

Better Schools for a Stronger Detroit:

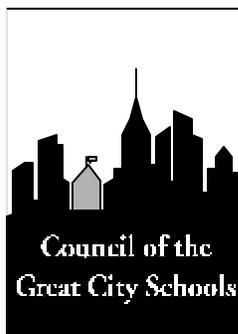
Report of the Strategic Support Teams
of the
Council of the Great City Schools

Submitted to the

Detroit Public Schools

By the

Council of the Great City Schools



With support from

The Broad Foundation

Fall 2003

Acknowledgments

The Council of the Great City Schools thanks the many individuals who contributed to this project to improve student achievement in the Detroit Public Schools. Their efforts and commitment were critical in presenting the district with the best possible proposals.

First, we thank CEO Kenneth Burnley. It is not easy to ask one's colleagues for the kind of review conducted by this project. It takes courage and openness. It also requires a commitment to the city's children that is uncompromising. He has that in abundance.

Second, we thank members of the School Board. Members were open, frank, and candid in their discussions with the project teams and are working hard and thoughtfully to guide and support the district's reforms.

Third, we thank the members of the Detroit Public Schools staff who provided all the time, documents, and data that the project needed in order to do its work. Their openness and enthusiasm were critical to our understanding of the challenges that Detroit faces.

Fourth, we thank the Detroit Federation of Teachers and its president, Janna Garrison, who was always available to meet with us. We gained immeasurably from her insights.

Fifth, the Council of the Great City Schools thanks the many groups, organizations, and associations with which we met. We apologize that we were unable to meet with everyone who we know had something valuable to say.

Sixth, the Council thanks the cities and school districts that contributed staff to this effort. They included Broward County (FL), Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, Cleveland, Houston, Fort Worth, New York City, Norfolk, Oakland, Philadelphia, Portland, San Diego, and San Francisco. A number of cities donated more than one person, and no district, when asked to help, turned down our request for assistance. All staff members from these cities provided their expert services to the Detroit Public Schools *pro bono*. We also thank Phyllis Hunter and Nancy Timmons who have retired from their respective districts but who were eager to help. The enthusiasm and generosity of these individuals and their districts is another example of how the nation's urban public school systems are banding together to help each other improve student performance.

Seventh, the Council thanks The Broad Foundation. It provided the financial support to cover lodging, meals, and airfares for the Strategic Support Teams that contributed to this effort.

Finally, I thank Council staff members Sharon Lewis, Janice Ceperich, Henry Duvall, and Tonya Harris whose skills were critical to the success of this effort.

Michael Casserly
Executive Director
Council of the Great City Schools

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Introduction: Purpose and Origin of the Project

ORIGIN AND OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

The Council of the Great City Schools has prepared this report at the request of Kenneth Burnley, Chief Executive Officer of the Detroit Public Schools (DPS). He asked the Council to review the school district's efforts to improve student achievement and propose ways to do better.

Dr. Burnley's request came after he saw the preliminary results of the Council's research on how other major city school systems were raising student performance. His interest was followed by a formal request for the Council to examine the district's instructional program and to benchmark it against cities whose academic performance was moving convincingly ahead.

To carry out its charge, the Council assembled five Strategic Support Teams (SSTs) in 2002 composed of senior urban school managers from across the country who have struggled with many of the same issues as Detroit has.

The first team was composed of research staff from the Council and from the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC). This team was charged with the initial benchmarking process. The second team was composed of curriculum and instructional leaders from cities that were raising student achievement. The third team was composed of testing and assessment directors from major city school systems. The fourth team was composed of staff from "CEO district" units from various city school systems. And the final team was composed of communications directors. Council staff accompanied each of the teams. This report summarizes the findings and proposals of these teams.

Each of the teams laid out a series of recommendations to the Detroit school's CEO in the spring of 2002 that would help the district align its practices to those of cities that were seeing significant gains in student achievement. Two teams returned to Detroit in 2003 to see how the district was doing in implementing the initial recommendations and to ascertain the district's likelihood of increasing student achievement.

Dr. Burnley and the school board are to be commended for their courage and openness in conducting a peer review such as this. It is not an easy decision to subject oneself and the institution one leads to the scrutiny that a project like this entails. These leaders deserve the public's thanks.

PROJECT GOALS

The main goals of the Council's review were to:

- ? Compare Detroit with other urban school districts that were raising student performance.
- ? Propose strategies—based on what was working in other cities—that could raise student achievement in Detroit.

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- ? Determine how well the Detroit schools were implementing the reforms initially proposed.
- ? Determine whether the Detroit Public Schools were on the right track in their attempts to boost student achievement.
- ? Judge how likely the district was to see improvements in student achievement.
- ? Suggest ways to strengthen public confidence in the Detroit Public Schools.

The Council also sought to identify expertise, resources, strategies, and materials from other city school systems across the country that the Detroit Public Schools could use to increase student performance.

THE WORK OF THE STRATEGIC SUPPORT TEAMS

The first team, composed of Council research staff and consultants, visited Detroit on January 14-15, 2002. This team analyzed the district's broad instructional strategies and continuous improvement plans. It also reviewed district priorities and analyzed how well DPS strategies and programs reflected those priorities. The instructional team visited the Detroit Public Schools on March 19-22, 2002. The assessment team visited Detroit on April 30-May 3, 2002. The CEO's district team was in the city on May 19-20, 2002. And the communications team visited the city on May 21-24, 2002.

The Superintendent was briefed by the teams on preliminary findings and proposals at the end of each visit.

The teams carried out their charge by conducting interviews and meetings with DPS staff and outside organizations and groups, reviewing numerous documents and reports, and developing initial drafts of recommendations and proposals. The groups also conducted conference calls after their site visits, gathered additional information, and refined their recommendations.

The initial teams were followed by two additional teams in 2003. These teams were composed of individuals from the original groups and were asked to determine how well the Detroit schools were implementing the recommended reforms. The first follow-up team visited the district on April 6-9, 2003. This team included specialists in curriculum and instruction, testing and assessment, low-performing schools, and reading and math. The second follow-up team visited the district on May 6-9, 2003. This team included specialists in communications.

This approach to providing technical assistance by using small Strategic Support Teams of senior managers from other urban school systems across the nation is unique to the Council and its members. The organization finds it effective for a number of reasons. First, it allows the Superintendent to work with talented, successful practitioners from around the country. It also permits the Superintendent and staff to share ideas with individuals who have faced many of the same challenges.

Second, the recommendations from urban school peers have power because the individuals who developed them have faced many of the same problems now encountered by DPS. No one can

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say that these individuals do not know what working in an urban school system is like or that their proposals have not been tested under the most rigorous conditions.

Third, using senior urban school managers from other communities is faster and less expensive than retaining a large management-consulting firm. The learning curve is rapid and the personnel time is donated. It would be difficult for any school system to buy the level of expertise offered by these teams on the open market.

Finally, the teams comprise a pool of expertise that Dr. Burnley, the Board, and staff can call upon for advice or help in implementing the recommendations, meeting new challenges, and developing alternate solutions. Members of the Strategic Support Teams included the following individuals:

STRATEGIC SUPPORT TEAMS

Benchmarking Team	Curriculum & Instruction Team	Testing & Assessment Team
Jason Snipes Research Associate MDRC	Marsha Sonnenberg Director of Reading & Language Acquisition Fort Worth Public Schools	Maryellen Donahue Director of Research & Evaluation Boston Public Schools
Corinne Herlihy Research Assistant MDRC	Patrick Burke Deputy Superintendent Portland Public Schools	John Easton Director of Research & Evaluation Chicago Public Schools
	Phyllis Hunter National Reading Consultant Houston	Katherine Blasik Assistant Superintendent for Research Broward County Public Schools
	Denise Walston Director of Mathematics Norfolk Public Schools	
	Barbara Pellin Assistant Superintendent for Student, Family & Community Svc. Charlotte-Mecklenberg Public Schools	
	Nancy Timmons Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Fort Worth Public Schools	
	Donna Garner Math Coordinator San Francisco Public Schools	

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CEO's District Team	Communications Team
Marjorie Elliott Senior Assistant to Superintendent Chancellor's District New York City Public Schools	Alexis Moore-Bruton Executive Director of Communications Philadelphia School District
Thandiwe Peebles Director of the CEO's District Cleveland Public Schools	Kenneth Epstein Public Information Officer Oakland Unified School District
Sherree Ray CEO's District Cleveland Public Schools	Keith Bromery Chief Communications Officer Chicago Public Schools
Shelly Ferguson Director, Focus Schools San Diego Public Schools	Deidre Stewart Supervisor, Internal Communications Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Schools
Gail Daves Coordinating Director, A+ Schools Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Schools	

CONTENT OF THIS REPORT

This report has an Executive Summary that follows this introduction. It outlines steps that the Detroit Public Schools have been taking to raise student achievement and improve communications. Chapter 1 presents a brief overview of the reform efforts in the Detroit Public Schools over the last three years. Chapter 2 summarizes—in narrative and table form—the recommendations that the Strategic Support Teams made to the school district a year ago and the status of their implementation. The text is organized around a set of themes that the research teams have found useful. Chapter 3 summarizes recommendations that the teams made to the district for improving communications and the status of those proposals. The final chapter summarizes and synthesizes the report.

The appendix of the report lists the people we talked to and the documents that we reviewed. It also presents brief biographical sketches of team members. Finally, the appendix contains a brief description of the Council of the Great City Schools and The Broad Foundation.

We have shied away from using a specific school reform model to guide our recommendations. Instead, we have taken a distinctly district-level orientation to reform and have relied on what works for some of the fastest improving urban school districts in the country. These included Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Houston, Sacramento, and the Chancellor's District in New York City. We have also relied on the advice and expertise of other cities. The reader should note, however, that few urban school districts share Detroit's precise mixture of demographics, staffing constraints, and resource issues. Our work and recommendations by definition will be inexact for that reason.

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We should point out that this project did not examine everything. We did not, for example, spend time looking at food services, transportation, personnel, facilities management, security, or other operational functions. Detroit has retained a number of consultants to work in these areas. We did not want to duplicate their work. Our efforts, instead, focus exclusively on student achievement and related issues.

The project also did not conduct a detailed review of staffing allocations and did not examine staff qualifications, although the teams were generally impressed with the quality of many of the individuals in the district. The project, moreover, did not look at School Board policies or other governance issues. We did suggest ways to organize the instructional and research units of the school district, however.

Finally, we did not examine the district's financial situation. The district has had to make substantial cuts to its budget over the last year. The project did not look at the merit of those reductions or analyze how the district was spending its resources.

There are a great many people across the country who want the Detroit Public Schools to succeed. This report was written in that spirit.

PROJECT STAFF

Council staff working on this project included:

Michael Casserly Executive Director Council of the Great City Schools	Sharon Lewis Director of Research Council of the Great City Schools
Janice Ceperich Research Specialist Council of the Great City Schools	Terry Tabor Conference Specialist Council of the Great City Schools
Henry Duvall Director of Communications Council of the Great City Schools	Tonya Harris Communications Specialist Council of the Great City Schools

Better Schools for a Stronger Detroit:

Report of the Strategic Support Teams Of the Council of the Great City Schools

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES

PROGRESS

The reform of public education in Detroit is in full swing. The district has revamped its leadership and staff; overhauled its operating systems; and moved to boost student achievement. And it has done so in the midst of wrenching budget cuts and ambivalent public sentiment. Progress has not always been steady, free of controversy, or consistent. But, the city and its school district are heading in the right direction.

This makeover is in the best tradition of a Great City whose history is marked by innovation, invention, and industry. Detroit is a city that has stood astride many of the nation's most important events, but is now fighting to reverse decades of economic decline and build a future worthy of its past.

Other big city school systems across the country have struggled to regain their footing as well. Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Cleveland, Houston, Norfolk, Philadelphia, and other city school systems have moved to right themselves after years of neglect and take their rightful places in revitalizing their communities. Some of these districts initiated reforms on their own; others had the choices made for them by external powers. But none of these cities has regretted the path of reform they are now on. Children are learning more. Test scores are up. Management has improved. And optimism is returning.

Detroit is in store for the same progress. The new school board and the CEO are moving along a common path and avoiding the factionalism of the past. Management is tighter; finances are better monitored; public outreach is returning. And the pieces for improving academic performance are being put into place.

Efforts to spur student achievement began anew in the Fall of 2001 when Detroit schools' CEO Kenneth Burnley, frustrated with the pace of his initial instructional reforms, met with the Council of the Great City Schools to discuss new research emerging from the organization on why and how some major city school systems were improving academic performance and others were not.

Burnley and the Council embarked on a unique strategy that called for benchmarking the instructional practices of the Detroit Public Schools against those of the fastest improving urban public school systems in the nation and then replicating them. The Council assembled a series of Strategic Support Teams to do the work. These teams were composed of senior managers from

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cities across the country that had significantly boosted student achievement. These teams visited the Detroit schools in 2002 and prepared a detailed set of recommendations for the CEO that sought to align the district's instructional program in nine broad areas with those of cities making substantial gains.

These proposals, which the CEO began implementing before the review was finished, augmented or reoriented strategies that the district was already pursuing, but were designed to fit together in a way that would give the district the right strategic focus and a higher probability of success.

The Council and its teams returned in 2003 to see how the district was progressing in the implementation of the proposed reforms. **The teams found a new determination to raise achievement and a clearer sense of direction and purpose.**

The Detroit schools have moved rapidly in the last to implement the reforms that new research is showing can significantly improve student achievement in major urban school systems. In particular, the Detroit Public Schools have been—

1. Setting measurable goals for academic attainment.

Raising the academic performance of urban schoolchildren is the bottom line for every big city public school system in the nation. Fort Worth, Houston, Sacramento, Charlotte, Boston, Long Beach, Norfolk, and other cities have made major gains in test scores over the last several years, despite their high levels of poverty, because they focused like a laser beam on the central goal of improved student achievement.

To replicate the same focus, the Detroit Public Schools over the last year have:

- (a) Set a long-range districtwide goal of 100% student proficiency in reading and math achievement.
- (b) Tied their long-range academic goals to state proficiency criteria established under "No Child Left Behind."
- (c) Set annual and measurable districtwide targets for reading and math improvement.
- (d) Tied annual improvement targets to state guidelines for "adequate yearly progress."
- (e) Established numeric targets for reading and math achievement for each school in the district.
- (f) Tied annual school-by-school targets to those needed for the district to attain its goals.

2. Establishing a new accountability system for attaining achievement goals.

Urban school districts that are seeing significant gains in student performance attribute some of their progress to improved systems of accountability, starting with top administrators

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and working down through the principals. The purpose of these initiatives is twofold: to boost public confidence that taxpayer-supported staff are being held accountable for results and to focus staff activities on the bottom line, student achievement.

Over the last year, the Detroit Public Schools have:

- (a) Placed senior district instructional staff and administrators on performance contracts.
- (b) Tied the performance contracts of senior staff, in part, to annual districtwide achievement goals.
- (c) Placed principals on performance contracts.
- (d) Tied principal contracts, in part, to annual school-by-school goals.
- (e) Revised the tools, procedures, and criteria used to evaluate staff and principals so that attainment of student achievement goals is part of the evaluation process.
- (f) Standardized the “School Improvement Plans” to put greater emphasis on meeting concrete performance targets.

3. Aligning district programs and activities with state standards and assessments.

It is common for struggling urban school districts to be using a variety of often-disconnected and inconsistent instructional approaches and programs. Big city school systems that are showing improved student achievement, on the other hand, do the opposite. They align their academic programs with state standards and ensure that they are in sync with what the district is holding people accountable for.

Over the last year, the Detroit Public Schools have:

- (a) Aligned district reading curriculum with state standards.
- (b) Incorporated state standards into the district’s professional development program for reading.
- (c) Conducted an inventory of all the instructional approaches, philosophies, materials and programs used to teach reading.
- (d) Assessed district instructional programs for grade-to-grade alignment.
- (e) Assessed which district activities align with state standards and which do not.
- (f) Began to delete district activities that do not match up with state goals.

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4. Standardizing districtwide instructional strategies and curriculum.

Preliminary research suggests that urban school districts that are improving student performance are doing so by standardizing their curriculum and implementing a more prescriptive approach to reading instruction. They are doing this for three main reasons: to bring greater focus to their instructional programs; to mitigate the effects of high student mobility; and to ease the task of monitoring program implementation.

Over the last year, the Detroit Public Schools have:

- (a) Launched a new district campaign to boost reading achievement.
- (b) Implemented a new uniform, districtwide reading curriculum that reflects the latest scientifically-based research.
- (c) Purchased extensive supplemental materials to fill gaps between new reading curriculum and state standards.
- (d) Developed and implemented uniform pacing guides for the implementation of the new curriculum.

5. Providing districtwide professional development on the implementation of the new curriculum and instructional approaches.

Many of the faster-improving urban school districts across the country are also standardizing and focusing their professional development. They are doing this to ensure better implementation of their curriculum and to clarify to principals and teachers what was expected. It does not mean that each school cannot supplement the districtwide training with other activities, but it does require principals and teachers to participate in professional development that is common across schools.

Over the last year, the Detroit Public Schools have:

- (a) Implemented uniform professional development for teachers and principals on the new reading curriculum.
- (b) Used the district's Principals Academy to provide professional development to school-based staff.
- (c) Assigned staff to manage the district's professional development program for teachers, administrators, and non-instructional staff.

6. Beginning reforms in the elementary schools.

It has been very difficult for urban school districts to improve by trying to raise the academic performance of all grades simultaneously. Instead, many of the fastest improving districts started their reforms at the elementary grades and worked their way up to the middle and

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high school levels. These districts pursued this approach to correct serious curriculum alignment problems in the lower grades and to stem the tide of students entering middle and high schools without solid basic skills.

Over the last year, the Detroit Public Schools have:

- (a) Expanded preschool and all-day kindergarten programs.
- (b) Strengthened reading reforms and curriculum implementation in grades 1-3.
- (c) Required specified time for reading instruction at the elementary school level.
- (d) Begun to align district preschool programs with the new reading curriculum.

7. Focusing on the lowest performing schools.

A number of urban districts have also helped boost citywide achievement by focusing on their lowest performing schools. Charlotte, Houston, Cleveland, San Diego, and New York City are examples. Each of these districts established a sub-unit within their systems that focused resources and technical assistance on schools that were furthest away from meeting state standards. These units are often overseen by a person with CEO-like powers who brings special attention to the needs of their schools.

Over the last year, the Detroit Public Schools have:

- (a) Established a CEO's district composed of schools with the lowest academic performance.
- (b) Targeted additional resources to some schools in order to lower class sizes and supplement professional development.
- (c) Provided technical assistance to these schools to improve the school improvement planning process.
- (d) Targeted some of these schools for closure.
- (e) Partnered with Wayne RESA to provide support for CEO schools.
- (f) Established a peer review and mentor program to support these schools.

8. Ensuring reforms are implemented at the classroom level.

The urban school districts that are seeing steady progress in student achievement do not develop new policies at the central office and hope that they will trickle down to the classroom. Instead, they design specific strategies for ensuring that the reforms are implemented where they can do the most good and then monitor how well they are being put into operation.

Over the last year, the Detroit Public Schools have:

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- (a) Charged Executive Directors with monitoring and approving school improvement plans to ensure faithful implementation of the new districtwide curriculum.
- (b) Provided extensive professional development for all teachers so they understand the district's goals and how the new curriculum was designed to meet them.
- (c) Placed instructional specialists or coaches in schools to assist teachers with program implementation.
- (d) Implemented extensive "walk-through" protocols to allow Executive Directors, principals, and senior staff to monitor curriculum implementation and teaching practice.

9. Using data to monitor progress and decide on interventions.

A common feature in urban districts making rapid gains in student achievement is their use of statistical data. These districts use data to monitor progress, identify schools or students that are starting to slip behind, and decide on intervention strategies to bring students back up to speed.

Over the last year, the Detroit Public Schools have:

- (a) Replaced the district's outdated norm-referenced exam (MAT-7) with the updated Terranova assessment.
- (b) Implemented a new "quarterly assessment" system that is more closely aligned to state standards to catch students who were beginning to fall behind.
- (c) Began to use the results of the new quarterly assessments to decide on reading interventions for students who are falling behind.
- (d) Provided teachers and principals with better professional development on test data to inform classroom practice.

In addition to the strides that the Detroit Public Schools are making to align itself with the practices of the nation's fastest-improving urban school systems, the district took a number of steps over the last year to improve its communications with its staff and the community. The Detroit Public Schools:

- (a) Hired three new professional staff members who are enthusiastic, well-qualified, and who bring fresh ideas to the district.
- (b) Pursued an aggressive student enrollment and literacy campaign.
- (c) Overhauled district publications and website to make them more user-friendly.
- (d) Provided media training to principals and staff.

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- (e) Bolstered operations of the district's radio station.
- (f) Held a number of community forums on school closings.

The district's new school board, under the leadership of William Brooks, deserves special credit for beginning to reach out to district parents and the community and placing a new urgency on raising student achievement.

CHALLENGES

The Detroit Public Schools have not finished the job they set out to do, however. The district has a long way to go before it attains the level of academic excellence longed for by the citizenry. The challenges that the district faces remain serious. They have accumulated over many years. And they will take more time to address.

The most serious test for the school district remains student achievement. Test scores in the Detroit Public Schools (DPS) are low. The percentage of students scoring at satisfactory levels in reading and math on the Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP) has been below fifty percent for several years—a situation that cannot continue under *No Child Left Behind*. And the number of district graduates that score well enough on the ACT to grant them admission to a competitive college or university is very low.

The strides that the district has made, particularly over the last year, if continued, should reverse these trend lines. But the district will need to deepen its reforms and improve their cohesion, strengthen its professional development, bolster its still-fledgling data systems if test scores are to progress. The task will not be made easier in Detroit by declining enrollments, steep budget cuts, extensive layoffs, and further personnel reshuffling.

The second major challenge involves the district's declining enrollment. The result of this situation is the severe loss of revenues to support district reforms and the increased possibility of labor strife because of the district's fragile financial health. Exacerbating the problem is a set of state laws that have resulted in an inordinate number of charter schools in and around the district. These charter schools have a number of effects. They contribute to exodus of district students as parents search for good schools. And they increase the district's proportion of special education and other "at risk" students that charter schools often do not accept in large numbers.

The final challenge involves the support of the Detroit citizenry. Most of the available evidence suggests that community perceptions of the school district are low, despite the fact that city residents recently supported a special education millage increase for Wayne County that citizens outside Detroit did not support as vigorously. An April 2002 survey by the Skillman Foundation showed that about 74% of Detroit residents gave the city's schools a grade of "C" or lower, and only 20% gave the schools a "B" or higher.¹

¹ Skillman Foundation (2002). *Concerning Kids: A Skillman Foundation Study*. Detroit, MI.

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Detroit's citizens are clearly hungry for better schools and are willing to support the district's efforts but they want to see progress and be involved in it. The aforementioned Skillman Foundation survey, in which so many residents graded their schools poorly, also found that 56% would pay more taxes to improve them. About 69% of residents supported the reforms that are now occurring. And 89% of residents rated education as being very important to them—a level higher than in any of the surrounding suburbs.

This priority is clear in every citywide poll, every study, and probably at most kitchen tables across the community. We think that the district is on the right track to give the public what it wants.

Chapter 1: Background

The Detroit Public Schools are undergoing some of the most significant reforms of any major city school system in the nation. The district was taken over by the state, its governance structure was changed, its leadership was revamped, its operations were restructured, and its programs were overhauled—all in an effort to restore the once proud and innovative system to its former glory and to teach the city’s children to a standard that would rebuild the public’s confidence and spur the redevelopment of the community.

The changes had numerous origins, most of which can be traced to frustration—inside and outside the city—over continuing scandals, low student achievement, unstable leadership, and dysfunctional operations. To address these issues, the Michigan legislature—at the behest of many of Detroit’s own community leaders and citizens—approved a measure in 1999 to disband the city’s elected school board and replace it with one appointed jointly by the Mayor and the Governor.

Then-Mayor Dennis Archer was given six school board seats to fill under the new arrangement; then-Governor John Engler was given one, albeit one with the authority to block the selection of a new Chief Executive Officer he or she did not approve of.

Once in place, the newly-appointed school board selected Kenneth Burnley, a Detroit native, to be the district’s CEO. Burnley—who was given powers by the state legislature normally reserved for the school board—took the reins of the district in 2000—following the one-year interim appointment of David Adamany—and called for an immediate review of the organization’s operations and finances.² The results of this review lead to a major overhaul of the district’s food services, grounds maintenance, information technology, budget, transportation, and other operations. Burnley also put into place a plan for repairing and renovating schools with bond funds that the public had approved some eight years earlier but that had not been spent. And he began the first fledgling efforts to boost student performance.

In 2003, current-Mayor Kwamme Kilpatrick exercised his prerogative by replacing several of the original appointed board members with his own selections and charged the board with improving community relations, providing more aggressive oversight, and spurring student achievement.

This report summarizes the efforts of the school system to improve its bottom line, student achievement. The district’s “School Improvement Plan” states clearly that enhanced learning is the first priority of the Detroit Public Schools—a priority that the district has attempted to keep front and center as it struggled to fix its broken operating and financial systems and regain public trust. This report also summarizes some of the district’s efforts to communicate better with the citizenry of the city.

² See *The Efficiency and Effectiveness Plan—Transforming the Detroit Public Schools: A Plan for Creating A Student Centered Customer- and Data-Driven Organization*. The Berkshire Advisors, April 2001.

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The task of rebuilding the Detroit Public Schools (DPS) is yet incomplete. The challenges facing the district when Kenneth Burnley took its reins suggest that the reforms will take more time before they yield the results that parents long for. Still, the progress to date provides hope that they ultimately will not be disappointed.

ABOUT THE DETROIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Detroit Public Schools, of course, are different from any other school district in Michigan. The school system is the state's largest and the one that presents some of the state's stiffest challenges.

The Detroit Public Schools enroll a student population that is twice as likely to be poor as the statewide average—a factor that consistently correlates with low student achievement. Some 66.0% of Detroit's students are eligible for a free or reduced price lunch, compared with about 29.3% statewide. In addition, some 91.2% of Detroit's enrollment is African American, compared with about 19.6% statewide. The district's enrollment of English Language Learners and students with disabilities, however, is closer to statewide averages.

Comparison of Detroit and Michigan Schools³

Variable	Detroit	Michigan ⁴
Enrollment	162,194	1,743,337
% African American	91.0	19.6
% Hispanic	4.1	3.5
% White	3.7	72.9
% Other	1.2	2.8
% Free/Reduced price lunch	66.0	29.6
% Disabled	12.4	13.1
Pupil/teacher ratio	20.6	18.0
Number of schools	263	3,998
Average Enrollment per school	617	436
Current expenditures per pupil	\$7,862	\$7,432
State Funding Targeting Ratio ⁵	0.53	1.00

The ability of DPS to overcome its challenges is constrained by several factors—mostly related to the lack of resources. The average school in Detroit enrolls some 624 students, compared with an average school enrollment statewide of about 439 students. The district,

³ Source: Council of the Great City Schools (2003). *Beating the Odds III: A City-by-City Analysis of Student Performance and Achievement Gaps on State Assessments, Spring 2002 Results*.

⁴ Michigan figures include Detroit data.

⁵ The degree to which the Michigan funds the Detroit Public Schools in relation to the district's proportion of the state's poor children. An index of 1.00 indicates that the state's funds are distributed in direct relationship to the district's share of poor children. An index above 1.00 indicates that a district gets more funds than what its share of poor students suggest. An index below 1.00 indicates that a district gets less than what its share of poor students suggest.

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moreover, has fewer teachers per student than the average Michigan school. And the state spends on Detroit only 53% of what might be expected given the city's share of the state's poor children.

In addition, the school district has been subjected to almost constant changes to its leadership over the last fourteen years. The last period of any real stability in the Detroit Public Schools was during the fourteen-year superintendency of Arthur Jefferson (1975-1989). In the 14 years since 1989, however, the Detroit school district has had four superintendents and two Chief Executive Officers—a new chief every 2.3 years:

1989-1991	John Porter (interim)
1991-1993	Deborah McGriff
1993-1997	David Snead
1997-1999	Eddie Green
1999-2000	David Adamany (interim)
2000-present	Kenneth Burnley

This rate of turnover is common in other urban school districts that have struggled to find the right combination of leaders and programs to boost student performance and stem middle-class exit. Ultimately, this strategy has proved counterproductive, however, because the constant rotation has made it difficult for Detroit and other big cities to gain any momentum behind their reforms.⁶

The school district has had substantial turnover, as well, among its principals, teachers, and staff. Part of this churning is due to severe budget cutting. Part is due to attempts by the district to find school leaders after the dismemberment of the principals union. Part was due to numerous early-retirement plans over the years. And part was due to attempts to weed out corruption.

Student turnover has exacerbated the situation, as the district has lost nearly four thousand students a year for the last several years. Some students have left the city for the suburbs; some have decided on private schools; and others have opted to attend one of the area's burgeoning charter schools. The result is a serious loss of revenues needed by the district to support its reforms; an increase in the proportions of special education and other "at risk" students that charter and private schools do not accept in large numbers; and the increasing possibility of labor strife stemming from the district's fragile financial health.

Finally, the school district has piled one program on top of another for so many of the last fourteen years that one could not tell what the system was trying to do or why. The district had lost its focus; its efforts had become incoherent and unintelligible; its moorings had loosened, and its unity of purpose had splintered. The result was a school district where anyone could claim that their work was consistent with the goals of the system no matter what they were doing and individual survival took precedence over organizational goals.

⁶ Jim Collins, in his book *Good to Great*, refers to this phenomenon in the private sector as the "doom loop."

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In short, the Detroit school district has had trouble hitting its mark over the years because so many people in the system were aiming in different directions. The result has been a slow, steady decline, rather than a rapid, recent slump.

It was into this environment that the Burnley administration stepped, charged with the mission of reforming the system and boosting student achievement.

REFORMING INSTRUCTION

Improving student achievement has been critical to the reform of the Detroit Public Schools from the beginning of the Burnley administration. Burnley—with his new Chief Academic Officer—moved quickly in 2000 to begin the instructional reforms.⁷ Together they-

- ? Instituted the ESAT test—a series of mid-year exams—to measure student performance.
- ? Established a summer academy enrolling some 20,000 students who need additional assistance.
- ? Designed a principals' academy to provide professional development for school leaders.
- ? Expanded the preschool program.
- ? Appointed thirteen Educational Directors to work with and support school principals.
- ? Replaced approximately eighty principals.

But student performance stalled. Frustrated with the pace of academic reform, Burnley changed the leadership of the district's instructional division in 2002 and moved to pick up the pace of reform. He appointed his former Chief of Staff to head the academic unit of the district and sought technical assistance from the Council of the Great City Schools, which was in the middle of a multi-year research effort to determine why some big city school districts saw improvements in student test scores and some did not.

As the results of that research emerged, Burnley asked the Council of the Great City Schools to do something unique: compare the practices of the Detroit Public Schools against those of the fastest-improving urban school districts in the nation and propose how the district could better mirror what they were doing.

The Council did this benchmarking in 2002, laying out a set of detailed recommendations for how the Detroit Public Schools could better align its instructional practices with those of other big city school systems that were seeing substantial improvements in student achievement. The proposals were designed to—

⁷ For a discussion of school improvement efforts during the 2000-2001 school year, see *A Progress Report: School Improvement in the Detroit Public Schools Phase I*. Michigan State University Project Team, Commissioned by New Detroit, Inc. and Funded by the Skillman Foundation, January 2002.

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- ? Sharpen the district’s goals and ensure that everyone was working on the same agenda.
- ? Streamline the district’s instructional program so that it was more coherent and cohesive.
- ? Elevate the district’s focus on student achievement.
- ? Improve accountability for results.
- ? Increase the district’s use of data to drive overall performance.

Meeting these goals has not been easy, for the district has had to fix dysfunctional operating and financial systems—while it works to boost student achievement—to an extent that most other big city school systems do not have to contend with in their reform efforts.

The Council followed its initial benchmarking work with another set of site visits in 2003 to see how the district was doing one year into the new instructional reform process. This report describes that progress.

Chapter 2: How Is Detroit Working to Improve Student Achievement?

To improve student achievement in the Detroit Public Schools, Kenneth Burnley, the CEO of the school district, asked the Council of the Great City Schools to compare the Detroit schools with urban school systems across the country that were making the most rapid gains in academic performance. The purpose of this analysis was to determine whether there were strategies common to these urban districts that could prove useful in Detroit. The results were published in a report called *Foundations for Success: Case Studies of How Urban School Systems Improved Student Achievement*.

In short, the research found that the faster-improving districts—Houston, Charlotte, Sacramento, and the Chancellor’s District in New York City—took two critical steps to improve student performance that cities without gains did not take. The first step involved the creation of a broad set of political and organizational preconditions for reform. The second set of steps involved translating the consensus for reform into specific systemic strategies that drove student achievement.

A. Preconditions for Reform. The faster-improving urban school districts worked hard in ways that other districts did not at developing the necessary prerequisites for meaningful change. This meant developing and sustaining political and organizational stability over a prolonged period and building consensus for the reform strategies that they were pursuing. These preconditions included—

1. A role for the school board that focused on policy-level decisions that supported improved student achievement, rather than on day-to-day operations of the district.
2. A shared vision between the chief executive of the school district and the school board regarding the goals and strategies for reform.
3. A capacity to diagnose instructional problems that the school system could solve.
4. An ability to flesh out the leadership’s vision for reform and sell it to city and district stakeholders.
5. A focus on revamping district operations to serve and support the schools.
6. A matching of resources to support the vision for reform and improvement.

B. Strategies for Reform. These preconditions were followed in the faster-improving urban districts with a set of nine interlocking reform strategies. These districts—

1. Focused on student achievement and set specific achievement goals for the district and for individual schools, with a fixed schedule for attaining the goals and defined consequences for not doing so.

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2. Created concrete accountability systems that went beyond what the states had established in order to hold district leadership and building-level staff personally responsible for producing results.
3. Adopted or developed districtwide curricula and instructional approaches rather than allowing each school to devise its own strategies; and they aligned their curricula with state standards.
4. Supported these districtwide strategies at the central office through professional development and support for consistent implementation throughout the district.
5. Drove reforms into the classroom by defining a role for the central office that entailed guiding, supporting and improving instruction at the building level.
6. Committed themselves to data-driven decision making and instruction. They disaggregated data in a variety of ways in order to better understand patterns in student performance. They improved the infrastructure for analyzing and disseminating data throughout the district. And they gave early and ongoing assessment data to principals and teachers and provided training and support to help them use these data to diagnose teacher and student weaknesses and make improvements.
7. Focused on the lowest-performing schools. Some districts provided additional resources and attempted to improve the stock of teachers and administrators at their lowest performing schools.
8. Started their reforms at the elementary grade levels instead of trying to fix everything at once.
9. Provided intensive instruction in reading and math to middle and high school students, even if it came at the expense of other subjects.

The Council used these themes and the expertise of its Strategic Support Teams to align the reform initiatives of the Detroit Public Schools with the fastest improving urban school systems across the country.

PROGRESS

Armed with the research on how the fastest-improving urban school districts in the nation were getting their results, the Council assembled—at the request of Kenneth Burnley—a series of teams from these school systems and others to propose ways that Detroit’s academic reforms could be strengthened. These Strategic Support Teams (SSTs) visited the Detroit schools in 2002, collected data, reviewed district materials and plans, compared them with the practices of the faster-improving city school systems, and proposed a series of steps that Detroit should take to improve student performance. The teams returned in 2003 to see how the district was progressing on the initial proposals and to suggest course corrections where needed.

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The table below lists the initial recommendations proposed by the SSTs in 2002. The table also indicates whether each recommendation was followed, is in the process of being implemented, or has not been done. Comments or observations are also included. Some steps, like “establishing a new climate of no excuses,” may be marked as “in process” because they require continuing and ongoing efforts. Other steps may be marked as “not done” but are being considered by the district.

Original Recommendations and Progress on Them

RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
STAGE-SETTING AND PRECONDITIONS				
1. Announce an immediate, emergency, high-profile initiative aimed at improving student achievement in the Detroit Public Schools now that many of the operational issues in the district are being addressed.	v			The district launched an initiative in the summer and fall of 2002 to give additional visibility to the new priority on reading.
2. Organize additional special events and high-profile (high visibility) activities that will highlight the district’s priorities in raising student achievement.	v			The district organized a number of high profile events, including one attended by U.S. Secretary Rod Paige. .
3. Establish—through the CEO—a tone of urgency about the district’s academic priorities.		v		The CEO is working hard to set a tone of urgency about meeting the district’s academic priorities.
4. Admit that student academic achievement in the district is unacceptably low and that the district’s primary focus will be to raise it.		v		The district is being much more straight-forward about the challenges it faces and the achievement levels it hopes to raise.
5. Establish a new climate of “no excuses.” Do not accept reasons for why the district cannot turn around. Other districts have done it, and so can Detroit.		v		The district and its leadership are working hard to create a climate where excuses for poor performance are unacceptable.
6. Establish a “new attitude” that will lead staff and teachers to act and think differently about the challenges in front of		v		The district’s leadership has been aggressive about spurring reform and stressing the need for a single districtwide agenda

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
them. Reinforce the idea that the district will be going in a single direction and that staff members who do not want to go in that direction should seek employment elsewhere.				defined around student achievement.
7. Convene a senior staff retreat to bring management onto the same agenda and to form internal task forces or work groups around the key issues articulated in this report.		v		The district held a number of retreats for staff in the academic division – principals, executive directors, and curriculum directors. The Council urges the district’s new school board to meet with the administrative leadership to make sure that everyone is going in the same direction. See Chapter 3.
8. Refocus the priority of the CEO’s cabinet around the improvement of student academic achievement, asking for regular status reports on it.		v		The cabinet’s focus on student achievement has improved over the last year. The Council would continue to encourage having the director of research present at cabinet meetings to underscore student performance.
9. Recognize that not all staff will be able to exist in this new climate and that additional unpopular decision lay ahead.		v		The district’s leaders appear committed to taking whatever steps are necessary on the personnel front to improve student achievement.
10. Clarify who in the district is responsible for ensuring that the district meets what goals.		v		The district is beginning to develop a series of performance contracts specifying goals and responsibilities.
11. Exude confidence in the new direction of the district.		v		The CEO and CAO are confident that the new direction is the right one.
12. Incorporate language on children and student achievement in all speeches and district communications.		v		This appears to be improving. The new communication team may want to continue building child-centered language into all speeches.
13. Devote some serious leadership time to strategic planning and systems – building around student		v		The district has devoted a substantial amount of time over the last year to planning and building systems for improving

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
achievement.				student achievement. This is an ongoing process that needs to continue and strengthen.
14. Fine-tune the district's Strategic Plan based on the mission and goals articulated by the school board, the new "School Improvement Plan," the recommendations in this report and develop a new instructional initiative that will be ready for Fall 2002 implementation.	v			The district's strategic plan is now based in part on the new "School Improvement Plan," which included substantial input from the SST's.
15. Devote a portion of every school board meeting to a briefing or update on some aspect of student performance in the district.		v		An update on curriculum and instruction is shared at most school board meetings now.
16. Convene a series of meetings and forums to rally the business community and the city's political leadership around raising student achievement.		v		This proposal is being followed up to some extent. Efforts could be more numerous and focused, however.
17. Convene series of <i>small</i> community forums to advise the district on its academic initiative and to hear comment on the strategic academic plan.		v		The office of the Chief of Staff has planned five district forums for the 2003-2004 school year, beginning with a "Back to School" forum in August, 2003.
18. Attend to the benchmarking research on rapidly improving urban school districts described in the Council's report describing how they— a) Articulate clear district goals and targets with specific numbers. b) Hold staff accountable for goal attainment. c) Set high standards aligned		v		The district is working hard to implement strategies consistent with those of the fastest improving urban school districts. (See subsequent recommendations.)

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
<p>with the state.</p> <p>d) Provide uniform, high quality curriculum and instruction throughout the district.</p> <p>e) Provide sustained, focused, building-based (but centrally-defined) professional development.</p> <p>f) Start reforms in the earliest grades.</p> <p>g) Intervene in schools where student performance is lowest.</p> <p>h) Implement district policies and programs at the school and classroom levels.</p> <p>i) Provide ongoing public reports about progress.</p>				
ACADEMIC GOALS				
<p>19. Establish a new goal for the Detroit Public Schools: all students will read proficiently by the end of grade 3 and will remain at or above proficient levels throughout high school. (Universal literacy by 2014-15)</p>	v			<p>A reading goal of this nature has been established. The district should make sure that it ties to new state and federal AYP requirements.</p>
<p>20. Set a series of annual districtwide performance targets that lead to the goal of having all 3rd graders reading at proficiency, basing districtwide goal on likely state AYP targets under Title I of <i>No Child Left Behind</i>.</p>	v			<p>Annual districtwide performance targets have been established. The district should make sure that the goals tie to new state and federal AYP requirements, as they are updated.</p>
<p>21. Set annual incremental <i>reading</i> targets for each elementary school based on levels required to get the</p>	v			<p>Reading targets for each school have been established based on state and federal AYP requirements. The district needs</p>

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
entire system to the goal and based on likely state AYP requirements.				to make sure that everyone is familiar with the targets at each site.
22. Establish a new goal for the Detroit Public Schools: all students will be doing math at proficiency levels by the end of 4 th grade and will remain proficient throughout high school. (Universal math proficiency by 2014-15)	v			A districtwide math goal has been established. Roll-out of the math initiative is scheduled for the 2004-05 school year.
23. Establish annual <i>math</i> targets for each school based on levels required to get the entire system to the goal and based on likely state AYP requirements.	v			Math targets for each school have been established based on state and federal AYP requirements. The district needs to make sure that everyone is familiar with the targets at each site.
24. Establish a districtwide math goal for all students to complete Algebra I by the end of 8 th grade.		v		A districtwide algebra goal has been established in the "School Improvement Plan." The district is now in the process of implementing the goal.
25. Establish a districtwide goal to triple the number of students completing geometry by the end of the 10 th grade and to triple the number of students taking AP calculus courses.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet, although a number of reviews of the district's middle and high school math courses have begun.
26. Establish annual districtwide and school-by-school targets for reading and math improvement for each major racial group, for free/reduced price lunch eligible students, for students with disabilities, and English Language Learners.		v		These targets are now being set pursuant to state and federal AYP requirements.
ACCOUNTABILITY				
<i>Central Office</i>				
27. Place senior managers of the district-starting with the		v		Performance contracts have been established for senior level

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
cabinet—on performance contracts tied to districtwide performance targets in reading and math.				instructional but not non-instructional staff. Not all contracts are fully operational, however.
28. Rewrite central office staff job descriptions and evaluation procedures to include progress toward meeting districtwide performance targets in reading and math.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.
29. Charge the CAO with creating an annual districtwide improvement plan that will set systemwide goals and strategies, and will guide the development of individual school-by-school improvement plans.	v			A districtwide improvement plan with goals and strategies has been developed.
30. Charge the CAO with standardizing the School Improvement Planning process across all schools and tightly monitoring how Executive Principals (or Principal Coaches) implement it.	v			A standardized School Improvement Planning process has been established. Executive Principals have a procedure for monitoring the process.
31. Charge the CAO with assembling the School Improvement Plans into a single districtwide plan and submitting it to the state.	v			The districtwide “School Improvement Plan” has been submitted and approved by the state.
32. Design and implement a wall-size, school-by-school progress chart for the CEO and CAO with quarterly MEAP and end-of-the year NRT performance data for easy monitoring and planning.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.
33. Consider the option of speeding up federal accountability requirements for the district’s lowest performing schools.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
34. Put data warehouse vendors on performance contracts.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.
35. Institute district and school report cards. Charge the accountability unit with designing and implementing report cards.		v		The district is developing school and district report cards in compliance with <i>No Child Left Behind</i> .
Executive Directors				
36. Place Executive Directors on performance contracts tied to their schools' performance goals and targets in reading and math.	v			Executive Directors have been placed on performance contracts tied, in part, to the performance of their schools.
37. Rewrite and standardize evaluation procedures and forms for Executive Directors to include progress toward meeting their schools' performance targets in reading and math.	v			Evaluation procedures and forms for Executive Directors include progress toward their school performance targets in reading and math.
38. Charge the Executive Directors with evaluating the principals.	v			Executive Directors evaluate principals assigned to them.
39. Require the Executive Directors to approve and sign their schools' School Improvement Plans (SIP), with approved plans reviewed by the central office to ensure quality.	v			Executive Directors review and approve their school's "School Improvement Plans."
40. Charge the Executive Directors with reviewing and monitoring each school's progress on its achievement targets using quarterly test results, MEAP and NRT data.	v			Executive Directors review and monitor each school's progress on its achievement targets using MIP, MEAP, and Terranova data.
41. Provide Executive Directors with training on the School Improvement Planning process and how to review and monitor plans in a	v			The Executive Directors have been trained on the School Improvement Planning in a uniform and standardized way.

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
standardized way.				
42. Charge the Executive Directors with reviewing their SIP's with the school supervision, accountability, and curriculum units of the central office before approving them.	v			The Executive Directors work with other central office units when reviewing and approving "School Improvement Plans."
43. Require the Executive Directors to conduct at least one walk-through a year of each of the schools under their supervision and quarterly of all schools in "school improvement" status.	v			Executive Directors conduct a structured "walk-through" of each school under their supervision.
44. Charge the Executive Directors with arranging technical assistance from the central office or elsewhere for "school improvement" schools as they develop their "School Improvement Plans."		v		Executive Directors work with central office staff to assist schools in developing their "School Improvement Plans" as needed.
45. Assign Executive Directors to an Executive Director for School Supervision, who will evaluate them based, in part, on annual target attainment.		v		Reporting line has been established but more work is needed to perfect the evaluations so they are based on target attainment.
46. Redefine Executive Directors' responsibilities around feeder patterns or clusters.	v			Schools are assigned to Executive Directors based on feeder patterns.
47. Eliminate Executive Directors' responsibilities for approving field trips, handling parent complaints, hearings, and other duties not related to monitoring and spurring student achievement.		v		Parent Liaisons have been assigned to Executive Directors to assist in handling parent and community concerns, but duties such as approving some field trips are still handled by Executive Directors.
<i>School Principals</i>				
48. Place school principals on 11-month performance	v			Principals have been placed on 12-month performance contracts

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
contracts tied to their school's goals and targets in reading and math.				tied, in part, to their school's goals and targets in reading and math. Approximately 25% of their evaluation is based on student performance data.
49. Rewrite and standardize principals' evaluation forms to include progress toward meeting their school's performance targets in reading and math.	v			Principal evaluation forms have been rewritten to include their school's performance targets in reading and math.
50. Allow principals to hire and evaluate their own teachers and staff.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.
<p>51. Charge principals with initiating and leading the school improvement planning process, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) school, teacher, and student performance data. (b) targets tied to district academic goals. (c) item analysis of individual student test results. (d) activities aligned to meet school goals and targets. (e) professional development and instructional intervention needs. (f) timelines. (g) parental involvement and public engagement. (h) other requirements established by state regulation. 		v		The district plans to initiate a web-based school improvement planning process in 2003-04. This will only be effective if principals and others involved in the planning process have access to the internet.
52. Incorporate performance targets and results of district tests into each school's School Improvement Plan.		v		The district plans to incorporate performance targets in the 2003-2004 school year.

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
53. Set up a “peer review” process that would allow schools to review and comment on each other’s School Improvement Plans.		v		A peer review process for School Improvement Plans was piloted in CEO schools in 2002-2003 and will be phased into other schools starting in 2003-2004.
54. Charge the principals with submitting all School Improvement Plans to their Executive Director for review, discussion, and approval.	v			Principals submit all “School Improvement Plans” to their Executive Director for review, discussion, and approval.
55. Incorporate student or classroom performance data (in part) into the teacher evaluation process.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet. The recommendation requires bargaining.
56. Design some form of recognition, monetary rewards, or other incentives, bonuses or award program for principals and/or schools that meet or exceed performance targets.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet. The recommendation does not require sizable resources to provide staff with recognitions (e.g., professional memberships, banners, awards dinner, or other recognitions) for a job well done.
57. Incorporate the upgraded school improvement planning process and the “walk-through” procedure into the district’s Principal’s Academy program.	v			The walk-through procedure is a part of the Principal’s Academy.
STANDARDS				
58. Align all district curricula, materials, and programs with state standards (with internal staff, consultants, or state officials).		v		District curricula, materials, and programs have been aligned with state standards. The district should not view this as a one time event. Periodically, major programs and materials should be reviewed to make sure they are on target.
59. Inventory all the instructional approaches, philosophies, materials, and programs used to teach		v		The district conducted a recent review of its math curriculum and its alignment with state standards. It remains unclear

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
students in the district.				whether the district's commitment to a constructivist approach to the teaching of math is yielding the best results.
60. Conduct an analysis to identify gaps between the district's reading and math curriculum, the district's new basal series, and the state's <i>content</i> standards.		v		The district appears to have accepted the reading textbook publisher's assurance that materials are aligned with state standards, but there is no evidence that an actual analysis was conducted. The district indicates that it has reviewed gaps between district and state standards in math.
61. Conduct an analysis to identify gaps between the district's reading and math curriculum, its instructional materials, and the state's <i>performance</i> standards (measured by MEAP).		v		The district has recently completed some of this analysis, but it is unclear as to the depth or sophistication of the work.
62. Assess the district's instructional programs and curricula for grade-to-grade alignment.		v		Grade-by-grade alignment is assumed in "Open Court," and the district plans to conduct a review of grade-to-grade alignment over the summer of 2003.
63. Incorporate material on state standards into principals' and teachers' professional development sessions.	v			Materials on state standards have been incorporated into professional development for teachers and principals.
CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION				
Reading				
64. Establish reading as the district's main new instructional initiative and priority for the immediate future.	v			Reading was established as the instructional priority for the 2002-2003 school year.
65. Name a district "Reading Czar"—or short-term national consultant—reporting to either the CEO or CAO to define, oversee, and coordinate (not operate)		v		The district has identified a successful principal to fill this position. The person reports to the CAO. The district should ensure that she receives the necessary professional

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
the district's new reading initiative and strategy.				development on the latest reading theories and is up-to-date on the latest research.
66. Identify a series of reading consultants to work with staff on latest research and program strategies.		v		The district used "Open Court" consultants and others, including Phyllis Hunter. Ongoing help is suggested.
67. Draft a districtwide reading curriculum by grade level based on state reading standards (and measured by MEAP) to integrate the latest reading research from the National Reading Panel.	v			The district has integrated the latest reading research from the National Reading Panel into its reading curriculum.
68. Purchase a new basal series that incorporates these five components. The U.S. Department of Education has indicated in its Reading Academies that at least three commercially-available basal series meet five-part criteria.	v			The district purchased "Open Court," which is published by McGraw-Hill.
69. Develop or purchase supplemental materials that to fill any gaps (identified from the analysis called for in recommendations 60 and 61) between the new basal series, the reading curriculum, state standards, and MEAP.			v	The district has purchased Reading Master (K-2) and Corrective Reading (Grades 3-6) to fill gaps, but the nature of the gaps was never formally identified. (See recommendations 60-61.)
70. Develop or purchase grade-by-grade pacing guides in reading after selecting the district's new basal series.		v		Grade-by-grade pacing charts have been developed. Additional work may be needed, however, because they do not take into account snow days, early dismissals, some holidays, etc. They may also need to be revised to match skills taught by specified test dates.
71. Have new districtwide reading program ready for implementation in Fall, 2002.	v			"Open Court" reading program was implemented in Fall, 2002.

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
72. Identify or assign a reading coach to every school.		v		The district has assigned 100 instructional specialists to schools, but not all are reading specialists. (Additional resources or a realignment of current resources may be needed to implement this proposal fully.)
73. Eliminate all “comprehensive school reform” models that do not work (i.e., raise student achievement) or for which there are no achievement data. Allow schools to revert to models, if they wish, when they meet state performance standards.		v		The district is placing greater emphasis on systemwide reform strategies rather than school-by-school strategies. The district is re-evaluating reform models as their funding expires.
74. Establish a districtwide policy that mandates 120 minutes per day of reading instruction with re-looping in grades k-8.		v		The district has mandated that 120 minutes per day of reading instruction be provided in grades k-8. Most elementary schools are now implementing the policy. Principals were given an “Open Court” Reading Checklist that outlines 180 minutes of instruction in grades 1-3 and 120 minutes in grades 4-8. A districtwide policy is in development.
75. Administer a diagnostic test to all children in the district to determine each child’s reading skills.		v		The district uses the diagnostic reading tests that are part of “Open Court.” The district has also identified levels of “Open Court” that are appropriate to specific disabilities and uses “Into English” with English Language Learners. But there remains a need for a systemic diagnostic reading test for students with disabilities and English language learners.
76. Structure three specific levels of intervention for students who begin falling behind in reading (and/or math) based on the results		v		The district has made some progress on this recommendation, but still has a ways to go. The tutoring program got off to a slow start

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
<p>of the quarterly assessments (see section on testing):</p> <p>(a) Individual tutoring before, during, and/or after school. Tutorials should be based on individual child assessment data and item-analysis of specific reading skill levels. The district could pay some teachers to tutor students before or after school, or during summers; use community volunteers; and/or use college students.</p> <p>(b) Prevention and intervention services in order to cut down on the rate of placements in special education. These services would provide specific group-oriented intensive reading interventions for students who are at risk of not reading.</p> <p>(c) Professional development and training for teachers on specific interventions, lesson plans, data use, and reading strategies for children at varying academic levels.</p> <p>(d) Provide specific, structured interventions before school, after school, and in the summer for students who are not reading proficiently or who are beginning to fall behind based on data from the quarterly assessments.</p>				<p>in the 2002-03 school year and many students did not receive assistance prior to MEAP administration. The district should have a formal evaluation process in place to determine the success of these intervention programs.</p>
<p>77. Restructure district use of federal Title I funds in order to pay for:</p> <p>(a) Reading Czar.</p> <p>(b) Reading consultants if</p>		<p>v</p>		<p>The district uses Title I funds to pay for reading consultants, instructional specialists, intervention strategies, expanded preschool programs, extended time, professional development, tutorials, and</p>

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
<p>needed.</p> <p>(c) School reading coaches.</p> <p>(d) Supplemental materials.</p> <p>(e) Intervention strategies.</p> <p>(f) Expanded pre-school programming.</p> <p>(g) Extended time (i.e., after school, weekends, and summer schools).</p> <p>(h) Tutorials and extra periods for teachers.</p> <p>(i) Professional development for teachers.</p>				<p>extra periods for teachers. (The Council proposes to provide the district with a Strategic Support Team to look at federal programming and alignment with “No Child Left Behind.”)</p>
<p>78. Eliminate any remaining Title I pullout programs.</p>		<p>v</p>		<p>Principals have been instructed to eliminate all Title I pullout programs, but it is not clear that all schools have followed the mandate, particularly at the middle school level.</p>
<p>79. Implement a special tutorial program in between the first quarterly exam (see section on testing) and the January administration of MEAP to focus assistance directly on students in grades 4 and 7 who are closest to moving from low to moderate or moderate to satisfactory reading levels on MEAP. Charge the research department with producing detailed item analyses and skills reports on these students.</p>		<p>v</p>		<p>Schools were provided with intervention materials, but it is not clear that tutoring was provided in the way that the SST proposed. This problem should not persist in the 2003-2004 school year if the district provides interventions based on the results of the quarterly exams.</p> <p>The research department has now completed a detailed item analysis of MIP scores that will be ready for the upcoming school year (2003-2004).</p>
<p>80. Ensure that each student identified by the first quarterly exam as needing help is provided with an intervention that would—</p>			<p>v</p>	<p>Schools were provided with intervention materials, but it is not clear that tutoring and other recommended strategies were provided in a timely manner</p>

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
<p>(a) Assign reading tutors.</p> <p>(b) Provide a double block of reading time every day.</p> <p>(c) Provide principals, teachers, and reading coaches with test item analyses by student.</p> <p>(d) Regroup students by needed skill (based on analysis).</p> <p>(e) Provide specific lesson plans and strategies for teachers to address needed skills.</p> <p>(f) Conduct parent conferences to describe strategies.</p>				<p>following the first MIP testing. This problem should not persist in the future if it uses its interventions programs correctly.</p>
Mathematics				
<p>81. Revise and align district math curriculum—using the system’s current middle school philosophy as the foundation.</p>		v		<p>The district has recently conducted a review of its math curriculum and its alignment with state standards for implementation in the 2003-2004 school year.</p>
<p>82. Establish a school board policy requiring at least 60 minutes of math instruction every day for every student.</p>			v	<p>There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet, but the district is researching options. The district currently requires 50 minutes of math instruction per day.</p>
<p>83. Consider using a math diagnostic instrument (e.g., MARS, the Math Assessment Resource Service) to assess math skills of students, particularly in lowest performing schools.</p>		v		<p>The district uses “Star Math” in some schools and has recommended it for use in the Math Intervention Program, which targets students scoring in stanines 1-3 on Terranova. The district also needs to do this using MEAP results. The assessment has yet to be used districtwide.</p>

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
84. Provide specific, structured interventions before school, after school, and in the summer for students who are not yet proficient in math.		v		The district is putting its new math programs into effect for the 2003-2004 school year and has identified “Accelerated Math” and “Summer Success Math” as its interventions.
85. Review the district math curriculum to ensure that concepts are vertically aligned from K to 12, have included all new state standards, and contain direct pathways to algebra, geometry, and AP readiness.		v		The district has recently conducted a review of the vertical alignment of its math curriculum, its alignment with state standards, but has not explicitly tied programs to AP readiness. The district indicates that it is working to create more direct pathways for algebra and geometry.
86. Conduct a study of the district’s mathematics textbooks and curriculum guides to measure their alignment with state content and performance standards and outcomes.		v		The district has conducted a preliminary review, but it not clear that it has conducted a thorough analysis of the gaps between its math materials and the state assessments.
87. Supplement the mathematics series with appropriate materials in order to strengthen the areas of weakness identified from the alignment analysis.		v		The district is putting into place both “Accelerated Math” and “Summer Success Math” to serve as interventions. It is not clear, however, that an analysis has been conducted on what gaps in the basic math curriculum these two interventions fill.
88. Develop and implement districtwide pacing guides for the math curriculum.		v		The district has developed a pacing guide, but additional work is needed as a math program is put into place for 2003-2004.
89. Include understanding and use of pacing guides and curriculum alignment concepts into the district’s professional development program (see subsequent section on professional development).		v		The district is providing professional development on how to use the pacing guides. Additional work is needed as a math program is put into place for 2003-2004

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
90. Develop a school-year's worth of specific model lesson plans for grades 4 and 7. Use the models to illustrate how master teachers might teach math concepts.		v		Some model lesson plans have been identified/developed as part of the curriculum review, but the process is not very far along yet.
91. Begin long-term process of developing model lesson plans for all grades.		v		The district is in the process of implementing this recommendation, but has a long way to go.
92. Identify or assign—as resources permit—either a math coach or a lead math teacher in every school. Provide lead teachers or math coaches with extra pay and make them responsible for implementing the district's math curriculum.		v		The district has assigned 100 instructional specialists to schools, but most do not have backgrounds in math. (Additional resources or a realignment of current resources may be needed to implement this proposal fully.)
93. Identify general education teachers, if certified math teachers cannot be found, and provide them with extensive training to teach math.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet but it does appear to be under consideration.
94. Consider asking Wayne State University, Eastern Michigan University, and others to develop a university course or professional development segment to strengthen the math skills of middle and high school teachers.	v			The district has been collaborating with area universities to provide professional development in math.
95. Begin phasing-in AP math courses in <u>all</u> district high schools.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet, although a number of reviews of the district's middle and high school math courses have begun.
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT				
96. Convene a mandatory districtwide education	v			The district held a massive education summit for teachers at

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
<p>summit to inform teachers, principals, and administrators about the new district instructional initiative and the urgency of raising student achievement. The summit should address the rationale for the initiative as well as its content, expectations, and accountability measures.</p>				<p>the start of the 2002-2003 school year with Secretary Rod Paige as one of the keynote speakers.</p>
<p>97. Centralize the content and delivery of all professional development to align with district reading and math curriculum, goals, and targets.</p>		<p>v</p>		<p>The district has re-established its professional development unit and is in the process of centralizing and maintaining records for staff participation in professional development activities.</p>
<p>98. Build the centralized professional development program around—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) specific course content by grade. (b) active engagement of participating teachers and staff. (c) building-based professional development, rather than training in large group sessions for everyone in the district at once. (d) a contributive approach, linked to ongoing work. (e) consistent follow-up over time. 		<p>v</p>		<p>The district is in the process of building a centralized program of professional development, but the effort is not far along or very coherent yet.</p>
<p>99. Eliminate school-by-school choices of professional development models and speakers and use a single districtwide approach for professional development until performance goals are</p>		<p>v</p>		<p>The district is in the process of building a centralized program of professional development, but a great deal of school-by-school professional development remains.</p>

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
met.				
100. Curtail process-oriented professional development such as Cambridge training.		v		The district has eliminated Cambridge training, but continues to use Baldrige as a model for continuous improvement.
101. Eliminate further professional development connected with individual comprehensive school reform models.		v		The district is phasing out all professional development activities related to the models that are not directly connected to student achievement.
102. Redirect additional federal Title I and II funds to support the district's program of professional development.		v		Title I and II funds have been redirected to support the district's program of professional development.
103. Include all principals and paraprofessionals in teacher professional development.		v		Principals and paraprofessionals have been included in most teacher professional development.
104. Focus new professional development program for Executive Principals, principals, coaches and teachers on— (a) Implementing scientifically-based reading instruction. (b) Using new district reading curriculum and basal series. (c) Understanding state standards and expectations in reading and math by grade. (d) Using supplemental materials to fill gaps in basal series. (e) Understanding the role and use of intervention strategies for students who are falling		v		The district has provided some professional development during the 2002-2003 school year independent of the "Open Court" adoption, but much of it remains "event" oriented. Staff in the new unit needs to strengthen their knowledge and skills about how to conduct quality professional development as the unit is being revamped. Research from the National Council of Staff Development states that "training is most effective if it includes presentation of theory, demonstration or modeling, low-risk practice, and ongoing support through coaching or study groups. Follow-up support helps teachers implement what they learned with their own students after they leave the training environment." The district has a ways to go before realizing this approach to professional development.

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
<p>behind.</p> <p>(f) Administering tests and using assessment results (quarterlies, MEAP, and new NRT) and item analysis.</p> <p>(g) Using pacing and instructional sequencing guides.</p> <p>(h) Developing lesson plans and planning.</p> <p>(i) Organizing and participating in study groups.</p> <p>(j) Implementing and using teacher practice sessions to reinforce skills, and try out lessons and interventions.</p> <p>(k) Understanding pedagogical techniques.</p>				
<p>105. Ensure that new basal publisher provides the professional development necessary to implement the reading material.</p>	<p>v</p>			<p>“Open Court” provided substantial amounts of professional development to some 8,000 teachers and staff on the program’s implementation.</p>
<p>106. Continuously revise and target professional development based on the results of feedback from reading and math coaches and data from the quarterly assessments (see testing section).</p>		<p>v</p>		<p>This process has started but is not very sophisticated yet.</p>
<p>107. Establish regular meetings between reading and math coaches and principals to shape professional development needs and</p>		<p>v</p>		<p>Regular meetings are being established but they are not yet universal.</p>

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
provide for continuous improvement.				
108. Provide intensive training to reading and math coaches on content, data use, technical assistance, and monitoring techniques.		v		Training has occurred in reading but additional training will be needed, especially as programming expands for English Language Learners and students with disabilities.
109. Provide any volunteer tutors the district might use with training on reading and math skills needed by students.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet but the district is considering it.
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS				
110. Continue expanding the district’s preschool program, as resources permit.		v		The district has increased the number of pre-k and all-day kindergarten slots; focused on improving the quality of the preschool program; and ensured greater compliance with licensing mandates.
111. Establish criteria for specific skills that each preschool and early elementary school pupil should master, including the ability to— (a) Demonstrate knowledge of 100 “high frequency words” at pre-k, kindergarten, 1 st and subsequent grades. (b) Identify all 26 letters (upper and lower case) by the end of kindergarten. (c) Identify at least 13 phonemic sounds by the end of kindergarten. (d) Demonstrate print	v			These criteria have been generally provided as a part of the “Open Court” reading series.

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
<p>awareness by the end of kindergarten.</p> <p>(e) Read 60 words per minute by the end of 1st grade.</p> <p>(f) Read 90 words per minute by the end of 2nd grade.</p>				
112. Lower class sizes, as resources permit, in grades 1-3, starting with CEO schools (see next section).		v		The district has reduced class sizes in grades k-3 in some elementary schools where space permits. Other schools continue to have large class sizes. Budget cuts are slowing the district's ability to implement this recommendation.
113. Ensure that middle and high school students who score poorly on district reading tests have a double block of reading time each day. (See recommendations on reading.)		v		Progress has been made on this recommendation but not all middle and high schools have implemented it yet.
114. Pilot middle school-within-schools of no larger than 650 students and high school units no larger than 800 students, as the district proceeds with its school modernization, repair, and renovation program.		v		The district has secured a Small Learning Communities (SLC) grant for work in ten high schools. The district is also collaborating with the Gates Foundation to create smaller learning communities.
115. Conduct inventory of AP classes in all high schools and begin process of adding AP courses in English, math, and the sciences to each school.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet, although the district has established a goal to add AP courses in all high schools.
116. Establish a summer AP training program for teachers who may be teaching these classes			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet. Some AP English teachers did volunteer on their own to take AP training over the summer in Indiana.

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
117. Begin tracking high-school course-taking patterns to ensure that students are enrolling in the requisite English, math, and science courses to boost ACT scores.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet. The district tracks ACT test takers to determine which courses they have taken. (This is done by ACT.) But the recommendation was made to spur the district to use ACT data to ensure that students take the requisite courses in middle and high school in order to do well on these tests.
118. Request that the state conduct a review of the rigor of the district's high school courses or develop a specific plan for how the district will review and strengthen the rigor of its courses.		v		The district conducted a review of high school curriculum for 2003-2004. The SST has not seen the results of that review to assess its adequacy.
LOWEST PERFORMING SCHOOLS				
119. Design and implement a "CEO's district" unit composed of the district's lowest performing schools or initially of schools in first or second year of "school improvement."	v			The district has designed and implemented a "CEO district," composed of the city's lowest performing schools.
120. Identify an administrator to head the new CEO unit. (Person should have a proven track record of turning around troubled schools, good relationships with principals, and authority at the central office.)		v		A CEO district administrator has been assigned. Leadership in this unit needs further strengthening, however.
121. Have the head of the CEO's district report directly to either the CEO or the Chief Academic Officer. (Consider including the person in CEO cabinet meetings.)	v			The CEO district administrator reports to the Chief Academic Officer. The CEO often meets with this person.

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
122. Dedicate staff to the CEO's district office. (Should probably have a lead administrator, a supervising principal, and a curriculum leader—as resources permit.)	v			The Wayne County Regional Educational Service Center has provided a “mentoring” principal and other staff to the original 12-13 CEO schools.
123. Remove all other responsibilities from CEO schools' director and remove CEO schools from responsibility of all other Executive Principals.	v			The CEO administrator has no other duties. Principals of CEO schools report directly to the administrator.
124. Identify a small number of low-performing schools (12 to 13) in the first year and increase the number gradually as needed.		v		The district identified a small number of schools --12-13. As need increased, however, the unit added another 20 schools. The district will be scaling back to 12-13 for the 2003-2004 school year. Criteria for adding and deleting schools are unclear.
125. Lower class sizes, as resources permit, in CEO schools and consider extending length of school day or adding intensive after-school interventions in these schools.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet. This is largely the function of scarce resources. It is not always clear what the differences are in support for CEO schools vs. regular schools.
126. Negotiate with the union to have only fully-certified teachers assigned to CEO schools.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet. The district should be able to assign certified teachers to open positions in these schools but may not be able to move staff as it wishes.
127. Consider paying most experienced and effective teachers higher salaries to teach in CEO schools.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented.
128. Retain greater authority at the central office over the hiring of teachers and other staff at CEO schools.			v	This recommendation appears to be under consideration.

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
129. Carefully screen principals for these schools to ensure they that have experience raising student performance.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet. Some screening may have occurred but it does not appear to be systematic.
130. Convene regular meetings with CEO school principals and key central office administrators to help identify and solve operational and instructional problems. (Meetings also help build teamwork and a shared mission among CEO school principals.)	v			Regular meetings are held with CEO school principals and key central office staff from the instructional division. Non-instructional staff members attend these meetings periodically but should be included on a regular basis.
131. Hold several professional development retreats or sessions in reading instruction throughout the year for principals and teachers in CEO schools.	v			Professional development retreats and/or sessions were held throughout the year for principals and teachers in CEO schools.
132. Assign a parent advocate to the CEO's district.	v			A parent advocate has been assigned to the CEO district schools.
133. Require double blocks of reading and math instruction every day in these schools.		v		Double blocks of reading and math are in some CEO district schools but not in all schools. The district should revisit this recommendation.
134. Consider using curriculum-imbedded or mini-assessments to provide more regular progress reports on student learning.		v		The district has developed curriculum imbedded assessments that are aligned with its pacing guides but they are not universally used yet.
135. Consider developing and implementing a "student achievement improvement plan" tailored to each student enrolled in a CEO school.			v	The district states that it is planning to develop an individualized plan for all students not just those in CEO district schools. The district might consider piloting the process in the CEO schools as soon as possible.
CLASSROOM IMPLEMENTATION				

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
136. Charge reading coaches and/or lead math teachers with monitoring fidelity of curriculum implementation, teacher planning, classroom observations, professional development, use of test data, and arranging and coordinating intervention strategies.		v		Principals and Executive Directors are being charged with overseeing curriculum implementation, teacher planning, classroom observations, professional development, and use of test data. Additional work is needed on arranging intervention strategies.
137. Require regular meetings of the Reading Czar with building-level reading coaches.		v		The Executive Director for reading meets with building-level reading coaches.
138. Charge Executive Principals with ensuring that all principals, coaches, and teachers receive the professional development outlined in this report.		v		The Executive Directors and the office of curriculum ensure that all of the professional development occurs.
139. Put principals, reading coaches, and teachers through intensive summer professional development in reading before the beginning of the 2002-2003 school year.	v			All staff participated in an intensive summer professional development session in reading prior to the Fall 2002 opening of schools.
140. Train principals to conduct professional “learning walks” or “walk throughs” in their schools.	v			Principals have been trained in and conduct “walk throughs” in their classrooms.
141. Require central office instructional supervisors to spend at least one day a week in schools.		v		Central office staff spend time in schools conducting “walk-throughs” and working with intervention teams.
DATA AND ASSESSMENT				
<i>Testing</i>				
142. Replace the MAT-7 with an updated norm-referenced exam (NRT) that can give the district nationally-comparative data by grade.	v			MAT-7 has been replaced with the Terra-Nova.

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
143. Charge the test vendor with customizing the district's new norm-referenced exam to align with MEAP (whose vendor is CTB McGraw) and to provide national norms.			v	There is no evidence that this was recommendation has been implemented. The district does provide schools with a CRST report that presents Terranova results on MEAP concepts but the tests are not explicitly linked.
144. Charge the test vendor, in addition, with developing two new quarterly exams for grades 1-10 and aligned with the norm-referenced test and with MEAP.	v			Two exams for grades 1-10 (MIP), aligned to MEAP and the district's pacing guide, were developed and administered.
145. Have the vendor develop the quarterly exams to be about two hours in length (one hour for reading and one hour for math)—in order to reduce total testing time previously devoted to administering the ESAT.	v			The new exams, Measuring Instructional Progress (MIP), are one hour in length (one hour for reading and one hour for math).
146. Administer the first quarterly exam in October and the second quarterly exam (measuring cumulative skills gained over school year) in March.	v			MIP was first administered in October and the second was administered in May rather than March.
147. Administer the new norm-referenced exam in May.	v			The new norm-referenced exam, Terranova, was administered in April.
148. Replace the currently -used ESAT (requiring three-to-five testing <i>days</i> per year) with the two new quarterly exams (requiring about four <i>hours</i> per year).	v			ESAT was replaced with MIP, a much shorter test that was explicitly aligned with MEAP.
149. Use the results of the first quarterly exam administered in October to determine who needs interventions in reading and math in preparation for the January MEAP. (See recommendation 81.)		v		The results of the October MIP exam were used on a very limited basis to provide interventions and tutorials for students prior to the January administration of MEAP. It is unlikely that the district realized the full benefit of the first MIP administration.

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
150. Use the results of the January MEAP for accountability and federal AYP purposes.	v			MEAP results are used for accountability purposes.
151. Use the results of the second quarterly exam in March to monitor progress in reading and math; to gauge use and success of the pacing guides; and to make additional intervention decisions.		v		The district is using the MIP, MEAP, and Terranova to monitor progress in reading and math and to make additional intervention decisions.
152. Use the results of the end-of-the-year norm-referenced exam to make decisions about summer school placements; and to provide data for teachers at the beginning of the subsequent school year.	v			The Terranova is used to make decisions about summer school placements. The district still needs to provide results to teachers at the beginning of the 2003-2004 school year.
153. Charge the vendor with providing a way to document change in test scores by the end of the 2002-03 school year.		v		CTB/McGraw-Hill is conducting a linking study between MAT-7 and the Terranova. The district will be able to measure progress from 2001-02 to 2002-2003 school year.
154. Negotiate with the test vendor to supply schools with test scanners to speed-up the turn-around time for scoring quarterly and NRT results. The district should conduct its own analysis to determine the speed, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness of having the vendor score the tests or scoring the test internally.			v	The district is using an outside service to scan and report results, but could do this in-house and speed results.
155. Require turn-around time on quarterly exam results of five working days or less. The district might consider using the ESAT technology already in place to develop this capacity.			v	The district sent the MIP to the vendor to be scored. Scoring time was about 15 days to a month. The district should consider scoring this test in-house, and has indicated that it will do so for exams administered over the summer.

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
156. Review the new testing structure in 2005-2006 when the state is required by federal law to have its grade 3-8 testing system in place. If the district decides to phase out some of its local testing at that point, it should keep exams for grades 1 and 2.			v	The district plans to review the testing schedule in 2005-2006. It is too early to have implemented this recommendation. The district will have to wait on the state.
157. Establish a uniform districtwide procedures manual for test administration, scanning, and processing to improve accuracy and timeliness.		v		The district has a systemwide procedures manual for test administration. It will include scanning and processing once the district is able to complete these tasks.
158. Provide uniform districtwide professional development to building-level test coordinators and teacher coaches. Use new testing procedures manual and consider incremental pay increases, stipends, additional vacation days, or other incentives for extra duties of test coordinators.		v		The district conducts some districtwide training using its testing procedures manual, but it has been slow to identify incentives for the added responsibilities assumed by the test coordinators. (Additional resources or a realignment of current resources may be needed to implement this proposal fully.)
159. Charge the testing office with developing a protocol for school-by-school examinations and review of test results.		v		The Office of Accountability has the responsibility for working with schools to review and interpret test results, but the work is often not well-coordinated with the testing unit.
<i>Data Reporting</i>				
160. Develop web-based reporting system for aggregating and posting student achievement data, the district's accountability plan, test calendar, etc.		v		The district has developed a web-based reporting system for school/district achievement data, disaggregated data, the district's accountability plan, testing calendar, etc. Much of the new system is expected for the 2003-2004 school year.
161. Include student participation rates in test-score reporting. Ensure that new test-	v			The district has done a good job of reporting state assessment data to each of its schools based

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
participation requirements under <i>No Child Left Behind</i> are complied with and that data are reported by language status, disability, poverty status, and race.				on the requirements of “No Child Left Behind.” Although reporting includes the number of test takers, it does not include the number of students enrolled at the time of testing. Therefore, one can not compute the actual percent of test takers. The district should include the number of students enrolled as a part of this report.
162. Publicly report results of the MEAP and the new end-of-the-year norm-referenced exam (NRT). (The district does not need to publicly report results on the new quarterly tests, as these tests should be considered diagnostic.)		v		The district publicly reports MEAP results and will publish Terranova data. Additional reporting will be required, however, by subgroup, which the district has not done in the last several years
163. Ensure that results (by student) of the end-of-the-year norm-referenced exam (NRT) are provided to principals and teachers at the beginning of the subsequent school year.		v		The district plans to re-sort and distribute the end-of-year Terranova or MIP results to schools for the beginning of the 2003-2004 school year.
164. Make maximal use of technology, cable, TV, videos, to report and discuss test results and issues to the public.			v	There is no evidence that this was recommendation has been implemented yet. The district reports, however, that it will be making a video on interpreting Terranova results.
165. Ensure that all item analyses on quarterly exams are distributed to principals and classroom teachers.	v			The item analyses for the MIP are used by teachers and principals.
166. Charge principals in each school with identifying data and test coordinators to handle quarterly tests and other assessment results.	v			Each school has a test coordinator.
TECHNOLOGY				
167. Establish regular and			v	There is no evidence that this

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
common queries of data warehouse for district/school use.				recommendation has been implemented yet.
168. Integrate “Test Whiz” into the district’s data warehouse.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.
169. Conduct an inventory of school-by-school scanning equipment and printing capacity to help negotiate with new test vendor to fill gaps in equipment needs for school-based scoring.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet. Scanners are apparently used for attendance but not test data.
170. Have schools feed (electronically) school-by-school test results to central office for aggregation and analysis.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.
DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION & RESPONSIBILITIES				
171. Consolidate research, testing, and accountability operations into a single department with the director reporting to the Chief Academic Officer (CAO).			v	<p>There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet. If the district chooses to keep the two departments separate, then:</p> <p>(a) The research, evaluation, and testing unit should have responsibility for data analysis, program evaluation, strategic research and related reporting, district and school goal setting, AYP, test development, administration, scoring, and reporting and web-based posting.</p> <p>(b) The accountability unit would be responsible for school improvement planning, district and school monitoring of goals, and preparation of district and school report</p>

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
				cards.
<p>172. Structure a new three-part department around research, and testing and assessment</p> <p>(a) Research unit would have responsibility for data analysis, program evaluation, strategic research, and related reporting.</p> <p>(b) Testing and assessment unit would be responsible for test development, administration, scoring, and reporting and for web-based reporting.</p> <p>(c) Accountability unit would be responsible for school improvement planning, district and school monitoring on goals, AYP, and preparation of district and school report cards.</p>			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.
173. Place the new executive director for research on the Superintendent’s cabinet.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.
174. Charge the new department with developing a continually-updated, three-year research plan matched with the district’s vision and goals and designed to drive student achievement.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.
<p>175. Charge the new research department with producing such regular reports and analysis as—</p> <p>(a) Reports on Title I and other program practices, e.g., Sylvan Learning, Reading Recovery.</p>			v	The research department conducts many program evaluations but the district does not call on it to conduct ongoing studies of district practices, policies, and programs in ways that would inform and spur student achievement.

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (b) Impact of student mobility on achievement. (c) Impact of student attendance on achievement. (d) Survey of “reading readiness.” (e) Impact of repeated failures. (f) Impact of summer schools. (g) Impact of teacher attendance. (h) Impact and patterns in out-of-school suspensions. (i) Ongoing studies (correlatives) between MEAP and other local tests. (j) Comparison of “like” schools and students. (k) Analysis of school-by-school performance and test participation. (l) Analysis of course-taking patterns (AP classes) and results. (m) Regular issue briefs. 				
<p>176. Charge the new research department with conducting a substantive analysis of “best practices” in the district’s 23 schools that have higher than average reading and math scores and poverty rates above 50%.</p>			<p>v</p>	<p>There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet. The district did conduct interviews in “Golden Apple” schools, but a rigorous study has not been done on why these schools perform better than others with the same characteristics.</p>

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
177. Charge the research office with conducting a summative evaluation of the reading and math initiatives to double-check the fidelity of program implementation.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet on a districtwide basis. The district is conducting a review of its “Reading First” program, but this effort is only being implemented in selected schools.
178. Delegate non-achievement related surveys (e.g., health) currently conducted by the research unit to relevant offices in the district.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.
179. Delegate Title I compliance monitoring to the Title I office.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.
180. Move the handling of parent questions and complaints about student assignments to exam schools to an ombudsman.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.
181. Add technical staff (programmers and statisticians) to the research department in order to boost unit capacity to conduct work articulated in this report. (Staff do not have to be educators.)			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet. The district would need additional resources to implement this recommendation.
182. Build some Title I, bilingual, and other federal funds for program evaluations into grant applications and assign to research and evaluation unit in new department.		v		Title I, bilingual, and other federal funds are being used to fund program evaluation positions but not in the research office.
OTHER				
<i>Teachers</i>				
183. Establish a districtwide teacher orientation program before new teachers start their jobs.		v		The teacher orientation program is being redesigned to include increased training in curriculum and instruction.

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RECOMMENDATIONS	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	COMMENTS
184. Design, implement, and evaluate a new teacher induction program to encourage retention and support of new teachers.		v		A comprehensive teacher induction program is being developed but has not yet been implemented.
185. Design incentives to attract and retain new teachers (e.g., free ATM services, car and housing loans; one-month rent; moving expenses; college-loan repayments; etc.)			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.
186. Design, implement, and evaluate a mentor program for new and beginning teachers.		v		A new mentor program for new and beginning teachers is being designed but it has not been implemented yet.
187. Establish common planning periods for teachers by grade-level to allow for them to share and discuss best practices.		v		The recently negotiated teachers' contract increased planning periods to allow principals greater flexibility in scheduling common grade-level and subject-area planning periods.

NEXT STEPS

The Detroit Public Schools have made substantial progress over the last year. But the work is far from complete. Not all recommendations have been implemented and some that have lack the kind of depth necessary to produce sustained results. We urge the district to continue working on the original proposals, the sophistication by which they are implemented, and the degree to which they lock together.

Still, the district is moving in the right direction in a way that is consistent with urban school systems that have seen significant improvements in student achievement.

The reforms need additional time to take hold, however. And there are a number of suggestions that the teams would make to give the initiative a better chance of success in raising student achievement.

Stage-setting and Preconditions. The new school board (under the leadership of William Brooks), the Mayor, and others have taken special steps to ensure that the board of education defines its role around the broad policy-making needs of the city. The new board also deserves

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credit for beginning the process of exercising greater oversight of the administration's activities, underscoring the imperative to raise student achievement, and initiating an aggressive outreach effort to parents and the community. The Council would suggest that the work of the district might be enhanced further if the new school board—

- ? Convened a special retreat with the CEO and other senior staff to develop a shared vision for the district and its direction. This step might help ensure that the board and the administration have the same understanding about the reforms that are needed and how they will be achieved.
- ? Built its new agenda around student achievement, operational reforms, and community outreach and participation.
- ? Lead a citywide effort to build community ownership of the reform process.

Academic Goals. The school district has done a good job over the last year of setting specific and measurable goals for improving student achievement. The district is also beginning to tie these goals—districtwide and school-by-school—to the “Adequate Yearly Progress” benchmarks required under *No Child Left Behind*. There is also a clearer focus in the district on student achievement and a new spirit of determination that performance can and will be improved. This new energy was clear among both top administrators and principals and teachers. Staff has a better sense of direction than last year. The Council applauds the steps that the district has taken and encourages it to—

- ? Accelerate the sense of urgency for raising student achievement in the district. Not everyone in the district shares the same imperative for raising student performance that will be needed to sustain gains in the future.
- ? Revise district and school performance targets as new state data on “Adequate Yearly Progress” comes available.
- ? Develop AYP targets for subgroups specified in *No Child Left Behind*. Targets will be needed districtwide and within each school.
- ? Ensure that all principals and teachers are fully aware of their schools' performance targets. It was clear to the Strategic Support Team that not all school instructional staff were aware of the goals that were being set for enhanced student achievement.
- ? Strengthen the strategy for specific 8th grade algebra course-taking and for high school Advanced Placement (AP).

Accountability. The Detroit Public Schools have moved aggressively over the last year to put into place an accountability system that will begin holding staff responsible for student achievement in the district. It has developed and implemented performance contracts for senior instructional staff, some Executive Directors, and principals. It has put principals on annual contracts. And it has instituted a peer review process to govern a more standardized “School

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Improvement Planning” process, particularly for the lowest-performing schools. It is not always clear, however, that the district abides by its budding efforts to enhance accountability. The Council urges the district to—

- ? Begin applying the performance and accountability system as achievement data come available. It is not always clear that personnel actions are taken on the basis of student performance results.
- ? Begin expanding performance contracting to other staff in the district.
- ? Put the CEO on a performance contract tied to student achievement.
- ? Begin increasing the portion of the personnel evaluations that are linked to student achievement. Currently, 25% of the evaluations are tied to student performance. This percentage could be increased.
- ? Begin putting outside vendors on performance contracts. (See recommendation 34.)
- ? Begin rewriting job descriptions for staff with performance contracts.
- ? Explore mechanisms for rewarding or recognizing staff who have significantly improved student achievement. (See next chapter of this report.)

Standards. The school district has made major strides over the last year in aligning its reading and math curriculum with state standards. The district has also incorporated information about state standards into the system’s professional development activities. The district will needs to—

- ? Perform a specific and detailed analysis of the gaps between state standards and “Open Court” to ensure that the district has strategies for teaching topics not included in the new reading curriculum. This activity could be accomplished with either an outside consultant or a district task force of teachers and administrators. (See recommendation 61.)
- ? Supplement “Open Court” with specific writing materials aligned with state standards. “Open Court” does not have a particularly strong component for teaching writing.
- ? Perform more detailed analyses of gaps between the district’s math curriculum and its instructional and intervention materials.

Curriculum and Instruction. The district clearly devoted the 2002-2003 school year to *reading*. It made literacy its main priority in a number of campaigns and initiatives. And it acquired and implemented a major new reading curriculum to boost student performance, particularly in the early grades. The district’s “Open Court” reading program was further supplemented with “Reading Mastery” (grades k-2), “Corrective Reading” (grades 3-6), and “Spotlight on Reading” (grades 7-8). The district has also developed a series of pacing guides to direct teachers through the curriculum over the school year and has assigned reading coaches to each of its schools. And the district has moved some \$65 million from non-instructional operations into curriculum and

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instruction. As the district, its principals, coaches, and teachers get more familiar with using the new reading curriculum, the Detroit Public Schools ought to—

- ? Provide additional professional development to teachers on the use of the supplemental materials that the district has purchased. The supplemental materials that DPS are using are good ones, but there was some evidence that teachers do not know how to use them.
- ? Devote more professional development to the use of “Open Court’s” diagnostic assessment system. The program that the district purchased comes with diagnostic testing, but many teachers and principals indicated that they do not know how to use it.
- ? Implement and monitor a board approved 120-minute per day—or two-class period—policy for teaching reading.
- ? Send the district’s senior reading staff for additional professional development on the latest reading research or hire new top-flight instructional staff to help guide and deepen the district’s instructional program.
- ? Begin reading interventions (tutorials, regrouping, professional development, etc.) earlier in the school year next year. Many intervention programs were not started until mid-year during the 2002-2003 school year.
- ? Continue to revise the reading (and math) pacing guides to take into account vacation days, snow days, test days, and the like. The current guides do not take these days into account and teachers find they are behind when they should not be. The pacing guides should also be aligned to the local and state testing calendar so that the skills taught match when they will be assessed.

The district will be implementing a revised *math* curriculum in the 2003-2004 school year. The district has already aligned its general math curriculum with state standards and developed a set of preliminary pacing guides. As it works to select and implement a math program, the district will need to—

- ? Review the system’s current math programming and decide if this is the best approach for raising student achievement. The district relies mostly on a constructivist approach but its math scores have not improved over the last several years using this approach.⁸ The district ought to ask itself a number of critical questions before moving ahead: Does a constructiveness approach work with large numbers of students performing below grade? What are the barriers for successfully implementing a constructiveness approach?

⁸ The Detroit school leadership may want to look at the Norfolk Public Schools, which uses TERC and Connected Math—as does Detroit—but has produced steady math achievement gains over the last several years on a state assessment that is as rigorous as the Michigan test. Norfolk uses these two programs as a supplement to an Addison Wesley basal and supports the programs with very intensive professional development. Detroit, on the other hand, places more emphasis on the two programs than does Norfolk and does not provide professional development for its teachers with the same intensity. There is also some evidence that Detroit uses the two programs in ways that are not always consistent across grade spans.

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What are the conditions that must be in place in order to successfully implement a constructiveness approach? Is the district willing and able to spend the resources necessary to provide the extra professional development to teachers that would support a constructivist approach? The approach is widely touted but is often very difficult to implement and often requires extensive professional development and support.

- ? Require 120 minutes or two periods a day in math instruction for the lowest performing schools and students.
- ? Develop end-of-course math exams--particularly in Algebra I and geometry--and increase the number of AP courses at the high school level—in all high schools.
- ? Develop tighter monitoring of teachers' use of the pacing charts.
- ? Consider differentiated staffing for grade 4 and above. If the district is not able to do this because of budget problems, it may want to provide specialized training for instructional specialists who work with these teachers.
- ? Partner with a university to provide professional development in math to instructional specialists.
- ? Develop more model lesson plans in math based on state standards.

Professional Development. The district also took steps over the last year to provide a more coherent program of professional development to teachers, principals, and other staff. Extensive training in reading instruction, for example, was provided as part of the “Open Court” implementation. The Principals Academy provided substantial professional development and mentor support, as well. Extra professional development in math is being scheduled. And a new professional development center was opened.

The Strategic Support Teams, nevertheless, had concerns that professional development remained fractured and uncoordinated from school-to-school and across constellations, and that staff's capacity to provide services was not as strong as it needed to be. Moving professional development into the district's Human Resources office may not help this situation and could exacerbate it. The Council suggests that the school district—

- ? Prepare a detailed professional development plan for the district that is coordinated, cohesive, and coherent. The plan should articulate how all training components are aligned with the district's academic goals in reading and math; how data and assessment results are woven into the training; how reading and math interventions are used; and how content knowledge—particularly in reading, math, and science—are strengthened.
- ? Develop a districtwide professional development calendar for principals, teachers, and staff.
- ? Differentiate staff development according to teacher experience and expertise.

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- ? Send the district’s professional development leadership to additional training on how to provide districtwide training. The district might consider programs and best practices at the National Staff Development Council.
- ? Establish a districtwide professional development advisory group composed mostly of experienced and effective teachers to guide the development and implementation of a districtwide plan.
- ? Continue to develop or borrow (from other districts) a bank of model lesson plans for teachers that are aligned with the district’s new reading and math curriculum. (Houston, Buffalo, and Broward County have good models.)
- ? Inventory all district professional development offerings and begin curtailing training that is not explicitly aligned to the district’s curriculum.
- ? Place the responsibility to defining, delivering, and monitoring professional development into the district’s instructional unit.

Elementary Schools. The Detroit schools have made a number of strides to boost the performance of students in the earliest grades. The district has expanded its preschool and full-day kindergarten program; strengthened the reading program in grades k-3; required specific time spent on reading in the early grades; and begun to align preschool programs with the district’s new reading curriculum. As the district moves forward, it will need to—

- ? Develop a clearer articulation of the curriculum from grade to grade in all core subjects.
- ? Retain as much emphasis on reducing class sizes in the early elementary grades as possible during the budget cutting process.
- ? Finish aligning the district’s pre-k programs with the new “Open Court” adoption.
- ? Begin inventorying all district high school courses; review for rigor; and begin eliminating courses that do not meet high standards.
- ? Develop an explicit districtwide high school reform plan. (The district might look at other plans developed by Philadelphia, Baltimore, Sacramento, and other cities.)

Low Performing Schools. The school district has also put additional emphasis on trying to improve student achievement in the lowest-performing schools. The district adopted the concept of a special administrative unit (the CEO’s district) to focus on the lowest-performing twelve, then 24, schools; arranged for technical support from Wayne RESA; and provided special staffing. The CEO’s district provides dedicated support to its schools, mentors for each of the principals, reading coaches for teachers, professional development, and peer support in the development of school improvement plans. As next steps, the district will need to—

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- ? Develop specific and measurable criteria for including and/or exiting schools from the CEO's district.
- ? Ensure that all teacher vacancies in the CEO schools are filled with certified teachers. The district might also want to arrange special incentives for the most senior and effective teachers to work in CEO schools.
- ? Curtail inconsistent professional development provided for CEO school staff and teachers. There was some evidence that training was being provided that was not aligned specifically to the academic goals of the CEO schools.
- ? Develop a clear articulation of how services to CEO schools are different from and/or more intense than services offered to other schools.
- ? Expand use of "individual education plans" for students in CEO schools.
- ? Develop a specific plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the CEO's district.

Classroom Implementation. The district is also working hard to ensure that its instructional and curricular reforms are implemented at the school and classroom levels. Extensive professional development during the implementation of the new reading curriculum helped ensure that everyone had a common understanding of what was to be taught and how. In addition, the district placed reading coaches and instructional specialists in the schools, charged the Executive Directors in each cluster with monitoring curriculum implementation, and developed an extensive "walk-through" system that made monitoring more uniform. As next steps, the district should—

- ? Align all of the "walk-through" protocols the district has developed to ensure that there are no gaps or overlapping activities.
- ? Continue using instructional specialists and coaches despite budget problems.

Data and Assessment. The school district has also made substantial headway in overhauling its testing and assessment system, and is placing greater emphasis on data-driven decisionmaking. The district replaced its out-of-date MAT-7 exam with the newer Terranova and replaced the ESAT with the newer, shorter, and better aligned MIP. The district has also begun to use the diagnostic tests built into "Open Court," although many teachers and staff still do not know how to use them. The district is also doing a better job in providing school staff with data and professional development on its use. To make these new assessments and the data that come from them are effectively used, the district should—

- ? Shorten the turnaround time on MIP test data from about a month to two weeks to five days. The district should be using local scanners to read test answer sheets rather than sending out the results for scoring. The delay prevented the district from having adequate time to intervene in schools with tutorials and supplemental services before the 2003 administration of MEAP.

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- ? Conduct a formal analysis of the degree of alignment between the state’s MEAP and the district’s Terranova. The degree of alignment is unclear, but the district needs to know the correlation between the two in order to better understand test results.
- ? Consider revising the test data sheets prepared by the office of accountability and provided to schools. The sheets are confusing, too technical, and not user friendly.
- ? Encourage stronger collaboration between research and accountability offices.
- ? Review the pacing guides to ensure that skills that are likely to be tested on MEAP have been covered in the classroom by the testing date.
- ? Begin analyzing high-level course-taking and PSAT and ACT patterns as the first step in beginning to encourage talented students to pursue AP and other advanced courses.
- ? Charge research and technology offices with collaborating on regular inquiries of the data system in order to improve the ability of the data warehouse to give decisionmakers the information they need to improve programs.
- ? Strengthen and deepen access to data on individual student performance and ensure that the data warehouse includes individual student test results
- ? Strengthen use of item analysis from MIP, MEAP, and Terranova to identify appropriate instructional interventions.
- ? Place pacing guides, model lesson plans, and other instructional materials for teachers on the internet.
- ? Develop common standards for technology (hardware and software) in all the schools to ensure equity.

The Detroit Public Schools have made important strides over the last year to improve student achievement. It is not likely that the district will show significant achievement gains on the 2003 MEAP, however. The new reading curriculum was in place less than five months before MEAP was administered. And teachers and administrators usually need a second year to get used to a new curriculum as complex as “Open Court.” The Council’s Strategic Support Teams were optimistic that the district will start seeing improvements by the 2004 testing.⁹

A number of reforms that the district has started, moreover, need to be implemented with greater sophistication and depth before they can be expected to produce sustainable results. Professional development, in particular, needs to improve beyond what was needed to familiarize

⁹ Preliminary data from the 2003 administration of the Terranova suggest that the recent slide in student achievement may have abated.

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teachers with the new curriculum. Much of the district's own professional development, beyond that provided by the "Open Court" vendor, appears incoherent and episodic. The district's training program should be overhauled to ensure that it can support the new curriculum on an ongoing basis.

Finally, the district's data system has not yet gelled in a way that will give district decisionmakers the information they need to drive higher performance. The new assessment system—including MEAP, MIP, and Terranova—should start yielding important data immediately. But it is not clear that the systems are in place yet to make the most of this information in a timely fashion. It is not clear that decisionmakers are asking the kinds of questions from the data that would yield good choices or would mold the databank to provide high-quality information. And there continues to be more excuse-making about poor student achievement at all levels of the district than the SST's would like to see.

Some of the steps proposed by the Council require more resources than the district has available. Nonetheless, the Council believed that it was important to provide a general blueprint about the steps the district needed to take in order to improve student performance. The district is badly under-resourced to lower class sizes, for instance, or to provide instructional coaches. There is a limit to how far the district can cut its budget without jeopardizing its fragile attempts to boost student achievement.

The Council also appreciates the fact that the Detroit Public Schools cannot implement everything at once. The district needs to stage its work, as it is doing by rolling out its reading program in 2002-2003 and waiting until 2003-2004 to unveil its math strategies. The public, for its part, needs to understand that the reforms cannot happen all at once and still be successful. The district needs to focus carefully on each step if the reforms are to yield what the public wants.

Still, the Council of the Great City Schools and its Strategic Support Teams were confident that the Detroit Public Schools will see student achievement improve if it pursues the strategies outlined in this report and does so with depth, cohesion, focus, and consistency.

Chapter 3: How Is Detroit Working to Improve Communications?

Improving student achievement is the central challenge facing the Detroit Public Schools. But it is not the only challenge. The school district and its leadership also face the task of improving communications with the community and restoring public confidence in the district.

The community's image of the school district is poor. An April 2002 survey by the Skillman Foundation showed that about 74% of Detroit residents gave the city's schools a grade of "C" or lower, and only 20% gave the schools a "B" or higher.¹⁰ Polls also show that much of the public remains unfamiliar with specific district reforms and initiatives.

The number of families choosing not to send their children to the Detroit Public Schools speaks as loudly as the poll data. The district has been losing almost 4,000 students a year. At the same time, the number of students enrolled in charter schools has increased from 2,509 in the fall of 1996 to 16,526 in 2001.

The community will be returning to the polling booth in 2004 to decide whether to stay with the newly-appointed school board or return to the previous governance system. The ability of the school system to improve student achievement will shape those decisions. But so will its capacity to communicate those results and engage a restive public.

PROGRESS

The Detroit Public Schools have a number of assets to help build public confidence. First, it has a communications staff that is generally well-regarded. It is experienced in schools and the media.

Second, the district has a powerful, 42,000-watt radio station, *WDTR-FM*, which has the wherewithal to reach more than three million listeners. It broadcasts 6:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Sunday through Saturday.

Third, the communications department has a draft communications plan for improving community and media relations.¹¹ The draft provides a starting point to begin thinking about a districtwide communications strategy.

Finally, the district has a newly-appointed school board, which is eager to reengage the public and build better relations with parents.

The Council of the Great City Schools was asked by Kenneth Burnley to assemble a Strategic Support Team to propose ways to improve the district's communications. The team, which was composed of communications directors from other major city school systems, visited

¹⁰ Skillman Foundation (2002). *Concerning Kids: A Skillman Foundation Study*. Detroit, MI.

¹¹ Detroit Public Schools. *Community Communications Plan*. September 1, 2001-August 31, 2002.

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the Detroit Public Schools in June, 2002. The team proposed a series of steps that were largely consistent with those suggested by the Berkshire Group.

The team returned to Detroit in 2003 to see how the district was doing and to propose course corrections. In between the two visits, the district took a number of steps to improve internal and external communications. Those steps included—

1. Hiring three new and well-qualified communications staff to handle public information, media relations, and marketing.
2. Expanding the budget, staffing, and programming of the district's radio station.
3. Conducting an enrollment campaign to stem the exodus of students from the district.
4. Launching a literacy campaign to improve citywide awareness of the district's new reading initiative.
5. Improving the accessibility of the school board and increasing the number of events at which board members and the superintendent appeared together.
6. Continued the district's well-used and popular calendar of events.
7. Revising and improving the district's website.
8. Providing principals and staff with more extensive media training.
9. Convening forums on school closings.
10. Redesigning district publications to make them easier to read and more user-friendly.
11. Increased the number and visibility of parent liaisons.
12. Strengthened public oversight of district operations by the new school board.

The table below presents the list of initial recommendations proposed by the Council's communications team in 2002. The table indicates whether each recommended step has been taken, is in the process of being implemented, or has not been taken. Comments or observations are also included. Some steps may be marked as completed but will, in fact, require continuing and ongoing efforts.

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Original Recommendations and Follow-Up Findings

Recommendations	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	Comments
COMMUNITY RELATIONS				
1. Launch a citywide campaign to promote the district’s reading initiative.	v			The district did launch a reading campaign. The Communications Department is currently working on a summer literacy program with the Detroit Public Library.
2. Develop a speaker’s bureau of district employees who could be “deputized” to deliver positive messages about the reforms at public forums and meetings.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.
3. Establish a districtwide ombudsman to handle parent complaints - or assign parent advocates to the Executive Directors.		v		Parent advocates have been assigned to the executive directors but the district has not assigned an ombudsman.
4. Have the district’s parent advocates report to the ombudsman.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet because an ombudsman position has not been created.
5. Expand the parent advocates role from conflict resolution to community outreach/engagement.	v			The district has increased the number of parent advocates and their visibility in the schools has increased.
6. Expand budget capacity and use of the district’s radio station to communicate with the public. ¹²	v			The district has increased the budget for the radio station and has also improved programming. The radio station needs to be marketed more extensively, however.
7. Develop a long-range plan to boost radio station sponsorships.		v		The radio station staff is currently developing a plan to secure sponsorships.

¹² The city’s estimated 47% illiteracy rate suggests that the district make maximum use of non-print media.

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Recommendations	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	Comments
8. Continue principals' media relations training on speaking to the news media.	✓			Principals and top district administrators have undergone media training.
9. Convene focus groups on the utility, effectiveness, readability, timeliness and news worthiness of district publications.		✓		A parent focus group is currently being coordinated to provide input on current publications.
10. Develop short, easy-to-read bulletins or "fact sheets" on district news and developments that are e-mailed, mailed or faxed monthly to city opinion leaders updating them on major district news.		✓		The Communications Department is working to develop a weekly one-page bulletin-style newsletter.
11. Continue outsourcing community-marketing functions to public relations agencies but keep them under the command of the communications director, who would coordinate and monitor their work. ¹³			✓	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.
12. Revamp the district's publications to be less text based, shorter, and filled with more news items about district performance and reform efforts. Also feature human-interest stories about unsung heroes-staff and students-in the district.		✓		The Communications Department is currently developing a quarterly, four-page newsletter with short informative articles, and pictures and graphics aimed at parents.
13. Institute a call-in (800) number for parent/community complaints. This call-in function should go through the ombudsman office.			✓	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.
14. Change the FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) process to			✓	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been

¹³ Feature DPS communications staff as sole media contact on all press releases.

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Recommendations	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	Comments
allow the media easier access to information.				implemented yet. There is no process to differentiate FOIA requests. The Communications Department also does not receive information from other departments in a timely manner in order to fill requests.
15. Continue and enhance campaign to encourage enrollment in DPS schools.	v			An enrollment campaign was conducted and the district has cut the rate of enrollment decline.
16. Conduct an opening day “student achievement” rally.	v			U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige was the keynote speaker at the opening of schools convocation in 2002.
17. Incorporate cultural training, parent relations, parent conferences, and decision making into the district’s Principals’ Academy.				The team did not investigate this recommendation.
18. Change the name of the district’s “Office of Enrollment and Immigration.” ¹⁴				This office has been disbanded.
19. Require schools to present regular reports or presentations to parents on improvement efforts and progress.		v		This recommendation is just being implemented.
20. Evaluate the effectiveness of the district’s current family resource centers and how equitably they are located geographically around the city.			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER				
21. Think strategically about speaking engagements and			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been

¹⁴ Apparently, the current name sounds too much like a passport office to immigrant parents.

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Recommendations	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	Comments
meetings to ensure that valued constituency groups get sufficient access over the next two years.				implemented yet.
22. Carefully craft messages for each constituency group tied to the district’s goals.			▼	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented satisfactorily yet.
23. Use radio and television more extensively to communicate. 15		▼		The radio station is starting to develop greater capacity.
24. Develop a faith-based advisory group to the CEO.			▼	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.
25. Develop a series of small-group “listening forums” with grassroots and neighborhood groups.			▼	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.
26. Include good news in any announcement of bad news.		▼		The CEO is doing this.
27. Be specific about how groups and businesses in the community can be helpful to the district and its schools.			▼	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.
28. Establish a partnership with the business community for a citywide volunteer literacy program.			▼	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.
29. Be sure to include the school board, key officials, union representatives and others in any special announcements about district academic initiatives.	▼			The CEO is appearing at events with the board president, and the union president is also attending events.
SCHOOL BOARD				
30. Have the CEO and board	▼			The CEO and board president

¹⁵ The CEO might consider hosting a show on commercial and public TV and radio outlets.

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Recommendations	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	Comments
president appear side by side at community events and forums.				are appearing together at events, such as the recent announcement that 16 schools would be closed.
31. Broaden and enhance the school board's role in communicating the district's new academic initiatives.		V		The school board is playing a much more visible role in the community and has improved the atmosphere at the board meetings.
32. Provide more strategic communications support for the school board before, during and after board meetings.		V		The current school board is more accessible to the public and the press.
INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS				
33. Finish development of and implement a districtwide internal and external communications plan.		V		An internal and external communications plan is being drafted.
34. Move the production of all school publications in-house and put under the control and coordination of the Communications Department. 16		V		This recommendation is just being implemented. Many publications are still handled outside.
35. Continue conducting annual districtwide staff surveys but do so by contracting directly with a research firm rather than going through a public relations company.			V	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet. Surveys are still directed by Caponigro Public Relations Inc.
36. Institute an employee recognition program for staff achievements and years of service.			V	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet.

¹⁶ The district may wish to continue the use of public relations firms for outside marketing purposes but ought to bring regular district publications in-house.

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Recommendations	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	Comments
37. Develop a written plan for using voicemail, e-mail and a district intranet system to communicate with schools and staff on a timely basis.		✓		The system is being developed.
38. Post district press releases on the website immediately after they are issued.	✓			The website has been revised and press releases are usually updated in a timely manner.
39. Continue the district's new calendar of events. ¹⁷	✓			The calendar of events is an effective communications tool.
40. Charge the principal of each school with reporting good news to the community communications office for dissemination to the press.		✓		The Communications Department plans to visit schools on a regular basis and is receiving information from schools through constellation meetings.
41. Provide all district staff with a DPS e-mail address.		✓		All staff members are being provided with email addresses, although there are some complaints about technical problems.
42. Institute a Detroit Public Schools electronic newsletter for employees.		✓		The Communications Department is developing a weekly one-page bulletin-style newsletter for employees.
43. Develop short talking points, or pocket statements, for staff during likely news cycles.		✓		Progress is being made on this recommendation.
ORGANIZATION/CAPACITY OF DEPARTMENT				
44. Increase resources and budget for the district's communication department. ¹⁸	✓			The district has hired three new people—a director of marketing, a director of media relations and a director of public information-- to serve in the Communications Department.

¹⁷ The SST heard nothing but positive comments about this document.

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Recommendations	Implemented	In Process	Not Yet Done or Under Consideration	Comments
45. Have the department headed by a person who reports directly to the CEO and is included in all cabinet level meetings. ¹⁹			v	There is no evidence that this recommendation has been implemented yet. The director is usually included in cabinet meetings, however.
46. Reorganize the Department.	v			The department has been reorganized with the addition of three new professionals.

NEXT STEPS

The Detroit Public Schools have made some progress in improving its internal and external communications. We urge the district to keep working on the recommendations that have not yet been implemented. In addition, the Council and its Communications team suggest that the district take a number of other actions in the following areas:

Community Relations. The public’s confidence in the district continues to be lower than it should be according to several local polls. We think that this is due to a number of factors. One, the district’s message to the public appears garbled and undisciplined. The district does not appear to have thought strategically about what it wants to say to the public nor does it appear to have a broad strategy for communicating its reforms and efforts. Two, the district does not appear to have a convincing way to engage parents and the public in its work.

In addition to the initial recommendations, the Council would suggest that the district—

- ? Develop a written two-year communications strategy and plan—not a ‘to-do’ list—that is built around the four priorities articulated in the district’s “School Improvement Plan” and specifically addresses issues raised in various local polls. The plan should include strategies for crisis communications.
- ? Strengthen relationships and collaborations with such key community groups as the NAACP, the Council of Baptist Pastors, the Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Urban League, and other groups.

¹⁸ The DPS community communications unit was one of the smallest communications departments of any major city school system in the nation when the team visited the district in 2002. Minneapolis, a school district with 49,000 students, has a communications staff of seven people, for instance.

¹⁹ A 2002 survey of the Great City Schools showed that 31 of 45 (68.9%) responding districts have their communications director reporting to the CEO or Superintendent; 6 of 45 (13.3%) report to a deputy or associate Superintendent; 5 of 45 (11.1%) report to both the CEO and another official; and 3 of 45 (6.7%) report to a chief of staff. The communications directors of the largest Great City Schools report directly to the CEO or Superintendent.

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- ? Make a greater effort to hold special events and meetings of the district at school or community sites.
- ? Curtail or better coordinate the several public relations firms that the district works with. All contracts should be coordinated by the Office of Communications.
- ? Institute a districtwide “Principal for a Day” program to help build community awareness of good things going on in schools.

Chief Executive Officer. The school district’s Chief Executive Officer, Kenneth Burnley, is a skilled and polished communicator. The community and the schools do not always see or feel his commitment to the district and its children, however. The Council suggests a number of steps to improve the district’s capacity to communicate effectively with the community:

- ? Infuse a greater sense of urgency into the district’s reforms and how they are communicated to the public.
- ? Charge the communications director and his staff with the main responsibility for media relations and for managing public relations initiatives and contracts.
- ? Charge all departments with responding promptly to requests from the Office of Communications for information needed for media and public information requests.
- ? Move on initial recommendations to set up “listening sessions” or focus group meetings with key community constituencies.
- ? Ensure that the CEO’s schedule includes regular meetings and events at school and community sites.
- ? Consider additional media training for the CEO and cabinet-level officials.

School Board. The Mayor of Detroit, Kwame Kilpatrick, has recently replaced a number of members of the appointed school board with selections of his own. The newly-constituted board has an excellent opportunity to strengthen parental outreach and build community confidence. The board’s eagerness to improve these two areas has been on display at several community hearings on school closings and its more aggressive oversight of administrative functions. The Council believes that the board can play a positive influence by improving transparency and fortifying community relations. The Council would urge the board to:

- ? Continue and strengthen outreach and oversight activities.
- ? Consider holding more school board meetings at community or school sites.
- ? Consider broadcasting school board meetings over the district’s radio station.
- ? Convene a school board and CEO retreat to articulate a clear vision for the district that its leadership co-owns.

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Internal Communications. The district has retained three new staff people to increase the capacity of the Communications Department. The Council's communications team was impressed with their enthusiasm, experience, and ideas. The office is now more in line with the staffing levels seen in other major city school systems. The result should be better internal and external communications, less reliance on the media to tell the district's story, and better in-house newsletters, brochures, and documents. The Council would urge the district to:

- ? Expedite the provision and servicing of email to all principals, teachers, and staff.
- ? Expedite the FOIA requests. The district should separate FOIA requests that do not have legal implications and send them directly to the communications office to fill. The current legal review process is slowing the filling of requests unnecessarily.
- ? Continue upgrading the capacity of the district's radio station.

The Detroit Public Schools are poised to improve communications internally and externally. The district's new staff and the new school board's commitment to greater outreach and oversight should pay dividends in the short and long terms.

Chapter 4. Conclusions

The Strategic Support Teams assembled by the Council of the Great City Schools for this project were generally impressed with the commitment of most of the people they interviewed—inside and outside the school district. Administrators, principals, teachers, and staff are working hard to give the city what it wants, and are dedicating themselves, in large and small ways, to taking care of the city’s children, outside the public eye and without much appreciation.

In our opinion, the stagnant student achievement in the Detroit Public Schools has more to do with the legacy of instability and variegated goals piled on top of another across nearly fifteen years of rotating leadership, poorly articulated ambitions, vacillating strategies, and undefined imperatives. The strategies proposed by the Council to reverse this situation were largely aimed at simplifying the district’s efforts, streamlining its programs, and unifying its agenda. We expect that the district will start seeing improvements in student performance as a result.

The Detroit Public Schools are not so different from other urban school districts across the country. But DPS is hindered to an unusual degree, even by urban school standards, by—

- (a) High rates of poverty, student mobility, rotating leadership and staff, and program-creep.
- (b) Declining enrollment to such a degree that it is undermining or choking the district’s financial ability to support reform.
- (c) State laws that have resulted in an inordinate number of charter schools in and around DPS. The result is an increase in the proportions of district students who are “at risk” because many charter schools do not accept these students in large numbers.
- (d) The possibility of labor strife arising from the district’s weakening financial health.
- (e) The effort and resources that the district has had to devote to fixing its dysfunctional operating systems.

All of these contribute to low student achievement in Detroit. The challenge, of course, is how to jump these hurdles so that the schools are not simply a reflection of society’s inequities but are a ramrod against them.

Other urban school systems, which have improved student achievement, have found that a relentless focus on academic performance over an extended period is what overcame the barriers that concentrated poverty presents and what ultimately boosted student learning. It is clear to us that that is what the leadership of the Detroit Public Schools is trying to do.

DPS is generally moving in the right direction with its new school improvement plan. The plan establishes four priorities for the future that the CEO has been communicating since he

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began his tenure in Detroit: improved student achievement, clean and safe school environments, better parental and community involvement, and a district that is an effective and efficient organization. They are the right priorities.

The challenge for the district's leadership has been to sharpen those priorities in ways that allow people to see them clearly; to undergird them with substantive, well-grounded and solidly-implemented strategies that can achieve the district goals; and ensure that everyone is pulling in the same direction.

The Detroit Public Schools have achieved governing stability and worked hard to improve its management and operating systems. The district has also made strides over the last year to deepen and accelerate the instructional reforms that began at the outset of the Burnley Administration, including—

- ? Setting concrete academic goals and sharpening the district's focus on them.
- ? Beginning the process of establishing accountability in the system for the academic results it achieves.
- ? Implementing a new uniform and scientifically-based reading program districtwide and providing extensive training for principals and teachers on its implementation.
- ? Increasing instructional spending by about \$65 million.
- ? Revamping the district's assessment system and beginning to put into place a more data-driven decisionmaking system.
- ? Naming a new board of education that is explicitly focused on engaging parents and the community and overseeing the district's administration and operations.
- ? Reaching out to other cities for assistance and for lessons on what has succeeded elsewhere.
- ? Establishing a special CEO's district to focus attention and resources on the lowest performing schools in the city.

Still, there are major challenges facing the school district as it looks to the future, including—

- ✍ Low student achievement levels on any number of standardized local and state tests and low numbers of students graduating with better than average skills.
- ✍ Rapidly declining enrollment and parents eager to choose charter schools and other options.
- ✍ Low public confidence in and community support of the school district.

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Foremost among these challenges, of course, is student achievement. But the district is generally on the right track with its new initiatives. These efforts have borrowed generously from the common strategies of some of the fastest improving urban school systems in the nation. The uniqueness of this approach to boosting Detroit's performance is hard to overstate. No district in the country has attempted to learn the lessons of reform and improvement from their urban colleagues in such a systematic way as has the Detroit Public Schools.

Detroit still has a number of things that it needs to do to make its reforms successful over the long run. Its professional development and data systems are not likely to get the job done in the ways they are currently structured. Excuse-making for poor performance is still stronger than we would like to see it. And many of the reforms lack depth and cohesion.

As much as anything else, the district needs steadiness in leadership and direction. No urban school district in the nation has substantially improved student achievement by switching gears and changing leadership. Now that the district is putting into place a series of convincing instructional reforms, the community should give them time to work. Starting over again is not really an option. For its part, the district will need to implement all strategies that were laid out for it as if they were one reform rather than as items on a menu. If the reforms are implemented with the depth, cohesion, and skill seen in other districts, they should produce significant gains in academic performance, first in the early grades and later in the upper ones. And the gains should start showing up with the 2004 testing.

Finally, it is important to understand that the path toward improvement is steep. It is almost always a rocky road. And it is almost always paved with setbacks. But other districts have followed it and seen gains. Detroit will see them as well if it sticks to the path it is on. Key leaders, staff, and teachers are doing what is necessary to give the public what it wants: better schools for a stronger Detroit.

APPENDIX A: INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED

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Individuals Interviewed by Curriculum Team in 2002

- ? Kenneth Burnley, Superintendent.
- ? LaVonne Sheffield, Chief of Staff/Chief Academic Officer.
- ? Anne Parker, Assistant to Dr. Sheffield.
- ? Juanita Clay-Chambers, Director of Curriculum.
- ? Marilee Bylsma, Professional Development.
- ? Caesar Mickens, Professional Development.
- ? Gerald Smith, School Board Member.
- ? Kimberly Peoples, Executive Director (Principals).
- ? Gloria Rozier, Executive Director (Principals).
- ? Beverly Gray, Executive Director (Principals).
- ? Yvonne Payton, Executive Director (Principals).
- ? Irving Petross, Executive Director (Principals).
- ? David Porter, Executive Director (Principals).
- ? Carlos Lopez, Executive Director (Principals.)
- ? Sheryl Thomas, Executive Director (Principals).
- ? Susan Madro, Director of Early Childhood Education.
- ? Nancy Varner, Director of Mathematics.
- ? Ella Cooke, Director of Special Education.
- ? Diane Woodward, Director of OSAS.
- ? Vern Davis, ESAT.
- ? Dennis Wisnewski, ESAT.
- ? Robert Bryant, ESAT.
- ? Linda Leddick, Research & Evaluation/Accountability.
- ? Mary Brown, Principal.
- ? Carolyn McKissic, Principal.
- ? Rosa Williams, Principal.
- ? Janet Kincannon, Principal.
- ? Paul Gray, Principal.
- ? Betty Hines, Principal.
- ? Carl Berg, Office of State and Federal Program Compliance.
- ? Janna Garrison, President of the Detroit Federation of Teachers.
- ? Lee Martin, Special Education.
- ? Mae Tansil, Teacher.
- ? Amy Coltart, Teacher.
- ? Patrick Alexander, Teacher.
- ? Roger Mattee, Teacher.
- ? Robert Santadicca, Teacher.
- ? Lois Von Hussain, Teacher.
- ? Pam James, Schools of the 21st Century.
- ? Otis Stanley, Director of School Improvement.
- ? Felix Velbuena, Bilingual Education.

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- ? Norma Barquet, Bilingual Education.
- ? Audrey Fitzgerald, Reading Department.
- ? Joyce Moore, Reading Department.
- ? Mildretta Hughes, Reading Department.

Individuals Interviewed by Research Team in 2002

- ? Kenneth Burnley, CEO, Detroit Public Schools.
- ? Roland Moore, Director of Technology.
- ? Linda Leddick, Research & Evaluation.
- ? Aaron Hedgepeth, Research & Evaluation.
- ? Vern Davis, Accountability.
- ? LaVonne Sheffield, Chief Academic Officer.
- ? Aleatha Kimbrough, Executive Director-Specialized Student Support.
- ? Sheryl Thomas, Executive Director.
- ? Beverly Gray, Executive Director-Divisional Director for Support Services.
- ? Maureen Costello, Berkshire Advisors.
- ? Ron Williams, Principal.
- ? Sylvia Green, Principal.
- ? Alvin Wood, Principal.
- ? Jan Lindsay, Principal.
- ? Larry Lattimore, Principal.
- ? Stan Allen, Principals.
- ? Felix Valbuena, Bilingual Education.
- ? Otis Stanley, Director of CEO Schools.
- ? Sue Pauley, Teacher.
- ? Lodesta Jackson, Teacher.
- ? Byron Tims, Teacher.
- ? Mary K. Edmunds, Teacher.
- ? Mike Albert, Director of Student Information System.

Individuals Interviewed by CEO's District Team in 2002

- ? Kenneth Burnley, CEO, Detroit Public Schools.
- ? Otis Stanley, Director of CEO Schools.
- ? Renee Tinsley, Berkshire Advisors.
- ? Vern Davis, Executive Director, School Accountability.
- ? Juanita Clay-Chambers, Associate Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.
- ? Mildretta Hughes, Executive Director, Reading and Literacy.
- ? Jerry Margerie.
- ? Robert Bryant, ESAT Statistician.

Individuals Interviewed by Communications Team in 2002

- ? Kenneth Burnley, CEO, Detroit Public Schools.

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- ? Jennifer Joubert, Interim Chief of Staff.
- ? Stan Childress, Executive Director, Communications.
- ? Francine Burgess, Media Specialist.
- ? Don Walker, Radio Station, Detroit Public Schools.
- ? Adam Azor Avalos, Citywide Student Council, Southwestern High School.
- ? Bianca Ayanna Suarez, President, Citywide Student Council, Southwestern High School.
- ? Jenice Choate, Citywide Student Council, Southwestern High School.
- ? Linda Leddick, Director of Research, Evaluation and Assessment.
- ? Shirley Mobley-Woods, Principal, Sampson Elementary School.
- ? Ron Peart, Principal, Southwestern Elementary School.
- ? Charldine Bowens, Parent Advocate, Central Constellation.
- ? Novella Lampkin, Vice President, LSCO/PTSA, Cooley High School.
- ? Huford Faskey, President, Detroit Council of PTSA's.
- ? Dan Bully, Office of Parent and Community Advocacy.
- ? Frederick Macklinder, Teacher, Boynton School.
- ? Michelle Parker, Teacher, Sampson Elementary/Middle School.
- ? Lawrence Hemingway, Education Liaison, Office of Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick.
- ? Rod Liggons, Planning Editor, WXYZ-TV (Channel 7).
- ? Barbara Arrigo, Editorial Writer, *Detroit Free Press*.
- ? Jodi Cohen, Reporter, *Detroit News*.
- ? Chastity Pratt, Reporter, *Detroit Free Press*.
- ? Cathy Nedd, Nedd Worldwide Public Relations, Inc.
- ? Jeff Caponigro, Caponigro Public Relations, Inc.
- ? Frank Fountain, Chair of the Board, Detroit Public Schools.
- ? Gregory Handel, Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce.
- ? Harrison Blackmond, Blackmond Givers Group.
- ? John Broad, Broad Auto Park.
- ? Barbara Gatton, Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce.
- ? Janna Garrison, President, Detroit Federation of Teachers.

Individuals Interviewed by Curriculum, Research and Low-Performing Schools Team in 2003

- ? Kenneth Burnley, CEO.
- ? Lavonne Sheffield, Chief Academic Officer.
- ? Juanita Clay-Chambers, Associate Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.
- ? Beverly Gray, Assistant to Chief Academic Officer.
- ? Alethea Kimbrough, Executive Director, Specialized Student Support.
- ? Caesar Mickens, Professional Development.
- ? Debborah Bodrick, Early Childhood Education.
- ? Robert Bryant, School Accountability.
- ? Vern Davis, Executive Director, School Accountability.
- ? Regina Thomas, School Accountability.
- ? Sherrie Joseph, School Accountability.

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- ? Jim Goddell, School Accountability.
- ? Linda Leddick, Research and Evaluation.
- ? Karen Ridgeway, Research and Evaluation.
- ? L. Kimberly Peoples, Executive Director.
- ? Sheryl Thomas, Executive Director.
- ? Pat Dignan, Executive Director.
- ? Patricia Gardner, Executive Director.
- ? Gloria Rozier, Executive Director.
- ? Marilee Bylsma, Professional Development.
- ? Connie Mitchell, Professional Development.
- ? Diane Jackson, Professional Development.
- ? June Rivers, Director of Reading.
- ? Ginny Axon, Reading Department.
- ? Karen White, Reading Department.
- ? Elizabeth Clark, Reading Department.
- ? Dahia Shabaka, Reading Department.
- ? Nancy Varner, Director of Mathematics.
- ? Earlene Hall, Mathematics Department.
- ? Irene Norde, Mathematics Department.
- ? Emmalee Barham, Mathematics Department.
- ? Karen Harrison, Mathematics Department.
- ? Roland Moore, Chief Information Officer.
- ? Tom Mariada, Wayne RESA.
- ? Olivette Pearson, Support to CEO Schools.
- ? Delores Nichols, Support to CEO Schools.
- ? Tamberlin Quick, Instructional Specialist.
- ? Delores Johnson, Principal.
- ? Harry George, Principal.
- ? Diane Thomas, Principal.
- ? Bernita Johnson, Principal.
- ? Paula Robinson, Principal.
- ? Gail Singleton, Principal.
- ? Ellen Stedeker, Principal.
- ? Yolanda Herbert, Principal.
- ? Diane Fisher, Principal.
- ? Oscar Abbott, Principal.
- ? Beverly Gibson, Principal.
- ? Virginia Clay, Principal.
- ? Mary Brown, Principal.
- ? Arnette Jordan, Principal.
- ? Gayle Lewis, Principal.
- ? Eloise Turbin, Teacher.
- ? Anna Moss, Teacher.
- ? Gail Kelvin, Teacher.

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- ? Geraldine Johnson, Teacher.
- ? Anita Lyons, Teacher.
- ? Teresa Ridges, Teacher.
- ? Deborah Montgomery, Teacher.
- ? Jason White, Teacher.
- ? Drinella Moore, Teacher.
- ? Christine Burbnay, Teacher.
- ? Pamela Morgan, Teacher.
- ? Althea Buckner, Teacher.
- ? Ida Walker, Teacher.
- ? Jolene Walker, Teacher.
- ? Tamara Rhodes O'Neil, Teacher.
- ? Lorna Scothells, Teacher.
- ? Angela Morgan, Teacher.
- ? Regina Crittenden, Teacher.
- ? Maryann Schlessinger, Teacher.
- ? Marsha Henderson, Teacher.
- ? Sharon Brown, Teacher.
- ? Geraldine Conaway, Teacher.

Individuals Interviewed by Communications Team in 2003

- ? Kenneth Burnley, CEO.
- ? Stan Childress, Executive Director, Community Communications.
- ? Francine Burgess, Strategic Support.
- ? Kay Lowry, Marketing Director.
- ? Mattie Majors, Director of Media Relations.
- ? Lekan Oguntoyinbo, Director of Internal Communications.
- ? Kathy Welch, General Manager, WDTR Radio Station.
- ? Donald Walker, Program Director, WDTR Radio Station.
- ? Ron Peart, Principal.
- ? Shirley Mobley-Woods, Principal.
- ? Minnie Pearce, Parent.
- ? Novella Lampkin, Parent.
- ? Barbara Arrigo, Editorial Board, *Detroit News*.
- ? Greg Handel, Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce.
- ? Jennifer Joubert, Chief of Staff.
- ? Sr. Carol Stoeckler, Assistant Dean, Liberal Arts & Education, U of D/Mercy.
- ? William Brooks, Chairman, Board of Education.
- ? Lawrence Hemmingway, Mayor's Education Liaison, Head of City Recreation Department.
- ? Michelle Parker, Teacher.
- ? Daphne Hughes, Mort Crim Communications.
- ? Jeff Caponigro, Caponigro Public Relations Inc.
- ? Kathy Nedd, Nedd Worldwide.

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- ? Bob Berg, Berg & Muirhead.
- ? Rod Ligons, Planning Editor, Channel 7.
- ? Art Edwards, Reporter, Channel 4.
- ? Jodi Cohen, Reporter, *Detroit News*.
- ? Chastity Pratt, *Detroit Free Press*.
- ? Reverend Dr. Joseph Jordan, Pastor, Corinthian Missionary Baptist Church, and Council of Baptist Pastors.
- ? Dr. Kenneth Harris, Associate Professor, Ecumenical Theological Seminary, and Council of Baptist Pastors
- ? Janna Garrison, President, Detroit Federation of Teachers.

APPENDIX B: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

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Documents Reviewed by Curriculum Team in 2002

- ? District Strategic Plan, 2001-2002.
- ? Annual Report: Detroit Systemic Program.
- ? Notes from MDRC Site Visit to Detroit Public Schools (MDRC).
- ? New Detroit - A Progress Report: School Improvement in the Detroit Public Schools.
- ? Description of the Curriculum Department (with Job Descriptions for Curriculum Staff).
- ? Additional Instructional Staff Information.
- ? Standards of Performance: Goals and Objectives.
- ? The Michigan School Readiness Program Guide.
- ? Michigan School Readiness Program: A Guide for the On-Site Review Process.
- ? Michigan School Readiness Program: Evaluation Reporting & Program Improvement Manual.
- ? Core Curriculum Outcomes: Preschool.
- ? Core Curriculum Outcomes: Kindergarten.
- ? B.O.O.K.S (Building On Our Kids' Strengths) Fact Sheet.
- ? *Beating the Odds* Profile and Test Score data.
- ? Detroit Public Schools – District Data.
- ? Grading Metro Detroit Schools.
- ? MEAP District Test Score Data.
- ? Professional Study Teams Description and Information.
- ? Professional Development Plan (Office of Mathematics).
- ? Detroit Public Schools Promotion Policy & Mandatory Summer Learning Academy For Students in Grades 3, 5 & 8 (Pamphlet).
- ? Criteria For Reviewing Educational Textbooks & Instructional Materials (Pamphlet).
- ? Attendance Policy (Pamphlet).
- ? ESAT Student Assessment Booklet (Mathematics Assessment Grade 7).
- ? ESAT Student Assessment Booklet (Reading Assessment Grade 7).
- ? Standards for Effective Teaching Performance.
- ? A Constructivist Vision for Teaching, Learning, and Staff Development.
- ? Early Childhood Standards of Quality.
- ? MEAP Student Support Packet – Teacher's Edition.
- ? Mathematics Core Curriculum Alignment Grades 1-5.
- ? Mathematics Core Curriculum Alignment Grades 6-8.
- ? Mathematics Core Curriculum Alignment Grades 9-12.
- ? English Language Arts Core Curriculum Alignment.
- ? Detroit Mathematics and Science Centers: A Profile of Activities and Resources.
- ? Performance Indicators – Parent Student Checklist: What Students Should Know and Be Able To Do.
- ? Annual Report 2000-2001 – Building Brighter Futures.
- ? Disaggregated MEAP Results 1999-2001.
- ? Detroit Public Schools Strategic Plan School Year 2001-2002.
- ? High School Curriculum Guide.

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- ? A Progress Report: School Improvement in the Detroit Public Schools Phase I.
- ? Elementary Mathematics Curriculum Grade 3 – 10.

Documents Reviewed by Research Team in 2002

- ? District Strategic Plan 2001-2002.
- ? Annual Report: Detroit Systemic Program.
- ? Site Visit to Detroit Public Schools Notes.
- ? Technical Support Team Notes (Curriculum & Instruction).
- ? Technical Support Team's Articulation of Concerns.
- ? New Detroit - A Progress Report: School Improvement in the Detroit Public.
- ? Description of the Research Department.
- ? District Testing Calendar.
- ? Michigan State Board of Education Standards for Accreditation *Education YES! – A Yardstick for Excellent Schools.*
- ? Discussion Regarding *Education YES! – A Yardstick for Excellent Schools.*
- ? Standards of Performance: Goals and Objectives.
- ? *Beating the Odds* Profile and Test Score data.
- ? Detroit Public Schools – District Data.
- ? Grading Metro Detroit Schools.
- ? MEAP District Test Score Data.
- ? A Definition of the ESAT.
- ? ESAT Reading Assessment Grade 7 – Student Assessment Booklet.
- ? Sample Item Analysis: Grade 7.
- ? Sample School Item Analysis Mathematics Grade 4.
- ? District Intervention Strategies for High Achievement Mathematics Grade 4.
- ? Building Intervention Strategies for High Achievement Mathematics Grade 8.
- ? ESAT Student Assessment Booklet (Reading Assessment Grade 1, 2, & 8).
- ? ESAT Student Assessment Booklet (Mathematics Assessment Grade 1-3, 7 & High School).
- ? Performance Indicators.
- ? Attendance Policy.
- ? Promotion Policy.
- ? Criteria for Reviewing Educational Textbooks and Instructional Materials.
- ? Mathematics Core Curriculum Alignment Grades 1-5.
- ? Mathematics Core Curriculum Alignment Grades 6-8.
- ? Mathematics Core Curriculum Alignment Grades 9-12.
- ? A Profile of Activities and Resources.
- ? English Language Arts Core Curriculum Alignment.
- ? MEAP Student Support Packet – Teacher's Edition.
- ? Early Childhood Standards of Quality Pre-K through 2nd Grade.
- ? A Constructivist Vision for Teaching Learning and Staff Development.
- ? Standards for Effective Teaching Performance.
- ? Issue Specific Report: Detroit Public Schools, MEAP 2001 Disaggregated Data, Differences in Percents of Students Satisfactory or Proficient.
- ? A Joint Collaborative Preliminary Evaluation of Funded Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSR/D) Models, 1998-1999 through 2000-2001, March, 2002.

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Documents Reviewed by Low-Performing Schools Team in 2002

- ? CEO's Challenge Schools (Draft), Detroit Public Schools.
- ? CEO's District: A Plan to Improve the Delivery of Educational Services in the CEO's District Schools (Draft), May 12, 2002.

Documents Reviewed by Communications Team in 2002

- ? The Effectiveness and Efficiency Plan: Transforming the Detroit Public Schools—A Plan for Creating A Student Centered Customer-and Data-Driven Organization, Berkshire Advisors Management Group, April, 2001.
- ? City-Wide Student Council Summary, April 17, 2002.
- ? Detroit Public Schools 2000-2001 Community Survey.
- ? Detroit Public Schools, Draft School Improvement Plan, April, 2002.
- ? Parent Links, Detroit Federation of Teachers, September, 2001.
- ? The Detroit Teacher, Detroit Federation of Teachers (Vol. 40, No.'s 13,14).
- ? Concerning Kids: A Skillman Foundation Survey, 2002.
- ? Detroit Public Schools Communications Survey, October 2001.
- ? Detroit Public Schools, Community Communications Plan, December 14, 2001.
- ? Detroit Public Schools, Communications Survey, Opinion Leaders Interviews, November, 2001.
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- ? *Open Court Reading*: Updated Staff Development and Implementation Plan.
- ? Leadership Meeting Agendas.
- ? Literacy Summit Information.
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- ? Literacy Coach Handbook.
- ? Measuring Instructional Progress: Guide for Interpreting Scores.
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- ? Job Description – folder.
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- ? Open Court Reading: Administrator’s Guide.
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- ? Literacy Coach Handbook.
- ? Reading Recovery – Buy-In and Summary of Services 2002-2003.
- ? Literacy Summit – African Heritage Professional Development Academy.
- ? Mathematics Improvement Plan – *Working Draft*.
- ? Performance Indicators 2001-2002.
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- ? High School Advanced Placement Courses.
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- ? Education Yes! Understanding Your School’s Report Card – video.
- ? Curriculum Rollout Plan.
- ? Collaborative Agreements with Local Colleges Regarding Specific Curriculum Training for Teachers.
- ? Core Curriculum Alignment.
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- ? Curriculum Instructional Sequence and Pacing Chart.
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 - Visual Arts Grades 3 and 7
 - Science Grades 1- 8
 - Physical Education Grades 2 – 12
 - Social Studies Grades 1 – 8
 - Mathematics Grades 1 – 3 & 5 – 7
 - Social Studies, Economics, Grade 10
 - Social Studies, Government, Grade 10
 - Social Studies, Geography, Grade 11
 - Social Studies, Global Issues, Grade 11
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- ? High School Science - Student Support Package - MEAP – HST Grade 11.
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- ? Curriculum Guides.
 - Elementary Mathematics Grade 4
 - Mathematics Grade 10
 - High School English
- ? Department of Early Childhood Materials.
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- Pre-Kindergarten Curriculum
- Pre-Kindergarten Progress Report
- Kindergarten Progress Report
- Parent Orientation Handbook
- Wrap-Around Plan
- Mission
- Professional Development
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- Pacing Chart
- ? Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment – Briefing Materials.
 - School Profiles and Annual Goals Report
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- ? TestMate Clarity: Standardized Reporting Software – Score Reports.
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- ? Terra Nova – A New Concept of Assessment Information.
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- ? Courville Math Results, Grade 4.
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- ? Draft Detroit Public Schools 2001-2002 AYP and School Improvement Plan Status.
- ? Draft AYP Two Year Comparison (2000-01 and 2001-02), Mathematics.
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- ? Lessinger Middle School Feedback on Professional Development Session.
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- ? Lessinger Middle School, Mathematics Benchmarks “Hit List.”
- ? Classroom Instruction that Works, Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement.
- ? MEAP Item Analysis 2001-02 Data, Lessinger Middle School.
- ? Midyear Performance Review of Executive Directors, 2/20/03.
- ? High Five Teach Walk-through Protocol.
- ? Memorandum: Corrective Reading Plan—Request for Information.
- ? SRA/Open Court Reading Program Implementation Checklists.
- ? “The Reading Initiative.”
- ? Office of Reading and Literacy, Professional Development—Spring 2003.
- ? Office of Reading and Literacy, Literacy Coach School Assignments.

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- ? WDTR Radio Station Strategic Development Plan.
- ? 2001-2002 Annual Report.
- ? 2002-2003 Summary of Professional Development.
- ? Professional Development Spring Course Catalogue 2003.
- ? Detroit Public Schools School Improvement Plan.
- ? Detroit Public Schools 2002-2003 Calendar.
- ? *Building for the Future, Framework for Action & Involvement-* A booklet providing an overview of the district’s bond program.

**APPENDIX C: BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF
STRATEGIC SUPPORT TEAM MEMBERS**

**APPENDIX C: BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF STRATEGIC SUPPORT
TEAM MEMBERS**

Katherine Blasik

Katherine Blasik is the Assistant Superintendent for Research and Evaluation for the Broward County (FL) Public Schools. She has held this position since 1994. In her role, Ms. Blasik oversees all testing, accountability, program evaluation, and research for the 240,000 student school system. She serves on the Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test Standards-Setting Committee, the South Florida Annenberg Evaluation Advisory Board, and is a Cooperative Fellow for the National Center for Educational Statistics (U.S. Department of Education). She has also published a large number of peer-reviewed papers in major national education journals and sits on the Achievement Gaps Research Advisory Group for the Council of the Great City Schools. Blasik earned her B.A. and M.Ed. from the University of Pennsylvania, a second masters degree from the University of North Dakota, and her Ph.D. in economic policy from the University of Miami.

Keith Bromery

Keith Bromery is the former Chief Communications Officer of the Chicago Public Schools. In his role there, he provided communications advice to the CEO, served as chief media spokesperson, produced a weekly television program, served as editor-in-chief of a monthly school newspaper, and managed a 15-member staff. Before joining the school district, Mr. Bromery was the manager of media relations at SBC/Ameritech. He also held similar posts at UNICOM, ENTERGY, and the GPU Nuclear Corporation. Bromery also has extensive news experience having worked for CBS News, the *Chicago Daily News*, and WLS-TV and WMAQ-TV in Chicago. Mr. Bromery did internships with the *Washington Post* and the *Boston Globe*. He has a B.A. in American History from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Patrick Burk

Patrick Burk is the Deputy Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction of the Portland Public Schools. He has been an elementary, middle, and high school teacher, and a central office school administrator with the district for over 25 years. He is an expert in standards-based instruction, assessment, and organizational structure and is responsible for the district's strategic planning for raising student achievement. He serves as the district's liaison to the Oregon Department of Education and the State Board of Education and is responsible for the district's implementation of the Oregon Education Act for the 21st Century. He has overseen a steady increase in the district's state test scores over the last several years. Burk has a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago.

Michael Casserly

Michael Casserly is the Executive Director of the Council of the Great City Schools, a coalition of some 60 of the nation's largest urban public school districts—including Detroit. Casserly has

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been with the organization for 26 years, twelve of them as Executive Director. Before heading the group, he was the organization's chief lobbyist on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. and served as its director of research. He led major reforms in federal education laws, garnered significant aid for urban schools across the country, initiated major gains in urban school achievement and management, and advocated for urban school leadership in the standards movement. And he led the organization in the nation's first summit of urban school superintendents and big city mayors. Casserly has a Ph.D. from the University of Maryland and a B.A. from Villanova University.

Gail Daves

Gail Daves is the Coordinating Director of the A+ Project in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Schools. In this role, she is responsible for overseeing programs and assessments for the school district's lowest performing schools. Before assuming her post in the district, Ms. Daves was the Assistant Director for School Improvement for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and a Leader in the NC Technical Assistance Team project designed to work with the lowest performing schools in the state. She holds bachelor and masters degrees from Appalachian State University and a North Carolina teaching certification in reading. Ms. Daves is a member of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Maryellen Donahue

Maryellen Donahue is the Director of the Office of Research, Assessment, and Evaluation for the Boston Public Schools. She has been in the school system for over thirty years. A third of that time was spent as an elementary classroom reading teacher. The rest of her career in Boston has focused on research, evaluation, and assessment. In 1985, she became the Manager of Testing and in 1987 she moved to her current position where she develops, supervises, and coordinates all district testing, program evaluation, and research activities for the school system. She has served as the President of the National Association of Test Directors and is an active member of the American Educational Research Association. Dr. Donohue is the author of numerous reports and studies on accountability, school improvement, standards, and implementation issues in performance assessment.

Henry Duvall

Henry Duvall has been Director of Communications for the Council of the Great City Schools since 1992. He coordinates press relations and public information for the national association of urban school districts and is the editor of the award-winning *Urban Educator* newsletter. Mr. Duvall has produced a number of nationally broadcast television programs, including an award-winning production with CBS newsmen Dan Rather, and provides technical assistance to school systems on effective communication strategies. Before establishing the Council's communications department, Duvall served as media relations associate to Elizabeth Dole at the national headquarters of the American Red Cross. For 13 years before going to the American Red Cross, Duvall served in various media relations and editorial capacities at Howard University. Earlier, he was a staff writer for the Potomac Electric Power Company; a staff writer for the University of Maryland-College Park; and a copy editor at the *Albuquerque Journal*, New Mexico's largest paper. He is a member of the National Press Club, the National Association of

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Black Journalists and the Education Writers Association, and is recognized in *Who's Who in America* and *Who's Who in the Media and Communications*. Duvall is a graduate of the University of Maryland, College of Journalism.

Marjorie Elliott

Marjorie Elliott is the Senior Assistant to the Superintendent of the Chancellor's District in the New York City Public Schools. She has held this position since the Chancellor's District was formed in 1996. Her responsibilities include program design and implementation, parent liaison, technical assistance, federal program coordination, oversight and monitoring, and other duties. Before assuming her current duties, Ms. Elliott was the Community School District 17 (New York City) Director of Special Education. She was responsible, in that post, for the improvement of instruction for the district's students with disabilities. Ms. Elliott has served in a number of other capacities for the New York City Public Schools relating to special education since 1976. She was also a classroom teacher for a number of years. Ms. Elliott holds a B.S. in Special Education from Eastern Michigan University; an MS. in special education from Columbia University, and a Professional Diploma in Education Administration from Hunter College of the City of New York.

John Easton

John Q. Easton is the Director of Research and Evaluation in the Chicago Public Schools, a position he also held between 1994 and 1997. Before taking his current post, Easton was Deputy Director at the Consortium on Chicago School Research. He has participated in numerous major research projects, including surveys of Chicago Public School teachers, principals, and students. He is the lead author of the first Consortium survey, *Charting Reform: The Teachers' Turn* (1991) and an ongoing series of annual studies of elementary school test score trends. Mr. Easton received his Ph.D. in Measurement, Evaluation and Statistical Analysis from the University of Chicago.

Ken Epstein

Ken Epstein is the Public Information Officer for the Oakland Unified School District. He has held this position since 1998. Before joining the Oakland schools, Mr. Epstein was an education reporter for a series of newspapers in northern California. He also served as a high school English and social studies teacher for 15 years. Epstein has a B.A. in history and a M.A. in journalism from the University of California at Berkeley

Shelley Ferguson

Shelley Ferguson is the Program Manager for the Mathematics Department of the San Diego Unified School District and the director of the school system's Focus Schools, the district's lowest performing. Before taking her current post, Ms. Ferguson was the Principles and Standards Coordinator for the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. She has also served as the Coordinator of the California Mathematics Initiative. She taught grades k-5 for 20 years and is affiliated with a number of professional organizations, including the National Research

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Council's Mathematics and Science Education Board; the California Mathematics Council; and the California Instructional Materials Review Panel.

Donna Gaarner

Donna Gaarner is a Mathematics Coordinator for the San Francisco Unified School District. She has held this position since 1998. In her role she works with the high school and middle school mathematics departments to adopt and deliver standards-based lessons and assessments in mathematics. From 1994 to 1998 she was the teacher coordinator for an NSF Teacher Enhancement Grant. In this role she trained high school teachers in the implementation of the Interactive Mathematics Program. She has been mathematics chair at a large urban high school and a middle school. She has published mathematics units that are used in California and Hawaii. Gaarder has had twenty seven years experience teaching mathematics at the middle and high school levels. She has also taught several curriculum and mathematics courses at San Francisco State University, Sonoma State University and City College of San Francisco. Gaarder earned her B.S. in mathematics from the University of Massachusetts and an M.A. in mathematics education from Stanford University.

Phyllis Hunter

Phyllis Hunter is a national reading consultant based in Houston, Texas. Before establishing her own company, Dr. Hunter was an education advisor to Governor George W. Bush; one of the architects of the Texas reading program; and a member of the President's Educational Transition Team. Hunter served as "Reading Czar" to Superintendent Rod Paige in the Houston Independent School District and was responsible for leading one of the nation's foremost efforts to improve reading instruction and professional development in the nation's sixth largest school system. In that role, she was responsible for developing the system's "balanced approach" to reading that essentially ended the district's reading wars and led to substantial gains in district reading achievement. Ms. Hunter is a National Fellow of the Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh and an Executive Board member of the Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE). She has been a principal, teacher, curriculum director, and program coordinator, and holds a master's degree from the University of Wisconsin.

Sharon Lewis

Sharon Lewis is the Director of Research for the Council of the Great City Schools, where she is responsible for developing and operating a research program on the status and challenges of the nation's largest urban public school systems. Ms. Lewis maintains a comprehensive database on urban public schools and is considered a national expert on assessment. She has served as an international educational consultant to the U.S. Department of Defense schools, and has been a State of Michigan delegate to the Soviet Union and the Peoples Republic of China. Ms. Lewis has served on numerous state and national committees including the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing; the National Academy of Sciences, NAEP Evaluation Committee; the National Academy of Sciences, Appropriate Use of Test Results Advisory Council, the U.S. Department of Education, the National Center for Educational Statistics Advisory Panel, the U.S. Congress Technical Advisory Board on Testing in Americas' Schools; the National Center for Education Study on the Inner Cities; and the Technical Review

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Committee of the Michigan Assessment Program. She also worked for 30 years in the Detroit Public Schools and served as its Assistant Superintendent for Research and School Reform.

Alexis Moore

Alexis Moore was the former Executive Director of Communications and Public Information for the School District of Philadelphia. In this position, she tapped her experience as a journalist for twenty years and as a former Philadelphia public school teacher for seven years. In her twenty-year career with the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, she covered Congress and public and alternative education in Philadelphia. She was also a member of the newspapers' editorial board for seven years. She has taught at the Institute for Journalism Education Summer Program for minority journalists at the University of California Berkeley and at the University of North Carolina, Memphis State and Penn State Universities. She is the co-author of "Tell Them We Are Rising," the inspiring story of how Ruth Hayre gave 116 children a chance for a college education. Moore earned a Bachelor's degree at Pennsylvania State University and a Master's degree in Education at Temple University. She is an *ex-officio* member of the Board of Community Advocates Association for Children and Youth (CAACY), a North Philadelphia agency for teen families. She is also a member of The Links, Inc., an international African American women's service club, and a member of the advisory council of the African American Museum in Philadelphia.

Thandiwe Peebles

Thandiwe Peebles is the Superintendent of the CEO's district of the Cleveland Public Schools. The CEO's district is composed of Cleveland's lowest performing schools. Before this assignment, Ms. Peebles was the Executive Director for Academic Affairs in the Cleveland school district. Her experience includes principal positions at I.S. 193 and P.S. 40, both in the Bronx (NYC). She also supervised language arts curriculum, Title I reading labs, librarians for grades 3-8, and served as a district assessment liaison and teacher in New York City. Ms. Peebles has also worked in the private sector (McGraw-Hill) as a consultant. She has served as an adjunct professor at the College of New Rochelle and at Long Island University, and currently serves on the Ohio Governor's Commission on Teaching Success. Ms. Peebles has a B.S. from St. John's University, and a Masters in Education from Hunter College.

Barbara Pellin

Barbara Pellin is the Assistant Superintendent for Student, Family and Community Services in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg public school system. In this role, she is responsible for early childhood education, student services, community services, family services, dropout prevention, after-school enrichment, and school health. She has extensive experience in community-based analysis and was responsible for designing the school district's award-winning pre-school literacy program, "Bright Beginnings," for the district's four-year olds. The program serves some 3,200 pre-school students. Before joining the Charlotte school system, Ms. Pellin served as the Program Chief for the Parent, Adolescent, and Child Community Health Division of the Mecklenburg County Health Department. She holds a Masters Degree in Public Health and a B.S. in Nursing.

Marsha Sonnenberg

Marsha Sonnenberg is the Director of Reading & Language Acquisition for the Fort Worth Public Schools. Ms. Sonnenberg is a nationally-recognized expert on reading and has advised numerous school systems on strategies for raising student achievement. She has worked with some of the nation's leading reading researchers on effective reading strategies and has served on the Governor's Reading Task Force under George W. Bush. She has also served on the Governor's Business Council and helped design the Texas reading initiative. Ms. Sonnenberg teaches language acquisition classes at the University of Texas and worked with the Texas Education Agency on the development and implementation of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills "TEKS" system for PK-3 reading and language.

Deirdra Stewart

Deirdra Stewart is the Internal Communications Supervisor for Public Information in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS), the nation's 25th largest system with more than 109,000 students and 13,000 employees. Ms. Stewart's marketing and communications expertise includes both public education and the private sector. In 2002, she was a key player in the communications efforts for the 2002-2003 CMS Family Choice Plan, one of the most successful school choice plans in the nation. CMS marketing and communications efforts rallied more than 105,000 parents (96 percent) to participate in this monumental process. Ms. Stewart led the internal efforts and the external Speakers Bureau campaign, which reached more than 7,000 people, including leading corporations such as Wachovia/First Union, Duke Energy and IBM. She has received several awards and honors for marketing, communications and writing. She is a graduate of Winthrop University in Rock Hill, South Carolina.

Nancy Timmons

Nancy Timmons is Associate Superintendent for Curriculum with the Fort Worth Independent School District. During her more than 30 years in public education, she has served as middle and high school teacher and supervisor of English Language Arts and social studies; director of curriculum for two school districts; assistant superintendent for administrative services; executive assistant superintendent for curriculum and staff development; and associate superintendent for instruction. She has also written and contributed to several textbooks on English Language Arts and is listed in *Who's Who in American Education*. Dr. Timmons is a certified auditor by Curriculum Management Audit Centers, Inc. She holds a B.S. from Prairie View A&M and an M.S. and Ed.D. from Baylor University.

Denise Walston

Denise Walston is the Senior Coordinator for Mathematics in the Norfolk Public Schools. She has held this post since 1994. She has overseen the district's dramatic improvement in math achievement scores since assuming this post. Ms. Walston is an active member of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics, and has served as president of the Tidewater Council of Teachers of Mathematics. She also serves on a number of statewide assessment committees responsible for the development and oversight of Virginia's math standards and testing system. She has her undergraduate degree in mathematics

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from the University of North Carolina and masters degree in mathematics education from Old Dominion University. Ms. Walston has also taken extensive graduate training from Princeton and George Washington universities. She began her career as a high school math teacher in the Norfolk Public Schools.

APPENDIX D: ABOUT THE ORGANIZATIONS

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Council of the Great City Schools

The Council of the Great City Schools is a coalition of 60 of the nation's largest urban public school systems. Its Board of Directors is composed of the Superintendent of Schools and one School Board member from each member city. An Executive Committee of 24 individuals, equally divided in number between Superintendents and School Board members, provides regular oversight of the 501(c)(3) organization. The mission of the Council is to advocate for urban public education and assist its members in the improvement of leadership and instruction. The Council provides services to its members in the areas of legislation, research, communications, curriculum and instruction, and management. The group convenes two major conferences each year; conducts studies on urban school conditions and trends; and operates ongoing networks of senior school district managers with responsibilities in such areas as federal programs, operations, finance, personnel, communications, research, technology, and others. The Council was founded in 1956 and incorporated in 1961, and has its headquarters in Washington, D.C.

The Broad Foundation

The Broad Foundation is a national entrepreneurial grant-making organization established in 1999 by Eli and Edythe Broad. The Foundation was started with an initial investment of \$100 million that has since been increased by the Broad family to over \$400 million.

The Broad Foundation's mission is to dramatically improve K-12 urban public education through better governance, management and labor relations. In addition to investing in a national portfolio of grants, The Broad Foundation's three flagship initiatives include: The \$1 million Broad Prize for Urban Education, awarded each year to urban school districts making the greatest overall improvement in student achievement while reducing achievement gaps across ethnic and income groups; The Broad Center for Superintendents, a national effort focused on identifying, training and supporting outstanding leaders from education, business, government, nonprofit and the military to become successful urban school superintendents; and The Broad Institute for School Boards, an annual training program for newly elected and appointed school board members designed to increase student achievement through improved governance. For more information, visit www.broadfoundation.org.