

**SUSTAINING PARTNERSHIPS:
EMERGING LESSONS FROM THE CARNEGIE CORPORATION'S
SCHOOLS FOR A NEW SOCIETY INITIATIVE**

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**SCHOOLS FOR A NEW SOCIETY
PARTNERSHIP SITES**

Boston, MA

Boston Public Schools
Boston Plan for Excellence

Sacramento, CA

Sacramento City Unified School District
Linking Education and Economic Development
(LEED)

Hamilton County, TN

Hamilton County Department of Education
Public Education Foundation

San Diego, CA

San Diego City Schools
CREATE/New American Schools

Houston, TX

Houston Independent School District
Houston A+ Challenge

Worcester, MA

Worcester Public Schools
The Jacob Hiatt Center, Clark University

Providence, RI

Providence Public Schools
Rhode Island Children's Crusade for Higher
Education

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Constancia Warren, Director of Urban High School Initiatives, developed the idea that led to this report. Connie asked us to take a thorough and hard look at the Schools for a New Society partnerships and to provide an analysis of their characteristics, their relationships, their progress in fostering sustainable reform, and to make recommendations that arose out of our findings. She was clear that our charge was to foster knowledge about complex interactions among diverse organizations and passionate and skilled people in seven very different places. Connie did not want, and in fact spurned, anything that resembled a public relations exercise about philanthropic investment in school change; she demanded a forthright analysis that would be useful as the Carnegie Corporation considered the next steps in its reform efforts. Her candor and enthusiasm are only two elements of the ongoing support she gave. We are grateful for her openness, insight and encouragement along with the prodding she provided. We hope that this work meets her expectations.

This report describes the deep commitment and high capacity of those who provide advice and technical support to the Carnegie Corporation and the SNS partners. We benefited greatly from the wisdom and understanding of Norman Fruchter, Warren Simmons, Rochelle Solomon, Jean Thomases and their colleagues. Catherine Pino, both when she was at the foundation and after she left, offered invaluable observations about the partnerships and important advice about the direction of our work.

This analysis is a product of the honest input of the partners themselves. District leaders, their staffs, core partner heads and their colleagues, along with other stakeholders, gave freely of their time. They recounted their accomplishments, spoke frankly of their disappointments and frustrations, and told us about what was working, what might have been and what never was. Above all, they shared their hopes for what could be and their ongoing dedication to the always difficult and often messy work of making school systems better for students and communities. We thank them for their patience and honesty and hope that this study will be useful to them.

Finally, an analysis like this one explores and interprets realities that are often subjective and not universally shared. This is fertile ground for error. We recognize that any in this report are ours alone.

Robert A. Kronley

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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Defining Relationships: Elements of Change

1. Successful partnerships are a product of positive relationships that develop over time, are infused by trust and respond to and foster opportunity for collaboration.
2. Trust between partners is critical to an effective relationship, but it is tenuous and can easily dissipate in the wake of supervening events or as the result of erroneous assumptions.
3. Partnerships are shaped and developed by districts' evolving perceptions of the need for and value of them.
4. Core partner contributions to reform vary by expectations, capacities, activities, context, their role in the broader community and their connection(s) to discrete sectors of the community.
5. Some partnerships have three or more participants – the district, the Core Partner and an additional partner(s), which may fill a variety of roles. Clarity in roles and responsibilities as well as agreement about the allocation of resources shapes the relationship and contributions of these partners.

Supporting Capacity Building: From Partners to Partnerships

6. Technical support has been pivotal in the Initiative's progress and has evolved significantly.
7. The Carnegie Corporation has assumed an active role in the Initiative, one which seeks to build partner and partnership capacity and requires expanded capacity from the funder.

Fostering Civic Demand: Community Engagement and Public Will

8. Engaging the community and building public will to sustain reform, while critical to the Initiative's overall approach, has been limited by the partners' lack of capacity and/or will to undertake it.
9. Community engagement and public will were not, in some respects, clearly defined or understood by districts and their partners.
10. "The community" that each partnership sought to engage varied with perceptions and experience of the partners.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Revise the initiative's theory of change to redefine the role of the core partner, to reinforce the commitment to public engagement/public will, and to re-emphasize the central role of learning for the partners in the initiative.
2. Develop site-based theories of change that are sensitive to the unique circumstances of each district, recognize the volatility that is embedded in long-term district reform efforts, define the role of the core partner, and highlight the importance of expanded community involvement in the initiative.
3. Bolster initiative learning by: aligning technical support with the redefined roles of partners; differentiating among the various knowledge capture strategies and between the knowledge capture strategies and technical support; ensuring that documentation and assessment are linked to site theories of change; and drawing on lessons from earlier foundation-supported district reform efforts in revising theories of change and developing strategies.
4. Ensure that the initiative has sufficient time and resources to accomplish its goals.

INTRODUCTION

In its Schools for a New Society (SNS) Initiative, the Carnegie Corporation seeks to transform high schools in seven urban school districts. Widely considered to be the component of public education most in need of reform, high schools are also regarded as the most resistant to it. Few dispute that large, factory-like schools offering curricula that is dull and disconnected to the real world and presented by teachers who work with little professional support and peer collaboration are failing to meet students' needs.

There have been promising successes in turning individual high schools into places offering personalized academic opportunities. These are suffused with relevant courses that emphasize active learning. These schools are staffed by teachers with deep content and pedagogical knowledge. They are both superior and hard to find. No clear path has yet emerged to transform all high schools across a district into quality schools. Excellence in high schools remains the exception, and mediocrity or worse the norm. This is the challenge the Corporation confronts in the SNS Initiative.

Drawing on extensive research, observations, its own experiences and those of others, Carnegie has developed a theory of change for SNS, which is guided by its belief that districts cannot, on their own, transform their high schools so that every student learns and succeeds. The magnitude and scope of fulfilling this goal surpasses districts' abilities, no matter how skilled and dedicated educators may be. They must have substantive support from the community, which is required to build capacity to design and implement reform. Furthermore, the community must maintain its expectation of academic excellence and demand that the district stay the course over time, despite changes in leadership, financial constraints and other set-backs. This civic demand is essential to sustaining reform past the life of the Corporation's grant.

With this belief in the role of communities shaping its theory of change, Carnegie determined that every district participating in SNS must have a core partner in reform, an organization that would provide strategic assistance and advice as well as nurture the development of new knowledge and skills within the district. In addition, the partner would facilitate efforts to engage the public in high school reform.

Partners and Partnerships

The Corporation is not alone in the belief that districts must have substantive and effective assistance if they are to succeed in making and sustaining positive changes. Many other stakeholders recognized districts' need for support and began devising ways of providing it. In a number of communities, local advocates, on their own initiative, created organizations that provided assistance to districts in a variety of areas. In some communities, foundations, local or national, established organizations intended to foster district reform. National organizations, which provided expert assistance to multiple districts, were begun through various public and private initiatives. Still other reform support organizations were part of or spun off from research centers at

universities. Their origins are diverse, but these organizations share a common purpose – promoting, fostering and sustaining reform.

In many communities, these organizations fill an increasingly large role in reform initiatives, in part because they are often the recipients of philanthropic funds for district reform. Despite their growing role, there are many questions about them. What are their areas of expertise? What types of activities do they undertake? What are their beliefs about and approaches to reform? How do they operate? What have they accomplished? With whom do they work? To whom are they accountable?

Researchers are beginning to ask these questions and are finding that there is rarely one clear answer to any of them. These organizations vary tremendously in structure, expertise, funding, and activities. Some, for example, work with only one district while others work with multiple districts. Some advocate particular approaches to reform while others believe reform must be crafted to meet specific needs and contexts of individual districts. Some develop particular areas of knowledge or skills sets while others seek to offer assistance to districts across a variety of areas. (Kronley & Handley, 2003; Honig, 2004; Marsh, Kerr, Ikemoto, Darilek, Suttorp, Zimmer & Barney, 2005)

The multiplicity of answers has, in part, given rise to different names for and definitions of these organizations. Many refer to them as intermediaries, which, according to one definition, are “organizations that occupy the space in between at least two other parties. Intermediary organizations primarily function to mediate or to manage change in both of those parties.” (Honig, 2004, p. 67) This definition highlights the position of the organization in reform efforts – it mediates between others such as teachers and central office personnel. Another definition that may be applied to these organizations is reform support organization (RSO); RSOs “include a range of outside organizations – public, quasi-public, private for-profit, and private nonprofit – that seek to engage or are engaged by school districts in efforts at systemic reform.” (Kronley & Handley, 2003, p. 4) This definition emphasizes the scope of reform – systemic. RSOs possess and bring to bear the capacities needed to work on fostering change across a school system instead of one element of it. RSOs shape reform as well as add to it.

As researchers continue to cast light on the “what” and “how” of these organizations, they are also beginning to explore the partnerships between the organizations and school districts as well as the results of them. A recent study found that partnerships between an external organization and a school district made a positive difference in facilitating reform when:

- district leaders championed reform with the external organization
- district and external organization staff worked together to create reform strategies specific to local needs
- external organization staff was viewed as credible and possessing knowledge and skills needed by the district

- the external organization offered accessible tools and information to support the implementation of reform strategies (March, Kerr, Ikemoto, Darilek, Suttorp, Zimmer & Barney, 2005)

These findings, however, surface early learnings about external organizations and school districts. Much more remains to be explored about how the various partnerships function and what is accomplished through them. Tied to this is an additional need to probe the relationship between districts and external organizations. How do two organizations – that differ in purpose, values, culture, traditions, funding, operations, position in the community and much more – work together in tremendously difficult, often contentious endeavor of district reform? What is needed for them to develop a positive and productive working relationship, and what are the obstacles that can prevent such a relationship from forming or can cast one into disarray? What is the role of the funder in creating, supporting and assessing these partnerships? These are some of the questions that Carnegie has raised and seeks to answer in part through this report.

Understanding SNS Partnerships

This report explores the relationship between and presents a snapshot of the SNS districts and their core partners¹. It is not an evaluation but rather an analysis of how distinct organizations undertake high school reform together. It attempts to capture, among other things, the elements of effective partnerships and what shapes them, the assistance they need to succeed as partners and in reform, and how partnerships might be leveraged to build greater community support for reform. This report also seeks to recognize the efforts of districts and partners across SNS to improve the academic experiences and life chances of urban students. While progress in reform has been uneven across the SNS communities, every site has taken steps forward in re-creating its high schools, and every partner has made significant contributions to reform. (See Appendix A for a brief overview of each SNS site.) These contributions, made in a very short period of time, include:

- A larger vision of reform and its potential impacts
- An understanding that the goal of structural change is sustained improvement in instruction and learning
- Structural capacities including, among others, organization, communications, use of time and technology
- Instructional capacities including, among others, literacy, curriculum development, leadership and professional development
- Promoting the effective use of data
- Providing an institutional memory and stability
- Fostering inclusion and promoting equity
- Delivering messages between and among stakeholders

¹Core partner is the Carnegie Corporation term for local reform support organizations that engage the district in the long-term effort to transform high schools. To promote consistency, the current study uses the terms “core partner” or “external organization” in its description and analysis of the relationships, activities and contributions of these reform support organizations.

- Advocating for policy changes
- Working to reduce resistance from principals, teachers, central office staff, parents, elements of the community and unions
- Promoting youth development and giving voice to youth
- Advising the district on alternative courses of action and their possible consequences
- Fostering a culture of reform
- Demanding accountability

The report begins with an overview of the SNS Initiative, which is followed by a series of findings about the partners as well as aspects of the district-partner relationships. It also includes, as the authors were asked to do, recommendations to improve the relationship between districts and their partners and facilitate the progress of reform. A brief, final section poses some further questions for exploration.

Running through the findings and the recommendations are several themes that inform each:

- *Learning at the core.* A commitment to learning by all involved – including district and school staff and faculty, core partner staff, technical support providers and the Corporation itself – is essential if high school reform is to succeed and be sustained. Much is unknown about systemic reform and specifically about transforming all high schools across an urban district. With documentation, shared information and deliberate reflection, the Corporation, its grantees and those who provide technical support to them pursue learning from their efforts as a means to strengthen them.
- *The political context for reform.* Reform is political. In the most literal way, it can become an issue civic leaders rally around, disparage or regard ambivalently. In the most practical sense, it requires continuous negotiating between and among institutional needs and traditions, personal preferences and agendas and visions of change.
- *Accountability is key.* Accountability infuses effective partnerships – between partners as well as between partners and the funder – for it drives demand and informs strategy.
- *Time is critical.* Reform of the nature contemplated by SNS takes time, longer than the five years allocated by SNS. Districts and their partners need adequate time to not only design and implement reform but to ensure that it is embedded in the culture, values and practices of the district and schools.
- *Building partner capacity is an ongoing challenge.* The capacity to undertake and sustain reform of both districts and their partners is a central factor in reform's progress, and it must be systematically and continuously built.
- *Effective partnerships are greater than the sum of partner contributions.* Districts and external organizations are different entities that must effectively blend strengths to create and sustain a distinct organic effort – a *partnership* – that deploys new and stronger capacities that transcend those of the individual partners.
- *Technical support is central to building partnership capacity.* The technical support provided to the partnerships through SNS has been essential in building their capacity to successfully pursue reform, and it must evolve and expand to meet shifting needs.

- *Civic demand.* Building public will through public engagement requires a high level of attention from all stakeholders in the initiative.

Methodology

Preparation of this report began with a review and analysis of materials, including formative SNS documents, proposals, interim reports from the sites and from the Corporation, partnership documents, media coverage, and materials and analyses pertaining to external organizations and education reform, civic capacity and public will.

Subsequently, a series of interviews with key stakeholders, including Carnegie Corporation staff, program advisers, district leaders, key central office staff, business and civic leaders, core partner leaders and staff, representatives of other partners and others with knowledge about and insight into SNS and systemic reform were conducted by the authors. The interviews were carried out in accordance with a protocol developed by the authors and informed by Corporation staff.

The authors also visited each SNS site once during which they interviewed key district and core partner staff, conducted focus groups, observed meetings and other work session and more. Site visits, including selection of interviewees, were arranged by core partners with input from Carnegie. Information gathered during the site visits were supplemented by follow-up conversations with some interviewees. (See Appendix B for a list of interviewees and focus group participants.)

The authors also met with Carnegie Corporation staff and the team of technical support providers to discuss early findings and solicit input.

It is important to note that the context of each site was and remains fluid – activities, staff, relationships and more are continuously shifting. A single visit to the sites cannot fully capture these changes, even as people recount them. Further explorations of the SNS partnerships should include additional, periodic visits to the sites.

SCHOOLS FOR A NEW SOCIETY: AN OVERVIEW

Background

In early 2000, the Carnegie Corporation launched a multi-year initiative to transform urban high schools. Like many others, the Corporation was keenly aware that many public schools across the nation were not adapting to a rapidly globalizing, increasingly knowledge-driven economy and their failure to do so was leaving most students adrift, ill-prepared to succeed in higher education or the workplace. These problems stretched across K-12 and, while few students were untouched, those who were of color or low-income were most likely to be left with minimal literacy and math skills and be least able to reach economic stability.

Some schools and school districts had recognized this and were exploring different strategies to improve teaching and learning. Their efforts, however, tended to focus on elementary and middle levels. In many cases, these efforts were promoted and in large part supported by philanthropic organizations. Some appeared to be bearing fruit, and it seemed evident that some districts were trying to alter how they interacted with and supported elementary and middle schools. Step by step, change was coming to early grades

The status of urban high schools was far less heartening. Some high schools served students well. While most of these were populated by white, more affluent students, there were examples of high schools where low-income and minority students were flourishing, schools that were helping these students succeed academically and developmentally. Defying stereotypes, these schools and their students were thriving.

They were also rare. High schools where low-income and minority students were mastering advanced skills and deep content knowledge were isolated exceptions, affirming Carnegie's perception that few urban students left high school prepared for postsecondary education or the workplace. These young people struggled to comprehend simple written text and to correctly solve basic math questions. Their teachers, who might see 150 or more students each day, rarely got to know students well. Many of these teachers, moreover, were inexperienced or ineffective. They often lacked in-depth content knowledge or the pedagogical information and skills to craft curricula that was interesting and had meaning in students' lives and, in consequence, rendered the substance of school little more than clock-watching for far too many students.

Those students who could no longer contain their frustration or manage their boredom simply left -- in some districts half or more of them. School, for them, held little relevance or reward. District leaders and other educators, while cognizant of the need to devise structures, policies and programs to better support learners, had for the most part not turned their attention to how districts need to change themselves to foster high quality teaching and student success in high schools. The state of urban high schools

was bleak and urgently required systemic attention. Carnegie determined to provide some of that critical focus by creating the Schools for a New Society initiative (SNS).

Assumptions

The Corporation began constructing the initiative based on four underlying assumptions:

1. *Student success requires deep change in urban high schools.* High schools must be re-created if they are to become places that value, engage and foster learning for every student. Marginal changes are not sufficient to make high schools work for all students.
2. *High schools must become communities of teaching, learning, purpose and contribution.* There is not one “correct” configuration for high schools but rather multiple means to promote student success. Effective high schools, however, share certain traits despite their differences; these foster a culture of high expectations, inquiry, effort and persistence by all, students and adults alike.
3. *Reinventing urban high schools requires district-level leadership and change.* While an individual school can pursue reform on its own, its efforts can be impeded and changes will not be sustained if the central office is not supportive and involved.
4. *Raising community expectations and increasing community contributions and accountability are essential.* The community has a critical role – which is often not understood -- in advocating for, supporting and sustaining reform.

As it began constructing SNS, Carnegie envisioned school districts that were flexible, knowledgeable organizations dedicated to fostering excellence in teaching and success in learning in every school and for each student. It saw high schools that had a clear and shared vision of teaching and learning, high expectations of students and faculty, effective school leaders, caring and respectful relationships between students and faculty, and coherent, engaging, and rigorous curricula aligned with authentic and fair assessments. It also emphasized the importance of personalization; the comprehensive high school, which was remote from the needs and interests of its students, had long ago become obsolete and cried out for reconfiguration. Part of this reconfiguration would be geared to engaging students but part of it embraced the community as partners in reform.

Carnegie’s perception of community involvement transcended traditional notions of boosterism and fundraising. The Foundation’s vision of high schools set a far greater expectation of the schools – that they teach *every* student effectively – than they had faced at any time before and for which they were not designed. Realizing this vision and meeting this expectation, the Foundation believed, would require districts to use and build their internal resources in new and strategic ways. It would also require them to have access to and use external resources and to draw on their communities for support and sustenance.

Districts, Carnegie held, needed assistance in reform. They needed knowledgeable partners capable of “pushing” them forward with information, best practices and

technical assistance and of “pulling” them by raising awareness of the need for and urgency of reform and advocating for it. The Foundation determined to make partnerships between districts and respected local organizations a defining aspect of the SNS initiative. Partnerships were to be at the core of the reform enterprise, and the district’s willingness to engage in a long-term relationship with a core partner was a required condition for participation in SNS. This approach was reinforced by Carnegie’s determination that the partner, not the district, would receive SNS grants.

Planning for Partnerships

With this vision and the underlying assumptions guiding it, the Foundation began the first phase of SNS. It invited 21 urban districts that had earned positive recognition for previous efforts at educational change to apply for a 15-month planning grant. During this time, districts, working with core community partners they identified, would assess their high schools as well as their own structures, policies, and operations, and identify strengths and challenges. With a team that included teachers, principals, students, community members and others, each district would develop a comprehensive plan to transform high schools into dynamic centers of learning that valued all students and offered each a personalized academic experience.

In 2000, ten districts and their community partners were awarded planning grants of up to \$250,000 to support a variety of activities including data collection and analysis, focus groups and community outreach, meetings, and assistance from consultants or other experts. In addition, Carnegie retained the Academy for Educational Development (AED) to provide technical assistance to grantees throughout the planning process. Beyond this, all grantees also participated in network meetings where they explored various issues and learned from one another’s experiences. The Foundation understood that these districts and their partners were forging a new and uncertain pathway to a still-emerging vision of what high schools and districts might become and that they would need support and expert guidance in their journeys.

For some of the districts, forming a partnership to support high school reform was easy – they already had good relationships with external organizations, prominent among them were Hamilton County and Boston. They had previously collaborated with these organizations in comprehensive reform initiatives that sought deep change at both the school and district levels. Leaders in these districts knew from experience that external organizations could add significant value to their work. Other districts, such as Worcester, had not pursued comprehensive reform with an outside partner, but had established valued relationships with external organizations. They had pursued collaboration on substantive aspects of school and district improvement. Districts in both categories had already established positive working relationships with partners. They were comfortable collaborating with external organizations, and there was mutual respect between the partners; these were traits that the Foundation was seeking. Carnegie was now offering these districts a rare and compelling opportunity to build on histories of effective engagement to take schools to another level.

Other districts, however, encountered challenges in establishing partnerships. They did not have established reform-oriented relationships with external organizations and were skeptical of entering one. The districts might at times work with external organizations on various projects or on selected components of reform, but these endeavors did not entail shared decision-making or mutual accountability. These districts, like most others, were accustomed to charting their own course and determining their own activities. They had many questions about the purpose and potential value of external partners. Would they be cumbersome? Would they unintentionally impede reform efforts? Would they consume scarce resources? Would they dilute control? What value could they really add? For districts accustomed to working autonomously, these were questions that did not have clear answers.

Carnegie, however, believed that the challenge that lay ahead – dramatically improving outcomes and opportunities for all young people, particularly those who had long been disadvantaged – surpassed the capacities of any one institution. It was a community challenge that required a community response. The Foundation held firm – participation in SNS meant participating in a partnership and the invited districts, with varying degrees of enthusiasm, forged them.

Hopes and Expectations

Whether the districts' relationships with their core partners were pre-existing or newly established, the Foundation believed that the partners should possess certain attributes that would sustain their leverage in the relationship and facilitate shared decision-making.

1. Vision – of transformed high schools, of high student performance, of educational equity, of community involvement in and influence on education reform.
2. Legitimacy and credibility – in the community and in school reform.
3. Leadership – within the initiative, of other partners and in the community.
4. Authority to command respect and attention in and outside the district.
5. Demonstrated capacity – to conceive and implement a complex, multi-year initiative with several partners and to serve as fiscal agent for it.
6. Technical expertise – in elements of the instructional, structural and community engagement aspects of the initiative.
7. Political skills – in building trust, in managing resistance, in disseminating information and in promoting the initiative.
8. Strategic sensibilities – in creating and seizing opportunities, in managing relationships, in outreach.
9. Persistence in the reform and sustained presence in the community.
10. Flexibility – in dealing with large systems often resistant to change.
11. Sensitivity to and interest in applying community engagement strategies.

The planning period was productive for the districts and their partners. They had ready access to information and experts through the assistance provided by AED and by the networking opportunities Carnegie arranged. More than that, though, the districts and

partners began an exploration of their high schools and high school students. They began gathering and analyzing extensive qualitative and quantitative data, which helped pinpoint specific problems as well as deflated erroneous assumptions and stereotypes. Learnings about reform and the reform process also emerged. Some of these early lessons were to resonate over several years. In Sacramento, for example, the team leading the planning process learned, among other things, that structural changes can create a context more conducive to high-quality teaching but will not, themselves, improve teaching. Focused efforts to improve teaching are needed. In Houston, team leaders found that relationships, not only reform, needed attention and deliberate cultivation for a partnership to begin with a reasonable chance of success.

In 2001, based on a review of their proposals, seven of the ten partnership sites, were awarded grants to implement their plans to transform their high schools. The partnerships were in Boston, Hamilton County (TN), Houston, Providence, Sacramento, San Diego, and Worcester (MA). (See Appendix A for a more detailed description of each.) Each partnership received \$8 million, except for Houston, which, because of its size, received \$12 million. Each grant was for a five-year period.

Grantees included districts and external organizations that had worked together for years as well as those whose relationships were still new and whose roles in the partnerships were still evolving. Carnegie valued pre-existing relationships between districts and external organizations and also sought to support external organizations that had demonstrated capacity to serve as the fiscal agent for the grant. These were far from the only factors in the Corporation's decisions. Carnegie sought to invest in external organizations that demonstrated capacities in areas critical to the success of the reform endeavor. These capacities varied with the context of the district and the goals of the reform.

Beyond the long, varied and ultimately overly optimistic combination of attributes in the core partners, the Corporation also looked for evidence of partnership capacity. In each instance, the external organization had been identified by the district. Each district responded to the practical imperative of choosing a partner that would support the immediate objective – collaborating in developing a proposal that would succeed in a highly competitive process. Carnegie understood this need but also looked for evidence that the partnership would grow beyond collaborating on funding. It looked for growth in indices of whether the partners, new to one another or not, had genuine respect for one another and were comfortable together; it also sought evidence that the partners had the joint capacity to establish and nurture a relationship that could share decisions and responsibilities, work out disagreements and progress to develop innovative solutions to unanticipated challenges. Put differently, Carnegie looked for partners' capacity to develop a core *partnership*.

Beyond the relationships between the partners, the Corporation focused on signs that the external organizations were well-regarded and listened to in the community. It wanted partners that had strong and independent connections to various sectors in the community (and these sectors varied with the context of the proposed reform). It was

Carnegie's expectation that community roots would provide the partners with additional presence in their relationships with the district. Moreover, connections to the community would also facilitate a process of public engagement that is a necessary precondition to building public will and public demand for reform.

DEFINING RELATIONSHIPS: ELEMENTS OF CHANGE

Each partnership between a district and its core partner in Carnegie's Schools for a New Society initiative (SNS) is unique. Partnerships are shaped by need, context, habits and assumptions, resources, and expertise. More than any other element, however, partnerships are shaped by relationships between individuals, between institutions, and between individuals and institutions. These relationships are not static and both influence and are influenced by the shared undertaking of transforming high schools.

Findings

- 1. Successful partnerships are a product of positive relationships that develop over time, are infused by trust and respond to and foster opportunity for collaboration.**

An abiding challenge for the Initiative has been to craft focused partnerships between diverse partners. Partners emerge from different places, with different agendas, different needs and different approaches. A successful partnership is distinguished by a shared vision that inspires disparate organizations to take risks that enable the joint venture to cultivate innovation, apportion accountability and nurture sustainability.

Fostering Trust

In SNS, the origins of partnerships varied. In some cases, partners had a history of successful collaboration that enabled them to turn without hesitation to one another when the Initiative was announced. In others, partnerships were a product of mutual need and convenience – context provided an unexpected opportunity for collaboration that both partners seized. In still others, partnerships were accepted by reluctant districts as the price of admission to the initiative.

Whatever their origins, successful partnerships require time for partners to learn about and gain trust in one another. As trust grows, partners become better able to identify and respond to opportunities for shared undertakings, which, in turn, reinforces the confidence that each partner has in the other and in the work. Several of the sites participating in Carnegie's Schools for a New Society initiative have followed this path and forged successful partnerships that are fostering positive changes for students.

When Carnegie invited the Hamilton County Department of Education (HCDE) in Chattanooga and its core partner, the Public Education Foundation (PEF), to apply for an SNS planning grant, the two organizations had already built a close working relationship that included partnering for reform. In the late 1990s, HCDE superintendent Jesse Register asked Dan Challener, PEF's president, for PEF's assistance in developing rigorous curriculum standards, the first significant step toward system-wide collaborations between the two institutions. When the work on curriculum standards began, both leaders were relatively new to their positions; Register came to Hamilton

County in 1996 to guide the contentious merger of the Chattanooga Public Schools, which served primarily African-American students in urban schools, and the county schools, which then served primarily white students in suburban and rural schools. Challenger came to PEF in the wake of a president who was a forceful figure in the community and evoked strong responses among those around him as he led change. District personnel regarded the former president with uncertainty, unsure if he was a supporter or a critic but certain that he would not hesitate to tell them what to do and how to do it. Challenger's approach was different; he sought out principals, central office administrators, teachers and others to ask them about their goals, challenges and strengths and to understand how PEF might respond to their needs. This shift in approach was noted by HCDE staff; while still cautious, they grew more open to Challenger and to PEF.

PEF developed and led a multi-phased process that engaged teachers, principals, parents and others across the community to craft the curriculum standards; the process was a success, and HCDE implemented the ambitious standards that resulted from it. Other collaborative work grew from that experience. PEF created Critical Friends Groups, school-based groups of teachers coming together to examine, understand and effectively implement the new curriculum standards. Again at Register's request, PEF established a Leadership Initiative to help principals shift from being managers to instructional leaders and to prepare future principals for this role as well. These efforts were successful and, with each, PEF demonstrated that it could and did add significant value to the district's efforts to strengthen teaching and improve learning. At the same time, the working relationship between Register and Challenger was growing based in part on the success of their organizational collaborations and in part on their respect for each other. They differed at times in the approaches they believed would most effectively meet the needs of students, but they did not lose sight of the larger goal they shared – ensuring that all students in Hamilton County mastered a rigorous curriculum and flourished in school and in life – or of their differing roles in realizing that goal.

In 1999, HCDE and PEF were offered an opportunity to push their relationship and the work they undertook through it to a new level. The Benwood Foundation, a Chattanooga-based philanthropy, provided funding to them to reform nine of the district's urban elementary schools, which were among the worst performing in the state. This was not a programmatic initiative, one comprised of specific elements and with relatively clear boundaries; it was comprehensive. To improve teaching and learning dramatically, the schools would have to be re-created and the central office would need to alter significantly how it supported these schools. PEF would be HCDE's partner, its collaborator in designing, implementing and being accountable for transforming the education students in these schools received. The Benwood Initiative was launched in 2000. When the opportunity to apply for an SNS planning grant arose, then, HCDE and PEF already had a vibrant partnership and were tackling together difficult issues of school and district reform. A successful pre-existing connection and the rapport that grew out of it made SNS a natural next step in their relationship and their work.

Similar circumstances played out in Boston where the Boston Plan for Excellence (BPE), led by Ellen Guiney, and the Boston Public Schools (BPS), under Superintendent Thomas Payzant, have worked closely together since 1996 to reform teaching and learning throughout the district. Guiney and Payzant both moved into their leadership positions in 1995. Guiney came to BPE to guide its transition from programmatic activities, such as grants to teachers, to designing and implementing whole school reform strategies that would result in sustainable improved outcomes for students across the district. Payzant arrived at BPS similarly committed to developing and implementing a plan that would lead to significant improvements in teaching and learning throughout the system. Neither was interested in maintaining the status quo.

Not only were they individually committed to reform, Payzant and Guiney knew each other from earlier work with the Pew Forum on Education Reform, a diverse group of educators and others who came together regularly over several years to discuss critical issues connected to school reform. When they began their respective jobs, the seeds of a good working relationship had already been planted and were nurtured by a shared vision of and commitment to reform.

The BPE-BPS partnership began when Guiney and Payzant designed a model of whole school reform, which was aligned with Payzant's comprehensive plan for systemic reform. They agreed that BPE, using funds from its own endowment as well as additional funds it raised, would implement the model across 27 of BPS' schools, elementary through high school. Not long after they undertook this initiative, called 21st Century Schools, BPE and BPS were awarded a \$10 million challenge grant from the Annenberg Foundation to expand their work. BPE raised over \$10 million to further support the initiative, leading Annenberg to award them an additional \$10 million. By 1999, BPE was overseeing the transformation of half of the district's schools, relying on an approach that emphasized significantly improving teachers' knowledge and skills.

As in Hamilton County, collaborating on high school transformation through SNS was, for BPE and BPS, building on solid ground. Both of these partnerships have faced numerous challenges as they have pursued high school reform – they have confronted internal and external resistance to change, they have struggled at times to align central office policies and positions with the needs of high schools, they have labored to create and cultivate a shared understanding of what a small learning community is not only across schools but within their own institutions. Committed to their partnerships and with trust in each other, these districts and their core partners have met these challenges together. The relationships between the districts and their partners in Hamilton County and in Boston, strong when the initiative began, have continued to deepen. They have been central to the significant progress that has been made in both districts in providing every student a personalized education that is rigorous, engaging and prepares them well for the demands of postsecondary education and the workplace.

HCDE and BPS readily embraced the partnership approach to reform mandated by Carnegie because their respective partnerships already existed and were strong. So

valuable had PEF and BPE been to the districts that both likely would have invited their partners to participate in the initiative even if Carnegie had not required it.

Pushing and Pulling

In other districts, however, no such invitation would have been readily forthcoming. To lesser or greater degree, some districts did not want or did not see the value of having partners in reform. They engaged partners because the Corporation required it; if they wanted access to Carnegie's funds – \$8 million for needed reform is hard to turn down – they would have to find and work with partners. Given this reluctance, trust (as opposed to familiarity) was in short supply at the outset of several partnerships. There were questions about whether the districts and partners would ever be able to genuinely trust each other in a complex long-term transformational endeavor. One site, Providence, demonstrates that it is possible to develop increased trust between partners, and it did so in large part because the core partner there pursued a role unique with SNS – it became a “pull” organization.

A core partner can both support (push) districts toward reform and demand that they engage in it (pull). The core partner pushes districts to reform by providing critical information, expertise and hands-on assistance that districts, engaged in the day-to-day demands of operating schools, rarely have access to or the opportunity to develop themselves. This expertise and assistance may fall within an array of issues. Many SNS core partners, including BPE, PEF, the Hiatt Center in Worcester, and Houston A+, have designed, coordinated and/or provided effective professional development. LEED in Sacramento fostered the district's connections to the business community, important as high schools have sought links to real-world professional experiences for students. In their “pushing” role, partners are supporters – they enrich and enhance districts' activities, which rarely triggers serious disagreement or distrust. It is in their “pulling” role that core partners may generate tension and distrust.

A core partner pulls a district to reform by monitoring it and holding it accountable for results – the partner is demanding reform. It may do this externally by releasing data or reports, which identify challenges the district needs to address, to the community in the hope that the community will insist that the district respond. It may organize other groups within the community to scrutinize the district and create an expectation of and demand for improvements. A partner can also lay out an expectation of reform internally by similarly sharing data with district leaders and asking difficult questions about the problems the data reveal. In either instance, the core partner is raising issues the district was not aware of, felt that it was not ready to address or did not believe were problematic. District leaders and staff, who are regularly criticized in the media and other forums and often fall into reflexively defensive postures, may see this as the would-be core partner joining the crowd of critics they may even perceive it as a betrayal of sorts. For these reasons, few core partners have focused on this role, including, initially, the RICC.

RICC, more than any other core partner in the SNS initiative, has positioned itself as an organization that “pulls” a district to change. Its emergence as a “pull” organization reflects its institutional purpose and expertise, its capacity to learn from its work, the evolution of its relationship with its partner, Providence Public Schools (PPS), and its ability to maintain the district’s trust while acting, at times in visible ways and public settings, as a critical friend of the district. Assuming this role has taken time and involved testing different strategies. Maintaining an effective balance between holding the district’s trust and demanding that it change has not been easy for RICC.

The Crusade is unique among core partners. It provides programs directly to students, enhancing the safety net for those who are vulnerable. It endeavors through its own programs to improve or provide the safety net for vulnerable students. It offers a school-based intervention program that, through an array of activities including academic support, mentoring and early exposure to higher education institutions and career opportunities, helps students develop the skills, knowledge and confidence needed to succeed academically. The Crusade also engages and works with parents, providing them with the information and tools that they need to encourage their children to stay in school and move on to postsecondary education.

The Crusade did not enter its partnership with PPS seeking to become a “pull” organization. PPS did not, in turn, contemplate it as either a “pull” or a “push” organization. It did not contemplate the Crusade participating in high school reform at all.

The superintendent who began Providence’s SNS reform, Diana Lam, did not embrace the idea of a partner nor did her successor, Melody Johnson. Both felt that the district could manage reform on its own and, where it might need additional expertise in specific areas, it could retain experts. The two superintendents also felt that PPS did not have the infrastructure to support a partnership and feared it would be a distraction from the urgent work of improving teaching and learning. Carnegie, however, insisted that PPS have a partner and encouraged the district to consider the Crusade, given its deep experience in youth development. Lam, who knew Mary Sylvia Harrison, the president of the Crusade, agreed and asked the Crusade to come on board as the core partner.

The district’s initial and strong resistance unsettled Harrison, but she agreed to serve as PPS’ core partner. She did so knowing she would have to step carefully and find a place for RICC within high school reform in Providence. RICC did not have a relationship with PPS prior to high school reform; its connections to public education were its relationships with the individual schools participating in its intervention program. In almost every way, the partnership with PPS to facilitate high school reform was a move into unknown and largely foreign territory for the Crusade. Neither organization had much trust for the other and neither was certain what the partnership was or where it might lead.

Though it could have attempted to mold itself to the model of an organization that functions primarily as a “push” partner, RICC opted for a different approach. It initially sought to apply the skills it had honed in working with young people to the youth development component of the district’s high school reform plan.

Early in the grant period, the Crusade conceived and led a series of community-based study circles to define youth development for Providence, which subsequently led to the creation of a blueprint for youth development within the district. Despite this early activity, RICC and PPS continued to struggle. The district continued to question the value of a partnership as well as the specific contribution of the Crusade to its effort, ultimately choosing to take over the youth development component. The Crusade grappled with understanding its role and positioning itself within the reform effort and felt shut out of critical decisions and removed from information that could help it assist the district. The partnership was floundering, and so was the reform.

Against this backdrop, RICC shifted gears; it refocused its energies on public engagement and building public will. It began reaching out to and coordinating other organizations and people within the community, providing them with critical and descriptive information about the district – what was going well, what was not going well and why reform was essential. In organizing other community groups and institutions, the Crusade sought to create an external demand for district reform, which would outlive the grant from Carnegie and could therefore help to sustain it. In doing so, RICC grew from trying to act as an organization providing expertise and internal supports to the district to functioning mostly as an organization operating apart from PPS, monitoring its actions instead of participating in them.

This shift was not lost on the district nor did it delight PPS; the superintendent referred to the Crusade as a “goat.” She also said, however, that, in this role, the Crusade “forced (the district) to face brutal facts.” Having the Crusade and its growing cadre of community organizations peering over its shoulder is not always easy for the district but, under a third superintendent, PPS has come to respect its work.

Some of this appreciation also stems from recognizing that the Crusade does more than demand performance from the district. When the district’s director of high schools, who had significant responsibility for designing and implementing transformation strategies, suddenly left his job, work was substantially frozen and progress jeopardized. Aware of this, Harrison stepped out of the “pull” role she had assumed and called then-superintendent Johnson to mobilize efforts to sustain the reform. The Crusade took some responsibility for pushing instructional change and, in so doing, earned trust from the district.

PPS’s appreciation for the Crusade as a demand organization rests in large part on its understanding that RICC is committed to fostering better outcomes for students in Providence, not to disrupting the district – ultimately both organizations want the same result. PPS’s current superintendent and the Crusade’s director do not have the close personal relationship that the superintendents and core partner leaders have in Boston

or Hamilton County, nor do they have a history of collaboration. They, however, believe in and respect one another's intentions and good will. While trust was scarce at the outset of the partnership, PPS and the Crusade have developed a level of trust that has enabled them to define and build a more productive relationship.

The experiences of the partners – district and core partners alike – in Boston, Hamilton County and Providence reveal that trust grows over time through shared, good-faith efforts. Trust between BPE and BPS as well as PEF and HCDE grew in a relatively straightforward fashion. They started small and built up to systemic reform. RICC and PPS have a different story – they collided in the deep end of reform with the Crusade struggling to swim. They are slowly succeeding, however, and, while the Crusade and PPS have a decidedly different partnership than either BPE and BPS or PEF and HCDE, trust is present in all three partnerships.

The success of partnerships between districts and their core partners rests largely on the relationships between the leaders and staff of the district and the core partner who work together day-to-day. Where these relationships are cohesive, collegial, and congenial – based in trust and mutual respect – the institutional relationships and the reform often flourish. Where personal relationships have foundered, the institutional relationships have often gone awry as well.

2. Trust between partners is critical to an effective relationship, but it is tenuous and can easily dissipate in the wake of supervening events or as the result of erroneous assumptions.

Trust fosters a dynamic that promotes risk-taking. In this process, school districts become more permeable to outside influences and less inward-looking and defensive. Partners become more understanding of the constraints on large systems and more flexible and creative in designing approaches to change. Trust consequently fosters greater honesty and deeper accountability. It promotes innovation and the confidence to change. Put directly, trust is essential for the kind of sweeping reform – the fundamental transformation of secondary education – that SNS envisions.

Trust's Limits

Trust is contextual and can also be transitory and fragile. Where it may be genuine, it may also have limits. Where it once flourished, it may falter under misperception, speculation and altered agendas. And, without other capacities, it is not enough to engender and maintain the reform enterprise.

The experiences of the partners in Houston reveals how trust, while genuine, may be limited and unable to foster a change-oriented relationship or nurture systemic reform. The Houston A+ Challenge (HAC) and the Houston Independent School District (HISD) have worked together since 1997, when Houston A+ was formed after receiving a \$20 million grant from the Annenberg Foundation to support school reform in HISD and several other local districts. HAC worked closely with schools in Houston and

surrounding districts to foster reform, providing funding, professional development and technical support. The organization is highly regarded across the Houston area and its contributions have been recognized and valued by HISD. At the outset of the SNS in Houston, the partnership between Houston A+ and the district was promising on paper and, initially, in practice too.

The two organizations worked well together during the planning and proposal writing process. HAC, for example, provided support to the steering committees formed at each of the district's comprehensive high schools, which were charged with examining current needs and issues, engaging the community and developing an action plan for reform. It was an integral member of the district's steering committee, which prepared the system's reform plan. Through its District Leadership Forum, HAC enabled HISD leaders to connect to and learn from other district leaders. The two organizations were even neighbors; the district placed its staff working on SNS in an office next door to those of Houston A+. The partnership operated well in reform's earliest stages. It began to stumble as the partners shifted to implementation.

HISD leaders and senior personnel trusted HAC staff and believed that they shared the district's goals for academic achievement. They were skeptical, however, of Houston A+'s institutional capacity to support reform on the scale contemplated in SNS. What and how could HAC contribute to the re-creation of the district's comprehensive high schools? The schools were large – Bellaire High, for example, has almost 3,300 students and Lee High School has close to 2,200 – and there were 23 of them. As time passed, HISD was increasingly uncertain about where and how HAC could fit into a broad effort to reform all of them.

At the same time, Houston A+ felt that it had an important contribution to make, particularly to professional development and the provision of learning experiences to students, but it was juggling high school reform in HISD with multiple projects across multiple districts in the Houston area. This disconnect between the two organizations was complicated by differences in culture and decision-making style. HISD tended to be more hierarchical and, from the perspective of HAC, somewhat closed and self-protective; Houston A+ did not always get information it requested. On the other side of the partnership divide, Houston A+, much smaller, was far less hierarchical and more inclined to shared decision-making. This, in turn, made it appear to HISD that HAC was more focused on process when the district needed action. For several years, Houston had been a national leader in innovation and improving student test scores. Seeking to maintain this leadership, the district wished to move forward quickly.

On multiple levels, the partners in Houston toiled to align themselves in both work and culture. Despite their mutual regard, they reached little resolution in bridging the gaps between them. Several years into the SNS initiative, HAC considered itself to have a support role that was "eclectic, pragmatic and not defined" and had concluded that if it asked "fewer leading questions (of the district regarding reform), the better."

There is trust between HISD and HAC and a shared vision of and hope for Houston's students. Trust, however, cannot create capacity for systemic reform, nor did it enable the district to see beyond its partner's limitations – perceived or real – to create a meaningful and robust role in reform.

New Leadership, Lost Trust

Partnerships can be disrupted when trust disintegrates in face of an unanticipated event, most often the departure of a key actor. Such a departure, at a minimum, slows the pace of reform as the leader's successor learns his or her role within the organization and reform. In some instances, the unexpected absence of a key leader, particularly the superintendent, extinguishes reform, at least reform as planned and pursued by the now-gone leader. This is part of the story unfolding in Sacramento.

The superintendent who initiated high school reform in Sacramento, Jim Sweeney, unexpectedly resigned in June 2003. His resignation was due, in part, to controversy he generated by advocating for the closure of one of the district's lowest performing high schools, Sacramento High School, and its re-creation as a charter school comprised of five small schools. Sweeney and Deanna Hanson, chief executive officer of LEED, had had a good working relationship and high regard for one another. Magdalena Mejia, who replaced Sweeney as superintendent in December 2003, was more cautious of the partnership and of LEED.

Mejia had questions about LEED that Sweeney had not had. LEED's origins are in the business community, where it grew out of concerns about the region's economic growth and workforce development. It is closely tied to the local Chamber of Commerce, which some view as an institution serving and representing the sector of business that is primarily white and elite. Leading a district that is almost 80 percent nonwhite, Mejia was early on uncertain that LEED was able to fully understand and address the needs of the majority of her students – those who are Hispanic, African-American, Native American or Asian – or of students who are poor. She believed as well that there were multiple ways of reforming high schools including but not limited to small learning communities or small schools. Under Mejia, the partnership between LEED and the district evolved into a relationship that was more ritualistic than a collaboration to bring about agreed-upon fundamental reform.

Leadership changes such as those in Sacramento proved to be the norm in SNS affecting both districts and partners alike. Hanson subsequently left LEED; a permanent replacement for her has not yet been named. Houston is on its third superintendent since HISD applied for an SNS planning grant from Carnegie. The current superintendent, Abelardo Saavedra, was appointed in 2004. That same year, the district's partner, Houston A+, also underwent a change in leadership when Dr. Michele Pola assumed the position of executive director in 2004. Donnie Evans, the current superintendent in Providence, is also the third superintendent in that district since SNS was launched. Alan Bersin left San Diego and has been replaced by Carl Cohn. Even Boston and Hamilton County, whose superintendents have defied the odds

for urban districts by remaining in their positions for almost 10 years, will lose their leaders at the end of the 2005 – 06 school year; both superintendents have chosen to move on. Changes in leadership do not necessarily bring distrust, but they sometimes do nudge the relationship between the district and its core partner back and, at times, stifle reform activities, as new leaders focus on becoming accustomed to and mastering their roles.

Leadership changes are only one source for erosions in trust. At times distrust arises because misunderstandings and erroneous assumptions come to permeate the relationship and undermine it. One area ripe for misperceptions is loyalty. As reform progresses, districts and partners often begin questioning where the other's loyalty lies – with its partner, its constituents, the funder, the partnership or itself. In Worcester, some senior staff in the district's central office, skeptical of the need for reform in all high schools across the district, began to view Carnegie as an intruder. From their perspective, the Hiatt Center at Clark University, its core partner and its collaborator on several ongoing efforts, was tied to the Corporation and set its course based not on what the district believed was the best approach and the best strategies but rather on what Carnegie did. This lack of trust in Carnegie and the Hiatt Center has at times stymied the open and honest conversations so critical for surfacing the hard issues and engaging in frank debates about what needs to change and how. The absence of trust contributes to the reluctance of districts and partners to expand beyond familiar roles and designated areas of expertise.

3. Partnerships are shaped and developed by districts' evolving perceptions of the need for and value of them.

Districts responded differently to Carnegie's requirement that they each have a partner with which they would pursue high school reform. Two promptly embraced their partners, knowing them to be valuable resources in a shared endeavor. A few were open to the idea of a partnership but were uncertain about how partners would enhance and make significant contributions to the districts' own reform efforts. Others resisted partnerships – they did not see the need for one and were concerned, moreover, that the presence of a partner would be poor use of limited resources. Districts' initial perception of their need for and the value of a partner did not dictate the growth of the partnership and the work undertaken through it, but it did greatly influence them.

Two districts – Hamilton County and Boston – readily embraced the partnership approach largely because each was already in one. As described above, these districts had worked closely with their partners for several years and on increasingly complex and comprehensive reform initiatives. With confidence in their partners and their partners' capacity to guide and support reform as well as a clear sense of the role the partners would fill, these districts and their superintendents seized the opportunity offered by Carnegie to collaboratively create a reform plan that shared decision-making authority, responsibilities and accountability for results. (See Finding 1.)

Hesitant Partners

Other districts, including Worcester and Houston, initiated the partnerships in good faith but struggled to define their partners' roles and to work comfortably with them. This was the case even though the districts had worked with their partners previously on critical elements of efforts to improve teaching and learning, which had yielded significant benefits for schools. Shared success with their partners in previous endeavors did not lead to a sense of ease in the districts with Carnegie's expansive notion of partnership or with the broadened roles the partners might have in such a partnership – both were far a field from what was familiar ground. These districts were receptive to partnerships but were not strong advocates for them.

As the districts and partners in both Worcester and Houston began planning and then implementing high school reform, they were also attempting to define the role of the partners. Their pre-SNS collaborations were more narrowly drawn around specific issues and authority had remained clearly lodged with the districts in those efforts. Moving into a partnership designed to lead and support systemic high school reform left the partners – districts and core partners alike – sorting through an array of questions. Should the core partner have a shared and equal role in constructing the high school reform plan? Should the partner have decision-making authority in the initiative and, if so, how extensive should it be? Was the partner to hold the district accountable for making progress or did that fall to the Foundation? Did the partner want such responsibilities? These were just some of the difficult questions that confronted the partnerships in both Worcester and Houston and for which clear answers did not always emerge.

The Hiatt Center was founded in 1991 to work collaboratively with Worcester Public Schools (WPS) to strengthen urban education. It has made important contributions to the district, particularly in the area of teacher quality by significantly revising its teacher education program to meet the needs of urban districts and by creating innovative and effective professional development. Working with the district, the Center, for example, created the Professional Development School collaborative, a network of schools that have integrated professional development, teacher education and school reform. Faculty from Collaborative schools work closely with Center staff on issues of teaching and learning and participate in embedded professional development. Through this and other efforts, the Hiatt Center and its staff are known and respected by many of the district's leaders and faculty, albeit primarily those in the geographic quadrant in which the Center does most of its work.

Prior to SNS, the Center had created a role for itself with which both it and the district were comfortable. It was an important resource in improving instruction both by providing information and offering high-quality means to do so. It tested strategies to increase learning among students, particularly disadvantaged students, and demonstrated that these students could reach high levels of academic achievement. Its role became less sure within SNS and uncertainty emerged about what it could or should do.

Hiatt Center staff made decisions for the SNS initiative about professional development strategies and funds. The Center, though, seemed to have little voice in other important areas, including helping to determine structural changes within the central office that were needed to support and push reform at the school level, and it lacked a clear mechanism for holding schools accountable for making progress. At the same time, Center staff hesitated to exhort central office leaders to address problems or emerging flaws in the overall reform plan. In some high schools, for example, there was considerable resistance to any of the changes contemplated in SNS from the development and institution of small learning communities to an increasing focus on infusing literacy throughout the high school curriculum. In the first few years of the initiative, the schools' action plan facilitators did not have authority to push principals and faculty to move, nor did the Secondary School Restructuring Coordinator, who was charged with day-to-day management of reform for the district. Center staff were aware of this situation but were reluctant to press the superintendent on it, knowing his desire to avoid issuing mandates. It became clear that moving beyond the roles in which they had each become accustomed to operating during previous collaborations was uncomfortable for both the Hiatt Center and the district.

Houston faced similar questions. As described above, Houston A+ was founded in 1997 to support school reform and improve student outcomes in the Houston Independent School District (HISD) as well as five other local school districts. (See Finding 2.) Houston A+ provides direct assistance and funding to selected schools in Houston and the other participating districts to support their reform efforts. In addition, the organization operates a variety of programs to improve teaching and learning across the six districts with which it works and has joined them in a collaborative, which also includes four local universities and a community college, to improve teacher education. Like the Hiatt Center, the activities of Houston A+ generated high regard from the community as well from HISD leaders and staff.

The challenges in Houston were different than those in Worcester, but the partnership there struggled as well. A pre-existing positive relationship and a promising start was not enough to enable the partnerships to become robust. The mismatch in size, capacities, and organizational goals between the two partners did not seem surmountable. Adding to the perception that the mismatch was insurmountable, Houston A+ was unable to create a role on its own in which it could demonstrate its capacity to make a long-term contribution to the structural or instructional aspects of the initiative in HISD.

Tame Partners

If there was confusion and frustration in Worcester and Houston regarding the role and contributions of their partners, there was initially outright resistance to partners in Providence and San Diego. San Diego, in fact, ignored Carnegie's requirement that districts have a core partner and prepared its first proposal for an SNS grant without one. When the Corporation insisted that participation in SNS and its attendant funding

were dependent on identifying a partner and collaborating with it, the district did so, but it sought a partner that wore only the label and did not fill the role. It wanted what the authors of this report have termed as a “tame partner”, one that would not challenge the district’s interpretation of a reform plan or its implementation process.

Tame partners lack significant authority and legitimacy in the context of the transformational enterprise that is the goal of the reform.² Authority involves a constituency in the community or in school reform and the influence that arises from the connection to the constituency. Legitimacy involves a history of achievement in education reform and the respect that arises out of it. Taken together, achievement, influence and respect can result in autonomy that signifies a broad capacity to have independent impact on the reform effort. In some places, districts’ need for control along with embedded skepticism about the value of a partnership led to a search for a tame partner. These districts engaged the partner to help – or to be present in – developing the proposal. Once funds were received, the tame partner was left to take its share of the funds and struggle to define its role.

San Diego’s chose CREATE, the Center for Research on Educational Equity, Assessment and Teaching Excellence at the University of California San Diego (UCSD) with the assumption that it would be a tame partner. CREATE was invited to join the district as its partner in SNS by the then-Chancellor for Instruction, Anthony Alvarado. CREATE’s primary goal is to expand traditionally disadvantaged students’ access to and participation in higher education by providing professional development opportunities to teachers and conducting research on school reform strategies and approaches to expanding access. It also established two high-quality schools for under-represented students to ensure that they are well prepared for higher education. CREATE generates, tests and disseminates ideas on improving teaching and learning; it is not designed to be a driver, in tandem with a district, of systemic reform. This made CREATE a very appealing choice for San Diego’s leaders, who did not want a partner who sought a voice and a role in reforming high schools.

In 2003, after Alvarado left the district, the superintendent, Alan Bersin, brought in a new partner, New American Schools (NAS); he asked CREATE to serve as the district’s local evaluator of reform. The district entered into the partnership with NAS with only slightly more enthusiasm than it had entered into the relationship with CREATE and, as with Carnegie, with a shove from the outside. The district had sought additional funding for high school reform from the Gates Foundation.³ Like Carnegie, Gates made partnering a requirement of the grant and strongly encouraged Bersin to seek a new partner, possibly New American Schools.

² It is important to emphasize that “tameness” is manifested in the context of the reform. These partners may have standing and a record of accomplishment in various milieus, what is absent here is sufficient weight in an ongoing endeavor that seeks significant lasting change in a public system. Tame partners are a product of the system’s wish to control the process. The example of RICC, in Providence, speaks to an external organization’s capacity to move beyond the system’s characterization of it as tame.

³ The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has an extensive program across the nation to transform high schools into small learning communities and to build small schools. The Foundation has invested over \$1.2 billion into this effort thus far, and has also made a significant investment in SNS.

Bersin was more receptive to NAS because he knew and respected Libia Gil, NAS' chief academic officer. Before joining NAS, Gil had served as the superintendent of the neighboring Chula Vista Unified School District. Gil's extensive experience and personal rapport with the superintendent made NAS a good match. Beyond Bersin's personal regard for Gil, there were other characteristics of NAS that made it more amenable to the district.

Unlike the other core partners in SNS, NAS is a national education organization, working in communities throughout the country. It is a nonprofit service provider that assists schools, districts and states in effectively implementing research-based whole school reform models. In addition, as an outside service provider, NAS is sensitive to the direction of the superintendent; the district remains the controlling force in the collaboration. This is true of every partnership, but locally-based partners, even when kept at arms-length by districts, have leverage points by which they can promote reform.

The NAS-San Diego partnership evolved significantly as a personal partnership between two leaders who respected and admired one another. Gil worked mostly as an advisor to Bersin, meeting with him regularly, often every week, helping him to oversee and push the district forward on reform. She focused on two issues that shaped reform significantly – bringing together San Diego's "portfolio" of high schools and merging instructional improvements with organizational change. San Diego was implementing several models of effective high schools – a portfolio of school options – so that the multiplicity of student needs and interests would be fully met. As the different types of schools were established, though, it became apparent that there were few connections among them. They may have shared a goal – improved outcomes for all students – but there was little common language or communication among them. Gil assisted Bersin in creating common ground across all of them so that there was coherence across and between the schools. Gil also helped Bersin connect instructional improvements with structural reforms. When Bersin and Alvarado began reform, they focused on improving instruction and paid less attention to the types of infrastructure that are needed to sustain effective instruction. Gil assisted Bersin in merging the two.

Other NAS staff members worked at times with district staff on elements of reform but, for the most part, the partnership consisted of Gil acting as an advisor to Bersin, providing information and recommendations as well as identifying emerging issues that needed to be addressed. At the outset of their partnership, Gil was to include community engagement in her activities. As discussed below, San Diego was not fertile ground for community engagement.

Despite the superintendent's initial resistance to working with a partner and the circumscribed nature of the partnership that did evolve with NAS, San Diego benefited from its relationship with NAS. The evolution of the partnership between Providence Public Schools (PPS) and its partner, the Rhode Island Children's Crusade for Higher Education (RICC), described above, followed a similarly circuitous path. In Providence,

an initially unwelcome partner, the RICC, emerged as a positive and unexpected contributor to reform. (See Finding 1.)

Accountable Partnerships

RICC's evolution is closely connected to partner views about accountability. Districts tend to see themselves as ultimately accountable for the success or failure of reform. Superintendents have learned that their jobs often depend upon meeting a variety of goals, some developed by them and others imposed from outside the system. One reason they may not value a partnership is that they do not regard external organizations as bearing the consequences of perceived failure.

Mary Harrison, RICC's leader, had strong views about accountability. She believed that the reputation of the organization and her own standing would suffer greatly if the initiative did not succeed. Given this belief, she refused to allow RICC to function as a tame partner and sought to define and assume a significant role in the reform. This required struggling with efforts to collaborate in both structural and instructional initiatives before falling back on and extending one of the organization's distinguishing capacities – its ability to mobilize people and pull the district to change. (See Finding 1 for a detailed description of the evolution of the partnership between the Crusade and PPS.)

What RICC's evolution demonstrates is that accountability is not a burden that should fall exclusively on one or another partner. Accountability is a *partnership* responsibility. Recognizing shared obligations distinguishes the collaborative activities of a partnership.

4. Core partner contributions to reform vary by expectations, capacities, activities, context, their role in the broader community and their connection(s) to discrete sectors of the community.

Underlying the SNS initiative is Carnegie's belief that the mounting demands placed on schools and school districts – especially the critical expectation that *all* students should master rigorous curricula – are so great that they exceed the resources and capacities of the schools and districts to meet them on their own, regardless of how skilled and committed educators are. To meet these demands, schools and districts need a variety of supports. These include improving instruction, collecting, analyzing, disseminating and using data to inform decision-making, engaging parents in meaningful ways, aligning organizational structures and policies with teachers' needs and student learning goals and more. In SNS, the Corporation, like many others in the education community, looked to external organizations to offer or provide access to this expert assistance and to serve as the fiscal agent for a multi-million dollar grant.

Varying Capacities, Different Skills

Beyond this technical expertise, embedded in SNS was the anticipation that core partners would also possess certain attributes. These attributes included a vision of effective instruction and the kinds of schools and districts that foster it, an understanding of the process of change, legitimacy with educators, credibility within the community, political skills that foster individual and organizational relationships and cultivate support for reform, and persistence balanced by flexibility. These and other attributes are important to building and maintaining relationships with multiple stakeholders including the district, facilitating the process of reform within the district, and cultivating the community demand and support needed to sustain it. The Corporation initially anticipated that core partners would possess the full scope of expertise and attributes. Its expectations were high, and time and experience proved that it was unrealistic to assume that each core partner would possess most, if not all, of these attributes.

Core partners varied considerably in their capacities and skills. PEF in Hamilton County, for example, had political antenna within the district and was adept at fostering strong relationships there; it was less comfortable and skilled at building relationships in the broader community. The Hiatt Center had legitimacy with educators with whom it had worked, primarily those based in one quadrant of the district; it was less known outside this area and struggled to achieve the same recognition and credibility more broadly. Houston A+ was known and respected inside HISD and across the business community but was unable to convert this credibility into a leadership role in reforming high schools.

It also became apparent that partners differed in the breadth and depth of their technical expertise. Several of the partners had extensive experience and expert skill in specific areas but limited knowledge of reform design and implementation beyond those areas. LEED brought expertise in organizational relationship-building, particularly within the business community, a skill few districts have. The Hiatt Center had undertaken significant and effective work with teachers to improve their instructional knowledge and skills. The contributions made by these organizations centered on the particular issues they knew best – raising awareness of the need for and involving the business community of Sacramento in high school reform and, in Worcester, improving teacher quality.

Other organizations had a wider range of technical expertise and experience that they could contribute to the high school reform process. PEF and BPE were able to provide strategic advice and support to the superintendents and their leadership teams on developing reform plans, identifying and responding to emerging challenges, and monitoring progress. They also supplied technical assistance at various levels from the classroom to central office. Both championed and fostered effective professional development opportunities and pushed for the use of meaningful data in decision-making throughout schools and central office. Where they did not have expertise, PEF and BPE were often able to attain access to it. PEF and BPE were able, in many ways,

to surround their districts with a range of support mechanisms and contribute to reform in a variety of areas.

As with the other partners, the contributions of RICC were shaped by its attributes and its expertise, but it proved to be the outlier among the core partners as it increasingly shifted its emphasis to aspects of community engagement in reform. RICC could not provide the array of supports to Providence Public Schools that PEF and BPE do to the Hamilton County Department of Education or Boston Public Schools as its purpose, goals and expertise differed greatly from those of these organizations. It initially approached reform in a manner similar to that of the Hiatt Center and LEED – it would provide advice and assistance on one primary issue, youth development. This was an area in which it had extensive knowledge and experience. That did not go smoothly, however, so RICC shifted course dramatically. As described above, it now seeks to generate community understanding of, demand for and support of reform. (See Finding 1 for a detailed description of the partnership between the Crusade and PPS.)

For its part, PPS did not ask for the kind of comprehensive support provided by BPE or PEF, and the Crusade did not try to offer it in part because the district had already engaged the Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh to assist in implementing a plan that embraced the district's vision of teaching and learning. Though it took time and was not easy, the Crusade created a role for itself in high school reform, which draws upon its strengths while not compromising its institutional purpose, enables it to make an important contribution to the district's reform efforts and expands its own knowledge and capacities.

That the Crusade was the only organization to deliberately re-create its vision of how reform could be fostered by an external organization, to redefine its role significantly based on this altered vision of the reform process, and to become expert in an area it had not previously worked in is unsurprising. One of the Crusade's strengths was its flexibility, which it drew on to conceive and fill a new role. Other core partners, while possessing various strengths that districts relied on, did not always have the same flexibility and at times were less able to move assertively to develop additional strengths.

There are different reasons core partners were unable or did not want to move beyond their specialties. They may have been hesitant to branch out because doing so is outside their primary purpose and goals or beyond their resources. The small staff of the Hiatt Center, for example, is committed to improving teaching and learning in Worcester Public Schools, and the Center has invested considerable time and resources for over a decade into doing so. The Center is also, however, part of a university charged foremost with educating its own students. Providing a high quality education to Clark students is not mutually exclusive to working with the school district; the Center's work with the district, in fact, broadens the knowledge of Clark faculty and students alike and deepens the learning of all involved. With its superseding commitment to its own students, however, the Center is limited in what it can devote to the SNS initiative.

The Hiatt Center is not alone in having multiple goals and working on multiple issues. Several of the other core partners are similarly juggling numerous commitments and are as well operating various programs that are not connected to high school reform. As described above, Houston A+ provides programs in a variety of areas to five school districts in addition to HISD. Beyond high school reform, LEED in Sacramento focuses on economic development and youth development; it also functions as a local education fund. These initiatives and activities are integral elements of the larger purpose of these organizations; they position SNS and high school transformation, however, as one of many programs in which they are involved. Their resources, then, are spread across different issues and different districts, limiting what can be devoted to high school reform.

Carnegie's expectations of core partners may have been ambitious, but the districts' were more limited. Providence, for example, did not expect RICC to provide assistance in developing meaningful assessments or an accessible system by which data was collected, analyzed and disseminated. Sacramento did not look to LEED to offer guidance on building principals' leadership skills. Hamilton County did look to PEF for those things because it had built expertise in them, which the district relied on from the inception of the SNS partnership.

Partner Contributions and Community Contexts

Core partners' contributions to reform were also shaped by the context in which they operated. In San Diego, there was scant attention paid to communicating with and engaging the community in reform. Much of this was due to the superintendent's lack of interest in community engagement; had it been a priority for Bersin, it would have been a priority for CREATE and, subsequently, for NAS. The superintendent, however, was not the only factor. The composition of the community itself was a deterrent to engagement. San Diego is home to a large naval base, and the people connected to it, while they may have children, have a tenuous connection to it. Many are unable to put down roots in the community and become deeply involved in the issues that affect it. The area also has a large contingent of retirees; many years away from their own education and those of their children, they have little interest in reform. The presence of these groups does not mean that the San Diego community cannot be engaged in reform but that it is likely, even with a targeted and concerted effort, to be more difficult than in many other communities.

The contributions of Houston A+ to reform were also shaped by contextual concerns. When planning for SNS began, HISD had been considered, for several years, to be a national leader in school reform. Its then-superintendent, Rod Paige, was a visible presence in discussions at every level – local, state and national – about improving urban schools, and the Houston model of reform was a source of considerable pride in the community. On the perceived results of the reforms he promoted, Dr. Paige was asked by President George W. Bush, formerly the governor of Texas, to become the U.S. Secretary of Education. There was little interest inside or outside of the district in

contesting the story of Houston's success and little audience for the notion that, for most students in Houston's high schools, who left those schools too early or woefully under-prepared for higher education or the world of work, the future was resoundingly bleak. Both partners had an early interest in the public relations aspects of the initiative, which could, in part, be promoted as a reward to the district for its recognized accomplishments. Aside from its concerns about HAC's resources and capacities, HISD leadership saw little to be gained from an organization pushing for reform internally or pulling for it externally. At the same time, Houston A+, had found a role that suited its interests and capacities – providing and nurturing innovative programs and school-based reforms across several districts. It was making a positive difference and there was little push from its primary constituency – the business community – to change what it did.

Core and Expert Partners

The variation across the partners in their attributes, expertise, purpose, programs and contexts suggests several things:

- there may be different types of partnerships
- one partner, no matter how sophisticated its knowledge and skills, cannot meet every need of a district
- partners, like districts, need to develop their capacity to promote and support reform

Two of the partners, BPE and PEF, are devoted in their entirety to improving teaching and learning and outcomes for students in one district, Boston and Hamilton County respectively. Every activity they undertake and every dollar they spend is connected to reaching these goals. Neither began as an organization dedicated to systemic reform, but each grew to become an organization with the knowledge and capacity to foster and support systemic reform. The other partners offered specific knowledge and skills that could greatly enrich elements of systemic reform.

There may be then, two types of partners – *core* partners, which have the capacity to work collaboratively with districts across the scope of reform, from visioning to planning to implementation, and *expert* partners, which have expertise in a specific aspect of reform. The SNS partners fell into these categories. Key questions going forward for external organizations, districts and funders alike include how should they shape expectations for and participation of an external organization as a core or an expert partner? What is the role and responsibility of the core partner in identifying and managing the work of various expert partners? How should resources be apportioned to ensure that the reform can draw on both core and expert partners?

Partnerships in a Political Context

Closely connected to the notion that there are different categories of partners is the recognition that no single partner, not even those such as PEF and BPE, can meet the full scope of a district's needs. PEF, though expert in facilitating productive and

genuinely congenial working relationships between its staff and district personnel, has not yet developed a strong political instinct for cultivating relationships with the larger civic and business community of the Chattanooga area. It does not have broad, positive and visible relationships with business and civic leaders, who might have joined PEF in advocating for Register, the superintendent, who had been the target of increasing attacks by members of the Hamilton County Commission. Several of the commissioners do not understand or agree with the reforms he is enacting despite the significant improvements in student learning, teacher knowledge and school climate that are the results of these reforms.⁴ PEF, which has limited visibility in the general community, was too often a lone voice speaking up. In this instance, PEF and the school district may have been better served if another local organization had worked with them to get the word out about the positive changes underway in HCDE and to engage other community leaders in meaningful ways so that they might publicly support and advocate for those changes and for the superintendent's continued tenure.

This aspect of the Hamilton County experience highlights another central characteristic of education reform that infuses the initiative and has direct and continuing implications for the partnerships. Long-term, system-wide change occurs in a context that, in the broadest meaning of the word, is political. Changing public systems requires confronting often conflicting views and interests. It involves understanding and dealing with individual ambitions and systemic inertia. It incorporates potential controversy about resource allocation and near-certain disagreements about educational strategies. It includes the ongoing need to involve a "public" that is often concerned, usually poorly informed and rarely knowledgeable about the issues that affect public education. The ongoing challenge of functioning effectively in an unstable and precarious environment demands forethought, strategic vision, compromise, and continuing capacity to communicate with diverse constituencies. School systems have earned broad notoriety for the absence of these skills; core partners in the initiative have been slow to realize how essential they are and have, for the most part, not known how to access them. Realizing the inherently political nature of the enterprise, developing or accessing necessary political skills and deploying them effectively should be seen as integral *partnership* capacities, belonging neither to the district nor the core partner, but as key components of the fabric of the joint work.

The critical need for "political" as well as other skills means not only that partners recognize their limits and seek out necessary assistance, but also that they seek to build their own capacity. The experience of the Crusade in Providence demonstrates aspects of the need to consider new capacities. To fulfill its dramatically re-visioned role, the Crusade, guided by and with assistance from SNS technical support staff, undertook a strategic capacity building effort. It is learning how to connect to other organizations and how to foster similar links between and among them, and it is learning how to grow to become an advocate for reform. This kind of strategic capacity building is essential for partners to meet districts' needs effectively, particularly as reform progresses and new challenges emerge.

⁴ Register recently announced his intention to resign at the end of the 2005 – 06 school year, his tenth year leading HCDE.

5. Some partnerships have three or more participants – the district, the Core Partner and an additional partner(s), which may fill a variety of roles. Clarity in roles and responsibilities as well as agreement about the allocation of resources shapes the relationship and contributions of these partners.

One partnership – Boston – began with three community partners and grew to include a fourth. The two organizations that initially joined BPE in partnering with BPS were the Private Industry Council (PIC) and Jobs for the Future (JFF); when the effort expanded with the receipt of a grant from the Gates Foundation, the Center for Collaborative Education (CCE) joined the partnership. Each of the Boston partners has significant responsibilities for planning and implementation across the initiative. Several other partnerships sites have periodically turned to other external organizations for assistance with reform. In these sites, the participation of other organizations has been less formally structured than in Boston, and it has tended to be around specific elements of reform.

The partners in Boston are diverse. PIC has long worked to link schools to the business community and to provide work-based learning opportunities to students. Within the high school reform effort, it is helping to foster collaborations between businesses and small learning communities/small schools. JFF is a nonprofit organization founded in 1983 to help youth make a successful transition to adulthood by ensuring that they participate in a high-quality academic experience in high school, gain a postsecondary credential and that there are clear pathways for them to move successfully into the workforce. Among its many activities, JFF provides technical support to schools in creating career pathways as well as professional development to faculty in project-based learning. CCE provides technical assistance and guidance to the district's Pilot Schools, schools that have restructured themselves into small schools or small learning communities and that operate with considerable autonomy to foster innovation and excellence in teaching and learning; CCE also serves as the coordinator of the Pilot Schools Network. In addition, CCE is working to ensure that the learnings generated from the experiences of the Pilot schools inform BPS' broader high school reform process.

Boston is a unique community. In many ways it is an ideal site for a community-based education reform effort; it contains an array of highly-regarded organizations with significant expertise in dealing with issues connected to the healthy development and education of children and youth. There are many external resources that BPS can and does draw upon. The partners in Boston SNS have all worked with the district or its schools for at least a decade, are respected in the community for their contributions to public education, and each is deeply committed to improving the quality of education in BPS and outcomes for students. This shared, unshakeable commitment to students is one of the elements that has kept each partner at the table as they have struggled for clarity in roles and control – control of approach, structure and funds.

Disagreement and Dedication

Ellen Guiney, executive director of BPE, and Tom Payzant, superintendent of BPS, have a positive, long-standing working relationship characterized by genuine trust in and respect for one another. This has facilitated the partnership between the institutions they lead, which, in turn, has yielded real improvements in teaching and learning in the district. Their relationship, however, paired with BPE's designation as the fiscal agent of the Carnegie grant, gave BPE leverage over the other partners, which made it difficult, at times, for these partners to raise concerns, be involved in decision-making and gain the attention of the superintendent.

When SNS was launched in Boston, more than half of the district's high school students could not read well enough to learn; developing literacy has been, therefore, a priority of reform agreed upon by the partners. In earlier work, BPE pioneered site-based literacy coaches as an effective way to improve instruction and made literacy coaches a core element of the high school transformation process. BPE, in conjunction with BPS and PIC, allocated a significant portion of Carnegie funds to the literacy coaches and other elements of the drive to improve literacy. As reform work progressed, other partners, including BPS administrators and educators, while not disagreeing with the need to put literacy first, concluded that they lacked adequate funds to support the process of restructuring of large high schools. They wanted to reallocate some resources for this purpose, a move that BPE strongly resisted. BPE's resistance generated dismay, frustration and resentment among other partners.

There were other issues that cropped up that the other partners felt were not fully addressed because they were not priorities for BPE, including monitoring reform's progress, creating a framework for restructuring high schools, and engaging the community. The other members of the partnership, including BPS administrators, felt that BPE held control of reform and that the relationship between Guiney and Payzant left little room for their input.

BPE is the core partner and fiscal agent for the Corporation's SNS grant in Boston. This combined with its demonstrated expertise, skills in and ability to foster meaningful change give BPE leadership of SNS. Leadership of a multi-partner initiative, however, must incorporate other views if the partnership is to endure and promote progress. It also requires a willingness to act as a manager by tracking progress, coordinating responses to emerging problems among partners, and aligning resources with those responses. In short, a core partner must be willing to broker services and to allocate funds based on what schools and districts need most to move forward with reform, not on its own preferences.

Staff at several of the other Boston partners felt decision-making became more shared when, in 2003, JFF was named the fiscal agent for a \$13.6 million grant from the Gates Foundation for high school reform. It was also at that time and upon Gates' insistence that CCE was brought into the partnership. CCE has a long history of advocacy of small

schools along with extensive experience overseeing and assisting schools that seek to offer personalized and engaging learning experiences to every student.

The partnership in Boston is complex, at times cumbersome and on occasion fraught with frustration and even anger. It is also, however, comprised of high-capacity individuals and organizations that are deeply committed to Boston's students and to finding resolution to the problems that surface among them. It is evident, moreover, that having multiple partners in Boston, despite their disagreements, has deepened and strengthened reform, surpassing what any of the partners could do on their own. The partners' shared commitment and efforts are making a difference for young people in Boston.

Reaching Out

Several other partnerships on occasion have sought assistance from external organizations. The Worcester Public Schools – Hiatt Center partnership has turned to the New England Small Schools Network for assistance in several areas including professional development, data-driven decision-making and a competency-based system of performance assessment.⁵ In Sacramento, the district and LEED have collaborated with three organizations – Alliance for Education Solutions, Youth in Focus and the Freedom Bound Center – to enhance their efforts to engage youth more fully in the educational process. LEED has also worked with Area Congregations Together (ACT) to facilitate community and parent involvement in schools. As noted previously, PPS sought assistance from the Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh. In these instances, the additional organizations have offered skill sets or knowledge that neither the district nor the core partner has possessed or have expanded and enriched work that was already underway.

In general, though, core partners have rarely sought out assistance from other expert external organizations. Some observers of SNS believe that core partners' reluctance to do so reflects primarily their decided lack of enthusiasm for sharing grant funds, particularly if the money would be directed to activities the partner does not value highly. This raises a difficult question for the funder – should it overrule a grantee and compel that it bring in another organization if it – the original partner – is not doing something the foundation considers essential for reform? In these instances, should it provide additional funding for the new organization so that the original grantee does not have reduced funds? Should it stand back and let the partner and district determine the best course of action? There are not yet clear answers to these questions. They point, though, to a series of broader questions of when and how to bring other organizations into a reform effort as well as of fostering positive working relationships between and among multiple organizations. The realization that a single partner cannot meet the complete scope of a district's needs makes questions such as these increasingly important.

⁵ The New England Small Schools Network (NESSN) is an initiative of the Center for Collaborative Education in Boston. It provides support to and connects a group of districts in New England that are implementing small schools. In addition to Worcester, Providence is a member of NESSN.

SUPPORTING CAPACITY BUILDING: FROM PARTNERS TO PARTNERSHIPS

Since its creation, capacity building has been a key element of the Schools for a New Society initiative. Carnegie understood that the districts in the initiative, despite the experience that many had in reform, would have to grow in new and at times unanticipated ways to attain the goal of transformed high schools that provided a rigorous and personalized education to every student. It retained the Academy for Educational Development (AED) to provide assistance to districts and their partners during the first phase of SNS, when 10 sites were awarded grants to plan their approach to high school reform. During this period, the Foundation also created a network of the sites, which brought teams together to hear from experts and to learn from each other's experiences.

Technical support and capacity building have similarly infused the second phase of SNS – implementation of the seven funded sites' plans. AED continued in its role as technical support provider. It was subsequently joined by the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University and New York University's Institute for Education and Social Policy. The technical support providers from these organizations provide advice and information or access to it on an array of issues from youth development to structural change to community engagement, assess and offer feedback on proposed activities, monitor developments, and identify and help design responses to challenges.

As the initiative progressed, it became apparent that many of the assumptions the Corporation had held about technical support – who provided it, who needed it, on what issues, how it should be delivered – needed to be revised as did technical support itself. Technical support is now more intensive, more sophisticated and more differentiated than originally envisioned.

The expanded web of technical support has been valuable and both district and partner staff agree it has helped push reform forward. It has also resulted in a more complicated series of arrangements with multiple actors.

6. Technical support has been pivotal in the Initiative's progress and has evolved significantly.

Consistently, across sites, partner and district staff described the technical support they have received through the SNS initiative as critical to moving reform forward. Much as Carnegie staff have, the technical support providers have helped surface problems, encouraged innovation, offered guidance and, as one district administrator put it, acted as "irritants." They will not let district and partner staff settle into complacency but rather push them to examine continuously on their work. District and partner staffs' reliance on and appreciation of the technical support providers reflect the evolution of technical support.

More Providers, Greater Support

The growth of technical support follows a trajectory that parallels the progression of observations and beliefs about the partnerships themselves. At the center of this shift was the recognition that one technical support provider is not enough, that building core capacity is essential to developing partnership capacity, and that trust matters as much between site partners and technical support providers as it does between a district and its core partner.

Initially AED was the sole provider of technical support. It was well known to and highly regarded by Corporation staff and had extensive experience in youth development, which was important to Carnegie's wish to ensure that a philosophy of youth development permeated the initiative. As reform work got underway, however, the Corporation as well as AED found that, just as a single core partner cannot meet the array of a district's need, one technical support provider cannot meet the full array of sites' needs. Carnegie brought in the Annenberg Institute for School Reform (AISR) at Brown University, led by Warren Simmons, and the Institute for Education and Social Policy (IESP) at New York University, directed by Norman Fruchter. Both Simmons and Fruchter have extensive experience in urban education, as educators in schools and districts and as advisors to and researchers of them. While the support that the three organizations provide is not fixed, it falls into three loose categories – AED focuses on youth development, IESP on community engagement, and AISR on districts' framework for reform. Each provider works with all of the sites as needs arise, though the sites have tended to gravitate to particular providers based on geography, personal synergy, regard and trust.

As it came to understand that the initiative needed multiple technical support providers, Carnegie also came to realize that districts were not the only ones that needed assistance – partners did as well. The partners varied considerably in their experience, knowledge and skills but all needed support and advice in some areas. The core partners, like the districts, needed to build their capacity to support systemic reform, and they soon came to rely on the technical support providers as much as the districts did. (See Finding 4.)

Both the district and the core partner were engaged by the Corporation and its technical support providers in a secondary process of transformation – making a partnership out of disparate partners – that was essential if the primary process of district transformation was to progress. This meant developing and acting on a shared vision, speaking a common and commonly-understood language, acting together in the name of reform and inculcating joint responsibility and accountability for decisions, actions and results.

Mary Harrison of the Crusade in Providence turned to IESP at a pivotal moment in its relationship with PPS, after its early efforts to collaborate had gone awry and a path forward for the partnership was uncertain. Staff there helped her to broaden her vision of how external organizations can promote and facilitate comprehensive reform. They

suggested that she shift the Crusade's focus from pushing the district internally to change to pulling it externally to do so. This shift was a turning point for the Crusade and for its partnership with PPS. It had a clear role, which aligned with and did not detract from its institutional mission, activities or goals, it was adding value to the district by holding it accountable for improving outcomes for students, and it was fostering civic capacity in Providence by demonstrating how individuals and organizations can become active in critical community issues. (See Finding 1 for a detailed description of evolution of the partnership between the Crusade and PPS.)

Nurturing Relationships

Staff members of Boston's partners spoke highly of AED's Jean Thomases. She has worked with them to build positive relationships among the partners and between the partners and the district in part by helping to clarify the roles of each. Staff from one of the partners described how Thomases "moves the conversation (about reform) forward," and called her "our ally." They check in with her regularly.

Staff members' enthusiasm for Thomases, suggests that relationships between district and partner staff and technical support providers are grounded in personal relationships. At the center of these relationships is trust. Just as trust must be present between districts and core partners for their relationships to flourish, so too must there be trust between districts, core partners and technical support providers. In Hamilton County, Jesse Register, HCDE superintendent, and Dan Challener, the president of PEF, turned to Fruchter of IESP for advice and an objective perspective on their work. They did so because they trusted him, a perhaps unexpected development given what one HCDE administrator described as the district's early reluctance to work with a technical support provider. Had Carnegie not insisted that they work with a technical support provider, it is unlikely that either HCDE or PEF would have done so. They were comfortable with and confident in each other; they were skeptical of the need for another body in the mix. Fruchter, though, earned the trust of both HCDE and PEF. His role was not to promote an external agenda but rather to help HCDE and PEF succeed with their own. He is, in the words of one administrator, "their coach, their evaluator and their valued irritant."

As technical support has expanded and become more differentiated, it has become an increasingly integral component of the initiative, with districts and core partners alike readily calling upon any or all of the providers as needs arise. There are occasions, however, when AED, IESP and AISR cannot meet sites' needs. In these instances, the Corporation has encouraged them to look outside the initiative for assistance. In Chattanooga, for example, the team of PEF and HCDE leaders and senior staff directing high school reform participated in the Change Leadership Group (CLG) at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education. CLG seeks to build the capacity of district leaders to develop and guide systemic reform. Over two years, the PEF/HCDE leadership team attended a bi-annual, week-long retreat at Harvard facilitated by CLG during which they explored the practice of leading change, the phases of district change, diagnosing and addressing problems that inhibit change, and essential

elements of improving instruction. They also learned how to have hard yet productive conversations with each other, conversations that expose fundamental problems. One member said of the retreats, “they opened the door for PEF to bring issues to the table,” and gave PEF an “almost equal” standing with the district. CLG proved to be a powerful shared experience. Team members gained valuable knowledge and skills and, in the process, merged into a tight unit. The team’s unity was carried back to Hamilton County. A principal in one high school commented of the team, “they’re very tight; all of them are on the same page.”

Building a Team

As the technical support providers have built productive relationships with the districts and core partners, they have also developed positive relationships among one another and with the Corporation. Each came to the SNS work with a commitment to its success and a willingness to work with each other and Carnegie. At the same time, they were knowledgeable about the difficulties that are endemic to long-term reform efforts and experience had also taught them about the real possibilities and dangers of debilitating tensions among collaborators in these enterprises. The technical support team put a premium on collegiality, which grew out of good will, mutual respect and a shared vision of transformation.

The team has collectively built on a platform of openness and flexibility to foster deeper connections. As they began reviewing the initiative, they worked to define the roles of each organization based on its expertise. This clarified responsibilities so that they would not inadvertently collide with one another. The technical support providers have also been careful to communicate regularly and extensively with one another. This serves in part to keep all of the providers and Carnegie staff up to date on developments in the sites, but it also enables them to share information, ask questions, generate new ideas, solicit feedback and advice – in short, the technical support providers and Corporation staff have formed a de facto learning community. Like everyone else involved in the SNS initiative, the providers and Carnegie staff discovered that they too have more to learn about successfully fostering effective systemic reform.

7. The Carnegie Corporation has assumed an active role in the Initiative, one which seeks to build partner and partnership capacity and requires expanded capacity from the funder.

As SNS has progressed, Carnegie has moved into an increasingly hands-on role, shifting from a traditional grantmaker to a more active participant willing to use its growing knowledge to become involved in site-based efforts. Its still evolving role has four primary strands: technical support provider, evaluator, critical friend and initiative coordinator. It fills all of these roles independently and with input from technical support providers. In assuming each of these roles, it is endeavoring to build the capacity of the site partners.

Providing Technical Support

Acting as a technical support provider, the Corporation has undertaken multiple activities. It has identified and disseminated promising practices, encouraged innovation, surfaced learnings, asked critical questions, facilitated reflection on assumptions and actions, challenged habitual practices and policies, generated strategies for addressing problems, and pushed for the creation of and commitment to a new vision of secondary education for all students. It pursues these activities along side of the technical support providers and works closely with them. Carnegie staff have regular communication with the providers and participate fully with them in meetings and other gatherings.

As part of their technical support role, Corporation staff have devoted much time and energy to nurturing relationships between site partners. This has required Carnegie to develop individual relationships with each partner at each site. Knowing each individually helps the Corporation remain neutral between site partners yet supportive of them both. Walking this line of neutrality and support has not been easy. For Carnegie, it has entailed listening to partners' complaints about or disagreements with their partners. As a neutral listener, the Corporation provided a safe space for partners to release their frustrations while also offering insights and different options to address frustrations and serving as a sounding board for partners' ideas.

Evaluator

As it has had to walk a balanced line between site partners, the Corporation has had to balance its role as a technical support provider with that of an evaluator of the initiative. Carnegie staff as well as the technical support providers must monitor progress in addition to providing assistance and guidance for accountability is a cornerstone of SNS.

Carnegie has embedded accountability into the initiative in formal and in informal ways. The more structured elements of evaluation are carried out by external organizations. These elements include an annual assessment each partnership prepares of its own progress. Local evaluators have been retained to gauge progress in each community, and SRI International and its partner, American Institutes for Research, are conducting a comprehensive, cross-site evaluation of the entire initiative. Progress is also assessed through less structured means, in which Carnegie is involved. It is present in the sites through regular communication, site visits and feedback from the technical support providers. It is aware of which aspects of reform are going well and which are not. As a technical assistance provider, its job is in part to help resolve what is not going well, not to pass judgment; as the funding entity to which sites are accountable, part of its role is passing judgment and requiring a resolution.

Critical Friend

Carnegie has functioned as a critical friend to site partners. In this, it often acts very much like a core partner – at times it has pushed site partners to change and at times it has pulled them, as it did in Worcester.

As WPS and the Hiatt Center embarked on reform, they encountered strong resistance from one high school located in a mostly white, relatively affluent area. In comparison to other schools in the districts, this school seemed to be doing well. The school's principal, faculty and its parents saw no need for or value to reform, and they found support for their position among some of the district's senior leadership.

Carnegie held firm and insisted that the district fulfill its commitment to creating personalized, rigorous and engaging learning experiences in every school. Pulled ahead by the Foundation's conviction, the high school began moving toward reform. The school is creating a small learning community and establishing a school-wide ninth grade transition program, as the district's other high schools are doing. It is also expanding programs that better prepare students for advanced classes, and taking steps, such as common planning time, to foster a more collaborative professional culture. These are significant changes that will ensure students receive a better education and are changes that likely would not have occurred had Carnegie not demanded action.

Coordinating Change

In addition to acting as a critical friend, evaluator and technical support provider, the Corporation also manages the initiative. It communicates with and among all site partners and stays abreast of developments with each. It frequently and routinely gathers information from and shares it with technical assistance providers. It coordinates initiative-wide meetings and meetings of technical support providers. It oversees the formal evaluation process as well as an effort to document the development and outcomes of SNS. It guides and organizes the capacity building process across sites.

To do all of this, the Carnegie staff has had to build its own capacity. It has deliberately and strategically expanded its knowledge about effective high schools, the school and district transformation process, and the management of an initiative of the size and scope of SNS. The learning community that has grown up across the technical support providers and Corporation staff has been at the heart of Carnegie's capacity building process. (See Finding 6.)

Carnegie's hands-on approach has added value to the work in sites, but it has also added complexity to the Corporation's role. There is broad consensus across sites that the Corporation's approach and its contributions have been critical. District and partner staff alike spoke of the resource that Carnegie has been and of the value it has added

to reform efforts. At the same time, however, Carnegie's active presence has occasionally generated tension.

Schools and school districts are insular institutions. As noted above, outsiders, even parents, have rarely had substantive input into decision-making at any level – classroom, school or central office. If bringing parents and other community members into conversations and decisions about teaching and learning is difficult for many educators, bringing in an outside institution, such as Carnegie, is often doubly challenging. District and partner staff had to learn to become comfortable interacting so closely with and trusting Corporation staff and technical support providers. At the same time, Carnegie staff had to demonstrate their ability to contribute to the partners' work.

For the most part, district and partner staff have grown comfortable working with Corporation staff and technical support providers. There are still, however, questions about the Foundation's role. When does it operate as a neutral technical support provider, offering a fresh perspective on important issues? When does it act as an evaluator, assessing progress with an eye toward agreed upon outcomes and possibly future funding? When is it serving as a critical friend, pushing or pulling partners to reform? When is it functioning as a manager, coordinating Initiative-wide activities and strategies? The lines between these different roles often blur. The funder's multi-faceted, active role in the Initiative has added significant value to reform and advanced it greatly; it has also added to the interactions among various initiative stakeholders.

FOSTERING CIVIC DEMAND: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PUBLIC WILL

SNS believes that if a community establishes high expectations for its schools and if it generates the will to insist that these expectations be met, then the schools and the school district will be pulled to improve what they do. At the same time, schools and districts cannot improve what they do without input and substantive assistance from the community – parents, business, nonprofit and public service providers, civic leaders and students themselves. The community must be both a monitor and assessor of schools and a contributor to their success. An engaged community, SNS maintains, demands, supports and sustains reform. Community engagement, therefore, is a central strand of the Schools for a New Society initiative.

Because it was a required element of SNS, the sites initially created extensive plans to foster community input into and promote community support for high school reform. Few of these plans, though, came to fruition. Where there has been progress, it has come largely because the Foundation pressed sites to take action. It did so to promote clarity among districts and core partners about the purpose or process of public engagement and its connection to public will and to stress the centrality of this component of the initiative. At the same time, sites were devoting their resources to instructional and structural reforms. The sites' experiences, however, demonstrate that community engagement is a crucial element of reform and, though difficult, is as important as instruction and structural issues. As the Corporation and SNS sites move toward the next phase of their work, it is important that community engagement and public will be clearly articulated and understood and that all share a commitment to focus on it.

8. Engaging the community and building public will to sustain reform, while critical to the Initiative's overall approach, has been limited by the partners' lack of capacity and/or will to undertake it.

Early Efforts

Most sites in SNS began planning high school reform through a collaborative process that solicited input from across the community. In Worcester, the school district and the Hiatt Center created a 75-member steering committee, the Worcester Educational Partnership (WEP), to plan the overall strategy for high school reform. Committee members met regularly in sub-committees to explore specific issues in detail and as a full committee during the planning year. Similarly, BPE and BPS in Boston created the Carnegie Leadership Group (CLG), a group comprised of representatives of diverse organizations across the community including community-based organizations, parents, faith-based organizations, higher education, business and the teachers union as well as teachers, students and principals, to oversee and participate in a year-long planning process. CLG members held focus groups, conducted interviews and collaborated on organizing and facilitating working groups to explore specific issues.

In San Diego, the district and its first core partner, CREATE, took a different approach. Instead of establishing a group or committee of community representatives to oversee or regularly participate in the planning process, they chose to solicit community input through a series of inquiry groups. Students, parents, educators and other members of the community participated in the groups, which helped to surface a community-based vision of what high schools should be.

Community participation in reform, however, quickly dropped off the screen in San Diego, Worcester, and Boston as it did in most sites once implementation was underway. This reflected districts and partners' lack of capacity and will to engage their communities strategically and substantively in systemic reform and to maintain their interest and involvement in it over time. Site partners did not recognize the purpose and potential value of community engagement, which led to and was reinforced by their lack of experience with it. Compounding this, core partners' ability to engage the community broadly and their experience in doing so were often not important criteria in their selection; where community was a consideration, it was core partners' connections to sectors of the community elite that made them appealing.

Limited Expectations

Many school and partner leaders did not understand – and did not have a highly-developed interest in learning about – where the community fits into the reform process, how it could add value to reform, or what effective approaches to cultivating its awareness, knowledge and involvement are. To most of them, community engagement seemed disconnected from and less important than other reform elements such as professional development and data-driven instruction, which have a more direct and immediate influence on teaching and learning. For people trying to determine ways to ensure that high school students would be competent in at least basic literacy skills, public engagement often seemed extraneous and a questionable use of scarce resources. This perception of public engagement fed into and was driven by many partners' experience in engaging the community.

Districts have traditionally operated in isolation, rarely seeking substantive input from outside their walls into what they do and how they do it. Where they have sought to communicate, the most basic element of community engagement, information has typically flowed in one direction – from schools or the school district out; rarely has information flowed between the community and central office as part of a dynamic community discussion about education. Even communication from schools to central office is often limited, leaving teachers and principals uncertain about policies or programs the district is implementing and why it is doing so.

Many education reform groups similarly have limited experience engaging community members; their expertise often lies in components of effective instruction from curriculum standards to assessment tools to professional development or in elements of effective district and school operations to support high quality instruction. Some may have experience reaching out to specific elements of the community, but few are adept

at connecting to multiple sectors through multiple means. In the midst of reform, districts and reform groups alike gravitate to what they know well – what they know well is not public engagement.

There was, moreover, little expectation that the core partners would cultivate a cadre of advocates for and supporters of public education that stretched across the entire community. Many did not have experience in this. What they brought instead, in most instances, were connections to the various groups within communities' elite citizens – business leaders, philanthropic leaders, and higher education leaders among others – and, through them, to their institutions. In Houston, Houston A+ had strong ties to the philanthropic and business communities. LEED was closely connected to the business sector, and the Hiatt Center was a member of a distinguished university community. The core partners had ties to or roots in elements of each community's elite – people the partners knew, were comfortable with and to whom they turned for input into reform.

Overlaying all of these impediments to community engagement was the reform work itself. Districts and core partners were focused on designing and implementing effective reform strategies. They were wrestling with such questions as what type of approach to literacy would be most effective in their schools. How can teachers be best supported in embracing and using this approach? Do school-based coaches have the training and ongoing support that they need to be effective? If not, how can they get? In the midst of this, community engagement and its vital role in sustaining reform seemed like a very distant concern. As a result, efforts to engage the community in most sites were piecemeal; they received little time, attention, or money, as the experiences of several sites reveals.

In Boston as elsewhere, partners pulled back from community engagement activities that were initially planned. During the planning process, a group of representatives from community organizations was formed to facilitate raising community awareness of the need to improve high schools and strategies for doing so as well as to encourage community involvement in improvement efforts. According to one account, the group was “shut down” by BPE and then re-formed, after which it undertook a few outreach activities. Group members, though, felt that they lacked clarity on their purpose and decided to dissolve the group. It was re-formed a second time by the then-Deputy Superintendent for Family and Community Engagement, Dr. Karen Mapp. Under Mapp's direction, the group developed a clearer sense of its role and began moving forward with several activities including providing focused assistance on engaging the community around one large high school that was incorporating small learning communities, the Dorchester Education Complex, and on a broad-based campaign to raise awareness of high school reform. Other steps have been taken in Boston to bring the community into reform efforts including establishing parent coordinator positions in several high schools. These steps forward are crucial, but some of those working on community engagement in Boston feel that it remains a low priority among BPS and BPE leaders, who are focused on other elements of the reform initiative. In particular, they have expressed concern that few minority leaders or organizations have been

included in discussions about and activities to support reform, particularly as 86 percent of BPS' students are nonwhite.

In Worcester, it quickly became apparent that little attention had been devoted to moving the WEP steering committee from a planning body to a group that would oversee and assist with reform. According to one committee member, the steering committee had no structure, no clear goals, no agreed-upon processes for decision-making and no authority. High school reform quickly came to be seen as a joint initiative of the Hiatt Center and the school district, not a community-based effort.

The collapse of the steering committee generated ill-will toward the district and the Hiatt Center from some of its members, particularly those from minority, poor and immigrant communities who had initially hoped that the steering committee would be an opportunity to have a voice in schools and the school district and an active role in the change process. Their hopes quickly disintegrated. Several commented that their inclusion in the steering committee seemed, in hindsight, to be token and that little had changed in the schools. One representative of a Hispanic organization, when asked what she wanted from the schools, said "it would be nice if the teachers would at least treat our parents with respect when they come to the schools." To these members of the community, the promise of a voice among decision-makers and meaningful change in schools seemed to have been ripped away.

At the urging of Carnegie and key members of the Worcester community, a cluster of community groups were drawn together to form the UCALAA (United Caucasian, Asian, Latino and African American) Family Involvement Team to bring families into schools and into the reform effort, and the Hiatt Center created the position of UCALAA Family Involvement Coordinator. The coordinator manages the UCALAA community family involvement committee, which seeks to foster stronger relationships between families and community groups and the school district, assists schools create school advisory councils, parent-community groups that provide advice to schools as they pursue reform, and provides support and guidance to the members of UCALAA to help them engage parents around high school reform. Initially Carnegie funds in Worcester were directed almost exclusively to professional development and very little was allocated to community engagement, a reflection, in part, of how fostering community engagement was valued. Corporation funds are now used to support the coordinator's position and other outreach activities.

In San Diego, CREATE's early efforts to reach out to the community were not continued when New American Schools (NAS) replaced it as the district's core partner. When NAS came on board, community engagement was one of the areas it was to focus on, but, as a national organization based in Washington DC, it was not well-equipped to do so. The organization had little visibility in San Diego and few organizational connections to the individuals and organizations in the community that are stakeholders in public

education.⁶ Compounding this, engaging the community was not a priority for the district. The superintendent, had to be pushed by Carnegie to agree to work with only one organization – a core partner; the notion that other individuals or organizations might seek a voice in the district’s decision-making work was rebuffed

Community engagement proved to be a stumbling block for every site. Only the Crusade in Providence has begun to develop and deploy the capacity needed to plan and undertake a comprehensive community engagement effort based on an understanding of and belief in the role of the community in reform, and it has done so because circumstances compelled it to.

9. Community engagement and public will were not, in some respects, clearly defined or understood by districts and their partners.

Community engagement is a means to an end. That end is public will. Public will is itself a stage in the process of developing civic demand – in the case of SNS, demand for high-quality, personalized secondary education that graduates students prepared for work, further education and citizenship in a democratic society. Community engagement is not an end of itself, nor is it a substitute for public will. These distinctions were not well always understood or acted upon by core partners and districts in the first stages of SNS.

Community engagement is an interactive, ongoing process aimed at the community. It builds connections between and among individuals and organizations for a purpose – informed involvement – and it cultivates community ownership. Community engagement seeks to generate awareness, provide information, build knowledge, surface issues, foster a shared vision and mobilize differentiated sectors of the community to take action.

Public will is a product of this mobilization – an informed citizenry with the motivation and skills needed to demand policies and practices and to sustain reform engendered by private investment. This is manifested by the collective action this citizenry undertakes to compel public entities – such as school boards and school districts – to change what they do and how they do it and to support them as they do so.

Community engagement and public will are concepts that merge into each other, and distinguishing between them and the activities of each is not always easy. The sites struggled to understand them, and their lack of understanding, along with little capacity to undertake engagement, was a significant factor in the limited progress they made in fostering community awareness and participation in reform either as demanders of it or contributors to it. (See Finding 8 for a description of site partners’ capacities to undertake community engagement.)

⁶ The organization’ lack of connections and visibility should be distinguished from that of its representative, Libia Gil. Gil had served as superintendent in Chula Vista, a neighboring district, and was widely respected in the area. Her focus, though, was not on building civic demand.

Emphasizing Activities

For the most part, districts and core partners alike looked upon community engagement as a collection of disparate activities – surveys, focus groups and similar activities – intended to gather or disseminate information. These activities were distinct; they were not seen as elements of a coordinated and strategic effort to build public will for reform by, for example, cultivating knowledge about the need for reform or fostering a dynamic process of surfacing issues and generating or demanding responses to them.

Houston’s efforts to connect to the community were reflective of sites’ approaches to community engagement. In Houston, HISD and Houston A+ solicited community input into the development of the district’s reform plan through a collection of forums for different sectors of the community as well as a year-long series of focus groups on specific issues. At the school level, each high school created a steering committee comprised of students, parents, teachers, community members and others to explore aspects of reform; this was supplemented by student focus groups, panels and surveys to ensure that their voices were heard and their needs surfaced. Community involvement did not stretch much farther beyond this following the planning year. Several years later, HISD and HAC were still grappling with the role of the community in reform and attempting to develop ways to involve community members.

In 2004, the Houston partners proposed creating the Community Oversight Team (COT) to “enhance the district’s alignment with the community... (I)t’s role will be to engage the greater Houston community in a focus on adolescent literacy.”⁷ COT, as described, was to be an effort to solicit input from certain members of the community in a specific area, not the full scope of reform. Its membership, moreover – which was to include the superintendent, the director of HAC, the chief school administrator, the chief academic officer, a teacher representative – suggested that it would be driven by the district, not the community, and, as such, that it might be a means to align the community with the district, not the district with the community.

The partners also described community engagement with students, parents and business representatives as “clear, concise and regular communications... to ensure a common understanding of the Initiative and our common language.” Their view of communication as community engagement was further detailed when they stated, “(C)ommunication to all external stakeholders will guarantee the inclusion, understanding and engagement of the community.” This communication was to occur through “town hall forums, youth summits and District and school activities that focus on literacy.” As was the case with virtually all sites, the partners in Houston understood communication to be community engagement rather than an element of it.

⁷ Houston Independent School District and Houston A+ Challenge. “Houston Schools for a New Society Narrative for a Revised Plan.”

Engaging Educators

One site that, in some ways, succeeded in fostering limited engagement, albeit among a very specific group – educators – was Hamilton County. During the planning year, every high school established a leadership team to develop its plan to transform into small learning communities. The teams included principals, teachers, students, parents and often others from the community. They met regularly and frequently over the year and were provided with numerous opportunities to learn about their own schools and about different ways to improve them. They also received extensive support and guidance from PEF and the district's central office staff. The creation of the school leadership teams did not set high school reform in Hamilton County apart from the other SNS sites; several did the same or similar things. Hamilton County was distinguished by its ongoing engagement of the teams and their school communities in general as they have undertaken reform. The teams did not disintegrate after the Carnegie grant was awarded, nor were they overlooked as reform has proceeded.

Over the course of SNS, PEF and HCDE invested considerable time and energy in staying engaged with school site communities – ensuring, for example, that principals and teachers understood why reform is necessary, providing them with information so that the school communities were able to determine and implement the reform approaches they believed were most appropriate, assisting them in surfacing issues, providing encouragement in the face of setbacks, inviting their feedback and much more. Maintaining this level of engagement with school communities was not easy, and it required much of HCDE's central office staff as well as of PEF. Some site leaders wondered at the outset if it was inefficient, a poor use of limited resources. There is now, however, unanimous agreement across HCDE and PEF that this investment in engaging each school community in substantive, not token, ways has resulted in “tremendous shared ownership” of reform as Superintendent Register noted.

This does not mean that there has been no resistance to reform among principals, teachers or others in Hamilton County's high schools; there has been. Engaging schools in the process of reform instead of dictating it to them, though, has muted this resistance and contributed to the shape of reform itself.

The two organizations were unable to do the same outside of the school environment, with the broader community. PEF and HCDE undertook various activities that are elements of engagement, but there was not a comprehensive plan to engage the community meaningfully and continuously. This left many in the community unaware of reform, with only minimal knowledge of it, or with erroneous assumptions about it. This absence of community awareness and enthusiasm for reform may have left Register more vulnerable to political attacks by members of the Hamilton County Commission, several of whom repeatedly and publicly made inaccurate statements about him and the district as well as calling for his resignation.

San Diego shares a similar story. As described, there was no meaningful attempt to foster community engagement there. The district, under the superintendent's direction,

made real progress in creating a portfolio of high schools that offered rigorous and personalized learning experiences to all students. Many of the superintendent's decisions, however, were controversial, particularly among teachers and parents; he was described by some as having a "top-down" style of management and as being uninterested in soliciting input from others when making decisions. In November 2004, a new school board was elected in San Diego most of whom did not support the superintendent; several of the newly elected board members, in fact, made opposition to him a central theme of their campaigns. In January 2005, the new board bought out the superintendent's contract, and he left the district in June. As in Hamilton County, the lack of a credible community advocate for the superintendent and for the reforms he was enacting may have left him vulnerable to misunderstandings that led to distrust that, in turn, helped to prompt his departure.

10. "The community" that each partnership sought to engage varied with perceptions and experience of the partners.

Urban communities are not monolithic. They are comprised of many diverse smaller communities or sectors that have varying connections to schools. Businesses, for example, look to schools to supply them with the workforce they need to sustain current ventures and bring in new ones while parents see schools as a the means to a stable, healthy future for their children. Other stakeholders include faith-based organizations, community-service providers, civic leaders, minority organizations, and postsecondary institutions as well as educators at all levels within a district. All of these groups are part of the communities that surround districts and schools, and all of them have a role in reform. Across SNS sites, however, community engagement efforts focused on much more narrow audiences – the sectors of the community with which partners were familiar and relatively comfortable.

Playing to Strengths

LEED in Sacramento worked hard to promote the business community's involvement in high school reform, and many businesses did respond, expanding internships and other opportunities to connect students to the workplace. LEED and district leaders, though, learned the painful lesson that support from the business community does not lead to or substitute for support from sectors across the community when the superintendent, Jim Sweeney, sought to close one of the district's high schools and re-open it as a charter school containing five small schools. The board followed Sweeney's advice, and the school was re-created. The community, however, railed against this change, ultimately contributing to Sweeney's decision to resign. Reflecting on this experience, LEED realized it needed a broader reach and approached Area Congregations Together (ACT), a faith-based community organizing group that had created a teacher home-visit program to foster greater parent involvement, particularly among low-income and minority parents, in their children's schools and academic lives. Because of its previous work, ACT had credibility in the community that LEED did not and, as an organizer, it

knew how to connect to parents. LEED and ACT established a partnership to foster parent awareness of, support for and involvement in reform.⁸

LEED and the Sacramento district are not unique; consistently across the sites, outreach activities focused on those who were known and with whom interactions were comfortable – this infrequently included nonwhite or low-income communities in a systematic way. This was true even though in every district except Hamilton County, which has many rural schools, the majority of students are non-white, and there are significant disparities within districts in the quality of education offered to students.

The Imperative of Inclusion

Across districts, white students tend to coalesce in certain schools, often magnet schools or other types of schools that offer exemplary programs, while non-white students are often shunted into schools with limited resources, inexperienced or ineffective teachers, poor principals, and watered-down curricula. In Boston, for example, 54 percent of the students enrolled in prestigious and high-performing Boston Latin are white and 10 percent are African-American while across the district 14 percent of students are white and 46 percent of them are African-American. On the 2005 MCAS, 65 percent of Boston Latin tenth graders attained the advanced level in English while 93 percent did so in math, far above the percentage who did so across the district – 11 and 22 percent respectively.

Carnegie has a powerful vision of high school education that embraces all students, particularly in urban districts where far too many students have been shunted aside and where intervention is most urgently required. Districts and core partners also are powerfully committed to eliminating the disabling disparities in outcomes for non-white and low-income students.

This commitment has not yet been translated into effective strategies by districts and core partners to engage and mobilize nonwhite families, organizations and communities. With few exceptions, the partners are tied to and their leaders are part of the community elite. The barriers that divide districts from non-whites and non-native communities separate core partners from them as well. Partnerships must develop the capacity to bridge this gap if the reforms contemplated by the initiative are to take and last.

From the outset, SNS has recognized the importance of ensuring that the communities from which its most at-risk students come have a voice; it is imperative that districts, which are profoundly shaped by their nonwhite and low-income students, have meaningful input from these communities. What might be lost in not having the input

⁸ Despite LEED's efforts to reach to a broader array of community members, it continues to be viewed as an organization tied to and serving mostly white, predominantly male business leaders. This perception – accurate or inaccurate – has stunted the relationship between LEED and Sweeney's successor, who is uncertain that LEED is attuned to the needs of minority students and willing to be fully responsive to them.

and involvement of these communities is not easily determined, but their remoteness from many activities increases the likelihood that reform will have little recognition, credibility or support in them. SNS continues to work to include them.

New Roles for Communities

If one challenge has been engaging multiple sectors of the community, another has been in fleshing out new roles for communities. Site partners have displayed relatively narrow notions of what community institutions and members could do to promote reform and rarely encourage them to go beyond traditional ways of supporting education. Several sites, including Worcester and Boston, encouraged local universities to partner with small learning communities in schools. The University of Massachusetts Medical Center has partnered with North High School in Worcester in its Health Science Academy. The University of Massachusetts Boston and Harvard Medical School have partnered with Burke High School in Boston in its Health and Human Services small learning community (SLC) while the Massachusetts College of Art and the Berklee College of Music have partnered with the school in its Arts and Humanities SLC. These partnerships are integral to the SLCs and greatly enhance students' experiences in them. Seniors at North High in Worcester are able to participate in internships at the Medical Center, offering them a vital, real-world opportunity to learn and to apply what they are learning. As useful as these collaborations are, they do not seek to move higher education and other community institutions outside of their familiar roles. Internships are safe, and mentoring programs are not controversial. Advocating assertively for change often is controversial. The partnerships with such institutions have not yet addressed the context around schools and districts, nor is it clear that they have considered cultivating shared ownership across diverse communities of the school systems and a shared responsibility for their success. SNS contemplates and partnerships should embrace efforts to cultivate more strategic involvement in and greater responsibility for reform among community institutions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations rise out of the foregoing findings. They are limited in scope and are directed to enhancing the partnerships that are the key element in fostering and ultimately sustaining the reforms that are the focus of the Schools for a New Society initiative. The recommendations speak to the role of the core partner and the organization of the partnerships in the shifting contexts in which each district operates. They urge that the Carnegie Corporation's emphasis on public engagement and public will be explicitly connected to tangible and measurable strategies to ensure that this element of the initiative rises to the same level as those that seek to improve instruction and to restructure the educational enterprise. The recommendations also consider the roles and the relations among the technical support, assessment and documentation functions and, finally, encourage the Corporation to ensure that there is sufficient time and resources to maintain and build on the emerging accomplishments of the initiative.

1. Revise the initiative's theory of change to redefine the role of the core partner, to reinforce the commitment to public engagement/public will, and to re-emphasize the central role of learning for the partners in the initiative.

From its inception, SNS has been guided by a thoughtful and deliberate process, resulting in an approach that has shaped all aspects of the initiative. Some elements of the approach – especially the scope of the core partners' responsibilities and how these connect to districts and other potential partners, the critical importance of devoting unremitting strategic attention to public involvement, and the fundamental commitment of the initiative to add to knowledge about reform – should be reconsidered in a revised theory of change. The initiative should explicitly recognize that no one partner can meet the multiple expectations that the SNS reform requires of outside organizations and that specific provision must be made for differentiated efforts by multiple organizations at each site.

Similarly, core partner commitment to and efforts at systematically involving citizens in implementing (with the ultimate goal of helping to sustain) the initiative-engendered reforms have varied greatly from site to site. In no place has it yet ripened into an integral part of the district/core partner collaboration. Some of the reason for this arises from a lack of deep understanding by both districts and core partners of the relationship between public engagement and public will and the need for both in any lasting effort to transform education. Realization of the critical place that civic demand occupies in fostering and maintaining sustainable reform is the first essential step in developing the capacity to promote it. This realization must be inculcated and reinforced; where to begin is with the initiative's theory of change.

These two revisions to the theory of change – a direct statement that work by more than one outside partner is anticipated along with an unequivocal declaration about the vital necessity of encouraging civic demand for reform – will signify the initiative's commitment to engaging multiple high-capacity external organizations in focused, multi-

layered efforts to implement ongoing strategies to foster both public engagement and public will in the reform enterprise.

Finally, the revised theory of change should clearly surface the initiative's dedication to fostering and furthering learning and dissemination of knowledge about school transformation and district reform. This has been a key element in how the initiative has operated; much of the technical support function has evolved into a learning community, with aspects of an extensive knowledge capture effort informing the learning. There has also been increasing investment in dissemination. The initiative's devotion to learning and dissemination has not, however, been thoroughly absorbed by many of the sites, which consequently tend to treat discrete knowledge capture activities as elements of continuing "evaluation" that may have adverse consequences for them. Clarification of the importance of learning and dissemination to the initiative will significantly reduce anxiety about and resistance to the extensive and varied technical support, documentation, assessment and evaluation efforts that characterize the initiative.

This recommendation has significant bearing on the development and implementation of partnership strategies and activities and on the multiple relationships among partners, technical support and Carnegie Corporation staff. The two recommendations that follow pursue these implications by making more specific suggestions that affect the structure and functions of the partnerships, their relationships, and partners' interactions with the Initiative's staff and consultants. The fourth and final recommendation speaks to the nature of the investment in the partnerships and what it may take to foster sufficient partnership impact on schools and school districts.

2. Develop site-based theories of change that are sensitive to the unique circumstances of each district, recognize the volatility that is embedded in long-term district reform efforts, define the role of the core partner and highlight the importance of expanded community involvement in the initiative.

Each of the sites ultimately chosen to participate in SNS had prepared a detailed proposal, which in most cases was subject to significant revision at the request of the funder. The accepted proposals became the basis of an agreement that defined the expectations and outcomes of the activities supported by the Carnegie Corporation grant. The grant agreement, while critical to measuring success in achieving the outcomes, is not the same as a theory of change, which offers a roadmap of progress toward outcomes and allows for midcourse corrections in activities. The work at each site, which is multi-textured and complex, demands the sophisticated insight into both rationale and results that a thoughtful and collegially developed theory of change can provide. Employing site-based theories of change and reviewing them annually holds out the promise of greater flexibility and increased insight to designers, funders and evaluators of the local initiatives.

- A. *Consider the contexts that affect the partnership in each of the sites.* School reform efforts do not operate in a vacuum and are influenced by a variety of conditions and activities that are neither controlled by nor are responsive to wishes of the partners.

The initiative operates in a context that is not only educational but is, in the broadest sense of the term, political. During the first years of the initiative, each district was challenged by the accountability mandates of the federal No Child Left Behind Act. Several districts were adversely affected by state budget policies. Other impacts on the progress of the partnerships in promoting reform included the stability of leadership in the community, the district and the core partner, and the resolution of various local issues that affected, directly or indirectly, both schools and communities.

While it is not possible to factor many of these developments into a proposal or an initial theory of change, it is possible to anticipate some of them in the light of the initiative's experience along with those of other long-term district reform efforts. Contextual analysis should inform the development of benchmarks and measurements for each site. Consequently, the funder and the technical support team should prepare a series of "what if" questions for each partner. These hypothetical questions recognize the inherent risks surrounding efforts to improve education or, for that matter, any public system. These questions should be addressed as the site theories of change are developed. This will stimulate each partnership to consider contingencies that arise out of various national, state and local contexts.

Context and its real and projected impacts on the progress of site-based efforts should also be considered annually as each partnership reviews its theory of change with the funder. This will determine elements of the rationale for midcourse corrections and help to define new and emerging partnership strategies to reach agreed-upon goals.

- B. *Develop an explicit taxonomy of core partner capacities at each site and determine the gaps between these capacities and initiative needs.* Two related findings infuse this analysis. The first concerns the ongoing capacity of the initial core partner to adapt to evolving requirements of the reform enterprise at the site. Put simply, a core partner selected primarily for the advantages it offers in securing a grant may not be able to contribute much to developing instructional strategies. A partner selected for expertise in professional development may lack insight into strategies to involve the community in the reform. And a tame partner may not add much but cover to a district determined to do things its own way.

The second issue is that even the most adaptive partner may not be the most expert in the wide range of issues that a comprehensive reform embraces. Again, put simply, no one partner can do it all. Restructuring high schools, improving instruction in them and effectively involving the community in the endeavor requires different capacities, relationships and strategies. Parsing these requirements and understanding when and how to meet them is an ongoing challenge for all of the stakeholders in a site-based reform initiative. An early step in meeting this challenge is to align core partner capacities with ongoing initiative needs, determine what

additional capacities are called for and indicate how the partnership will approach meeting these needs.

Adopting this approach will also help to clarify the “push-pull” functions of the core partner. This analysis underscores the difficulties of a single partner serving simultaneously in both a “supporting” and “demanding” role for a school district. A clear understanding of when, how and by whom these roles may be filled should arise out of the site-based theory of change. To be effective, the theory of change must be directly informed by the taxonomy of partner capacities and initiative needs.

- C. *Treat the Core Partner as a “broker” of identified needed capacities.* If the core partner cannot meet all of the expectations of an external organization in the reform process, it is imperative that additional capacities from other external organizations be deployed. Meeting this need requires a core partner with the capacity and will to define, explore and engage in relationships, often temporary, with other external organizations. The core partner must be able to marshal a variety of attributes from multiple sources, including but not limited to itself, organize these capacities and monitor results.

Many core partners have not viewed this function as a necessary part of their work; some have resisted the financial implication of multiple partners, which may require sharing resources. The initiative’s theory of change must insist on diverse, multi-tiered, participation of external organizations; the budget for each site should reflect this understanding.

- D. *Develop a specific “theory of public engagement” for each site.* Civic demand is a critical component of the initiative’s theory of change; it is held essential both to implementing and sustaining change. Uncertainty throughout SNS about the meaning and scope of civic demand, focus on the instructional and structural pieces of the reform, inexperience with systematic and strategic public engagement by districts and many core partners along with resistance by several partnerships to reaching out to relatively unfamiliar segments of the community (in many instances low income and nonwhite populations) has limited the emphasis on this element of the work. Site based theories of change must incorporate contextual approaches to stimulating and targeting civic demand for developing, disseminating and persisting in long-term change. In addition to displaying sensitivity to the context of each community, local approaches to developing and deploying civic demand should also recognize that:

- Civic involvement is as critical to the success of the initiative as structural change and instructional innovation.
- Public engagement and public will are different though related elements of a strategic process of creating and maintaining civic demand for long-term change in public education.
- Promoting effective and lasting civic involvement must necessarily involve both push (support) and pull (demand) tactics, which require different capacities from

external partners and enhanced levels of understanding and tolerance from the district.

- 3. Bolster initiative learning by: aligning technical support with the redefined roles of partners; differentiating among the various knowledge capture strategies and between the knowledge capture strategies and technical support; ensuring that documentation and assessment are linked to site theories of change; and drawing on lessons from earlier foundation-supported district reform efforts in revising theories of change and developing strategies.**

Technical support and knowledge capture are integral elements of the SNS theory of change and have been essential components of initiative activities. The design and delivery of technical support have been treated as part of an initiative-wide learning process that is intertwined with learning at the partnership sites. Partly as a result of this approach, technical support has evolved into a variety of multi-faceted and related activities that are undertaken by several individuals associated with different organizations. The recognition that effective and targeted technical support requires multiple providers with different expertise and skills foreshadowed the realization that more than one partner is necessary at each site.

As the initiative continues, technical support must continue to evolve. This is essential if the number of partners (or collaborators) at each site increases. In this instance, technical support should expand to monitor and advise on the multiple relationships that will arise out of the new configurations. Additional technical support capacity will be required if, as recommended here, strategies and activities geared to fostering both public engagement and public will are enhanced. The need for new and different technical support relationships and activities should be an element of the theory of change for each site.

There are many initiative-driven activities that take place at the sites. In addition to visits and reviews by Carnegie officials, sites also respond to requests for visits, materials and interviews that inform SNS knowledge capture and dissemination activities. District leaders and core partners respond ambivalently to these interactions. Some are defensive, and regard these contacts as a form of evaluation, which, if adverse, will threaten their standing in the initiative. Further, many site partners are consumed with implementing the day-to-day work of the partnership and are less cognizant of and committed to the importance of mining and surfacing learning from the SNS investment.

Initiative leaders must stress the central role of learning in the initiative and clarify the multiple technical support, documentation and assessment functions and activities. Where possible, these activities should be scheduled at sufficient intervals and at times when they do not overly impinge on activities that site teams may regard as critical to their work.

What is key here is that each site has a clear understanding and explicit approach to documentation, assessment and evaluation. Some of the approach may be initiative-

wide, but other elements of evaluation and assessment should be customized for each site. This involves the development of annual benchmarks, indicators of progress and agreement on how assessment will be used for each partnership. In addition, each partnership, as part of its site-based theory of change, should promulgate local dissemination goals and strategies.

The initiative's commitment to functioning as a learning organization has influenced its emphasis on documentation, knowledge capture and dissemination. It is learning that partnerships between school districts and external organizations are complicated, although necessary, routes to transformation. It will be useful if SNS leaders will, at this juncture, review the experiences of other long-term philanthropic investments in systemic education reform that utilize the skills and expertise of external organizations and consider their relevance to SNS.

SNS has confronted significant turnover among district and external organization leaders, resistance in the central office and by some building leaders in some sites, and difficulties in fostering sufficient civic demand for systemic change. These issues are significant and bear directly on the ultimate success of the Initiative. They are, however, magnified because of the relatively large number of sites at which the Initiative operates and the simultaneous emergence at these sites of these issues. Yet these issues have affected other initiatives, which have relied to various extents on partnerships. It may be useful for SNS to review and catalogue and draw lessons from them.

4. Ensure that the initiative has sufficient time and resources to accomplish its goals.

SNS is an ambitious and complex undertaking. In less than five years, it has invested in seven sites and has seen a wide array of positive outcomes from these investments. As we discuss above, partnerships are demonstrating success in volatile contexts. The Corporation is drawing significant lessons from this work, and these lessons are in turn directly influencing ongoing efforts at the sites. The positive outcomes generated thus far are not, however, guaranteed.

More time is required to build on initial successes and to ensure that what lessons are learned have continuing direct impact on the work. Partnerships are paving a path to progress but the path is neither direct nor easy and for every two steps forward there is one that takes a site back or moves it to the side.

More time for the initiative, however, does not necessarily mean more time for each site. While progress has been uneven, it is clear that in some places it has been much greater than in others. For the most part, progress has been most pronounced where partners approach district reform as a partnership enterprise that combines both structural change and instructional innovation. In these sites, despite difficulties that arise out of unforeseen national and state policies, personality differences among collaborators and obstacles to learning imposed by circumstances beyond their authority or responsibility, districts and external partners have persevered in a shared

vision of transformed teaching and learning that embraces an entire community. These are the partnerships that may be willing to take additional risks – in including other partners, in reaching out to a diverse community, in discarding old structures and creating new, more flexible ones, and enabling educators to experiment with new and exciting ways of teaching – and which should be sustained on their journey to reform.

Other districts – those that sought tame partners, others that approached reform as an event rather than a process and still others that saw the community as alien or were unable to craft reforms to include all students – have provided the initiative with sufficient lessons. These can be surfaced and used as a guide without further investment in the sites. By phasing out some sites, the Corporation may devote resources that would have been applied to them to the remaining partnerships. These funds might be used for discrete activities of other organizations brokered by the Core Partner, building public engagement and developing public will, enhanced technical support, knowledge capture and dissemination.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS: SOME NEXT STEPS

Sustaining Partnerships surfaces findings about partnerships between school districts and external organizations that promote and facilitate education reforms. These findings are drawn from a review and analysis of the Carnegie Corporation's support for system-wide high school reform across seven urban districts through its Schools for a New Society initiative. The findings are specific to the participating partnerships, but they point to additional inquiries about such partnerships and the districts and the reform support organizations that enter into them. Much remains to be learned about the nature of partnerships and of the relationships that shape them, the characteristics of reform support organizations, the role and engagement of the community in reform, and capacity among all stakeholders in reform.

Partner organizations in SNS, in practice if not name, fell into two categories – core partners and expert partners. This raises questions about defining appropriate expectations for each in terms of roles, activities and outcomes. What does this differentiation in the type of partner mean for funders and their expectations of and interactions with the partners? What does it mean for the provision of technical support – does it alter the goals, structure and provision of it?

Relationships, both personal and institutional, shape partnerships and the work undertaken through them. How can positive relationships at both levels and particularly among leaders be fostered? What role does the funder have in this? How do partners hold each other accountable while maintaining a positive and productive working relationship?

Some partnerships are buoyed by positive institutional and personal relationships, including those between their leaders, yet the reforms undertaken by them flounder. Are some external organizations, regardless of the strength of the relationships between their leaders and district leaders, poorly suited to being a core partner? What are the characteristics of an organization well-equipped to serve as a core partner, and what are the traits of organizations better able to function as an expert partner? What are the implications for funders if the only organization(s) able to participate in district reform in a community is an expert partner?

Sometimes district action or inaction may lead to a mismatch between the partners. The district may not want a partner and therefore, if required, will seek out one that is tame. Can the independence and authority of a tame partner be cultivated so that it is able to assume a leading role in reform and make meaningful contributions to it?

Partners not only fall into the core/expert categories, they also tend to function primarily as either “push” organizations or “pull” organizations. Most of the SNS partner organizations focus their energies and resources on pushing districts to change and work closely with them to do so. Can an organization working hand-in-hand with a district effectively fill the role of a pull organization? Can it successfully cultivate and

join community demand for reform without undermining its productive working relationship with the district?

Questions around community engagement and demand (will) for reform are critical because so few districts and partners understand either and because both are central to the long term success and maintenance of reform. Who comprises “the community” of stakeholders for district reform? What are their roles in it and how can they be engaged effectively? What is required for “the community” to take ownership of its high schools and of their reform? Can this be incorporated into a theory of change for district reform?

At the heart of reform – for districts, external partners and the community – is capacity, the capacity of stakeholders to undertake reform and sustain it. Even high capacity institutions and communities must continue to grow to respond to shifting contexts and emerging needs. How can an external partner build its own capacity to support and promote reform while helping its district partner build capacity as well? What are indicators of a community’s capacity to demand and foster reform, how should it be cultivated and by whom?

Questions of capacity have, as well, implications for funders. What can a funder do when a district has greater capacity to undertake reform than its external partner does or when the size of the district and the scope of reform dwarfs the partner’s resources? Looking inward, if a funder assumes an activist role in reform, to whom is it accountable for its actions and for the development of its own capacity?

Finding answers to these and other questions is critical. The widespread recognition that school districts need support if they are to succeed in reform has made partnerships between districts and external organizations more common and, increasingly, the recipients of generous funding from multiple sources. Probing these partnerships, learning when and how they work and when and how they do not and what can be accomplished through them is increasingly urgent.

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APPENDIX A: SNS SITE BACKGROUNDS

Boston Public Schools/Boston Plan for Excellence

Boston Public Schools

Superintendent: Thomas Payzant

Number of students: 57,742

Number of high school students: 18,509

Number of high schools: 31

Student Ethnicity

Student Ethnicity

White	14.0
Black	45.5
Hispanic	31.2
Asian	8.9
Native American	0.4

Economically disadvantaged: 73.5 percent

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) Tests

	Grade 10 English Language Arts			
	2002	2003	2004	2005
Advanced	10	9	9	11
Proficient	25	27	29	27
Needs Improvement	31	34	37	35
Failing	35	30	25	27

	Grade 10 Mathematics			
	2002	2003	2004	2005
Advanced	12	19	21	22
Proficient	12	17	21	17
Needs Improvement	24	27	31	28
Failing	51	37	27	33

Since the mid-1990s, when superintendent Thomas Payzant arrived, Boston Public Schools has been a district committed to improve outcomes for students. The district, at times on its own but often in collaboration with one or several local organizations, has pursued various strategies to reform instruction and learning across the district. It has demonstrated a willingness to test different ideas and new strategies such as the Pilot Schools Network. Pilot Schools were created in 1994 in response to the passage of a charter school law through a joint initiative of the district, mayor and teacher's union; they operate with

considerable autonomy from the district and in accordance with a series of principles that include: high expectations, democratic school governance, small, personalized schools, learning that is authentic, challenging and creative, and cultivation of teacher knowledge and skill. The Pilot Schools also serve as a research and development arm for the district so that effective strategies that emerge from them can be disseminated to and replicated across the district. The Pilot Schools are one indicator of the district's long-standing commitment to developing and implementing strategic, innovative and effective reforms that will lead to better teaching and increased learning.

Boston Plan for Excellence

Executive Director: Ellen Guiney

Number of staff: NA

Number of staff dedicated to Schools for a New Society: NA

The Boston Plan for Excellence (BPE) is a local education fund, which was founded in 1984 to provide mini-grants to teachers to support classroom innovations and college scholarships to students. Seeking to foster deeper, more sustainable improvements in teaching and learning in schools and across the district, BPE reorganized in 1995 and has collaborated with the district on several significant initiatives. Much of BPE's work has focused on developing and implementing effective professional development approaches and promoting literacy.

Partnership History

BPS and BPE have worked together closely since 1996 when Payzant and Guiney developed a whole school reform model that aligned with Payzant's comprehensive reform plan for the district and BPE began implementing the model in 27 schools. As this work was beginning, BPE won a grant from the Annenberg Foundation to support systemic reform in BPS. Under the reform plan created by BPE and BPS and supported by Annenberg as well as other funders, BPE had oversight of and responsibility for reform in half the district's schools. Following the end of the Annenberg grant, BPE was no longer in charge of the district's schools but it continued to work in close coordination with the district. The work between BPE and BPS is buoyed by the close working relationship between Payzant and Guiney

Schools for a New Society: Original Plan

Goals:

Reduce the profound alienation many of Boston's high school students feel in and for schools and significantly improve their literacy skills.

Framework to Guide Reform:

1. School-based strategies to change relationships and improve instruction.
2. District-based strategies to address central problems.
3. Initiatives with the community to bring more adults into students' lives.

Key Reform Components:

1. A full-time instruction coach at each school to help teams of teachers use a common set of literacy practices and continuously assess individual student progress.
2. Continued development and accelerated operationalization of smaller schools or Small Learning Communities (SLCs) in high schools.
3. Targeted technical assistance to SLCs from Jobs for the Future on the difficult issues of climate, culture, and relationships and on project-based learning; and from flexible teams of expert central and other staff on operational obstacles.
4. An initiative to explore using full-time parent organizers to inform and engage parents and students, under the direction of Harvard's Dr. Pedro Noguera.
5. Redesigned support to high schools, including the designation of one of six new high-level positions as Instructional Leader for High Schools.
6. Systematic central review of all high school policies that hamper the work of SLCs and a process to revise those policies for all schools.
7. New effort to differentiate support to schools based on their reform work and student performance and to allow them more flexibility in decision making.
8. Retooling of school-business partnerships, brokered through the Boston Compact, to focus their support in each SLC or small school.
9. Establishment of Next Steps fund to seed and strengthen innovative projects between SLCs and their higher education and community partners.
10. Design and implementation of broad-based effort to inform and engage the community in support of high school reform.

Hamilton County Department of Education/Public Education Foundation

Hamilton County Department of Education

Superintendent: Jesse Register

Number of students: 40,191

Number of high school students: 12,277

Number of high schools: 17

Student Ethnicity (%)

White	62.8
Black	33.0
Hispanic	2.4
Asian	1.5
Native American	0.2
Pacific Islander	0.0

Economically disadvantaged: 49.7 percent

Gateway Exam (Grades 9 - 12)

	2002		2003		2004	
	% Below Proficient	% Proficient & Advanced	% Below Proficient	% Proficient & Advanced	% Below Proficient	% Proficient & Advanced
Math (Algebra I)	30	70	35	65	33	67
Science (Biology I)	7	93	5	95	4	96
English (English II)	n/a	n/a	13	87	8	92

The Hamilton County Department of Education (HCDE) is a unique school district. The result of a merger in 1997 between the predominantly black city schools of Chattanooga and the primarily white schools of Hamilton County, it contains urban, suburban and rural schools as well as the strengths and challenges of each. While many in the community of all backgrounds were skeptical of, even resistant to the merger, Superintendent Register, working in collaboration with the Public Education Foundation, saw it as an opportunity to improve education for all students in Hamilton County rather than an impediment to their academic success. HCDE has tested different strategies for improving schools at every level; strengthening teacher quality and principal leadership throughout its various efforts.

In September 2005, Dr. Register announced that he is retiring from the superintendency in June 2006.

Public Education Foundation

President: Dan Challener, Ph.D.

Number of staff: 23

Number of staff dedicated to Schools for a New Society: 4⁹

Founded in 1988, the Public Education Foundation (PEF) is a local education fund. Its sole purpose is to improve public education in Hamilton County. It seeks to do so by, among other things, providing expertise and critical information, cultivating public awareness and involvement, and essential assistance in collaborative reform initiatives it undertakes with HCDE.

Partnership History

In its early years, PEF undertook a variety of programmatic initiatives to improve public schools in the county. While innovative, these tended to focus on narrowly targeted issues or on a small group of schools; they were not systemic in scope. That changed when with the merger of the city and county school systems and the arrival of Register, hired to guide the merger, who saw PEF as a valuable resource that could be drawn upon. Since 1998, PEF and HCDE has undertaken a succession of increasingly complex and far-reaching initiatives that, collectively, have the potential to transform public education from kindergarten through high school.

The first of these systemic initiatives was a community-wide effort, led by PEF, to develop rigorous curriculum standards for the merged system. The success of that collaboration led to the opportunity, through the Chattanooga-based Benwood Foundation, to pursue reform at the elementary school level. This, in turn, set the stage for the Carnegie Corporation and the Schools for a New Society Initiative. Most recently, HCDE and PEF have turned their attention, with funding from the locally-based Lyndhurst Foundation and the NEA Foundation, to reforming middle schools.

Schools for a New Society: Original Plan

Goals:

1. Each student will attend a school where she or he will be known well and will complete a course of study that engages that student's passions and interests.
2. Students' motivation and performance will increase through flexible use of time and place in meeting their needs.
3. Each student will benefit from a challenging, relevant and engaging curriculum.
4. Each student will attend a school where teachers, principals and staff are provided the support and training required to achieve the vision.

Framework to Guide Reform:

1. Building a learning network for principals and other school leaders.
2. Facilitate development of professional learning communities in schools and district-wide.
3. Develop structures to ensure student voice in policy and instructional decisions.
4. Expand community engagement in and support for public high schools.

⁹ This does not include PEF staff who contribute to SNS, such as the Director of the Leadership Initiative, the Director of Research & Effectiveness or the President, but do not staff it full-time.

5. Alter the roles, relationships and responsibilities of district level leadership with schools and the community.

Key Reform Components:

1. Every school creates its own vision of an effective and engaging high school and a plan for realizing that vision. The planning and implementation process is led by a school leadership team comprised of the principal, teachers, parents and students.

Examples of Goal 1 strategies used by schools:

- a. Creating small schools within larger ones, including 9th grade academies
- b. Sustaining the amount of time teachers spend with a group of students through looping

Examples of Goal 2 strategies used by schools:

- a. Flexible scheduling to vary school day and school term
- b. Community-based learning

Examples of Goal 3 strategies used by schools:

- a. Project-based learning, portfolio assessment and graduation by portfolio
- b. Increased rigor in academic courses and graduation requirements
- c. Adoption of career academies

Examples of Goal 4 strategies used by schools:

- a. Flexible scheduling to enable teacher collaboration
- b. Effective professional development

2. The district will redefine its role and function from mandating and monitoring to providing guidance, support and information. To fulfill this new role, the district will, among other things:

- a. Establish the position of Director of Instruction for Secondary Education
- b. Create an academic cabinet to focus solely on improving instruction
- c. Ensure that school teams have on-site expert support
- d. Collaborate with PEF to foster strong instructional leadership among principals and future school leaders
- e. Set rigorous goals and hold schools accountable for meeting them
- f. Support a transition program for all rising ninth graders.

3. The community, through and facilitated by the Project Leadership Team – a group of community leaders who provided critical advice and support during the planning process – will assume a larger role in Hamilton County’s high schools. They will engage other community members to, among other things:

- a. Create community work experiences for students that are embedded in and enhance their classroom work
- b. Transform vocational education
- c. Foster the transition of high school graduates to higher education so that more attend and fewer need remediation
- d. Hold HCDE, PEF and other reform participants accountable for achieving their goals

Expected Outcomes:

- 1. 95 percent of all entering 9th graders proceed to 10th grade in one year
- 2. 90 percent of students pass the state competency exams
- 3. 90 percent of students graduate from high school
- 4. Attendance rates exceed 95 percent
- 5. Remediation rates at postsecondary institutions decrease by 75 percent

Houston Independent School District/Houston A+ Challenge

Houston Independent School District

Superintendent: Abelardo Saavedra

Number of students: 208,945

Number of high school students: 46,787

Number of high schools: 37

Student Ethnicity

White	8.9
Black	29.0
Hispanic	59.0
Asian	3.0
Native American	0.1

Economically disadvantaged: 82.7

TAAS Exam Percent Passing

	2002	2001
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Grade 10

Reading	92.1	85.6
Writing	86.8	83.2
Math	88.9	85.3

TAKS Met Standard

	2003	2004
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Grade 9

Reading	66.0	79.0
Math	38.0	45.0

Grade 10

English Language Arts	59.0	67.0
Math	48.0	51.0
Science	39.0	50.0
Social Studies	70.0	81.0

Grade 11

English Language Arts	60.2	80.0
Math	62.0	80.0
Science	57.4	77.0
Social Studies	84.5	95.0

In 2003, the Texas Legislature replaced the state's assessment, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) exam, with a new, more rigorous exam, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS).

	Graduated	GED	Continued HS	Dropped Out
Class of 2001	72.0	4.3	11.0	12.7
Class of 2002	75.3	3.2	12.3	9.2
Class of 2003	71.3	2.9	11.2	14.6

Houston Independent School District (HISD) is the largest district in Texas and the seventh largest in the nation. The district has long been considered a leader in developing and instituting strategies to improve student learning, in particular ones that close the achievement gap between minority and majority students and between low-income students and their middle- and upper-income peers. In 2002, the Broad Foundation awarded HISD its first Broad Prize for Urban Education in recognition of the gains Houston’s minority and low-income children had made and of the efficacy of the approach the district was using.

The Houston A+ Challenge

Executive Director: Michele Pola, Ed.D.

Number of staff: 15

The Houston A+ Challenge (HAC) was established in 1997, following a community-wide, year-and-a-half planning effort, with the awarding of a five-year, \$20 million grant from the Annenberg Foundation to reform Houston’s public schools. An additional \$60 million was raised from local funders to support reform efforts not only in Houston but in several other area districts as well. HAC’s mission is to “promote an academically rich and purposeful education for more of our children and to demonstrate how such an education could become possible for all our children.” The Challenge addresses multiple issues that influence student success including school leadership, professional development, teacher preparation, and personalized learning environments; it also promotes and assists in implementing whole school reform.

Partnership History

HISD and HAC have collaborated on an array of substantive projects since 1997. The Challenge has provided extensive professional development opportunities to teachers in Houston and has fostered the development and implementation of Critical Friends Groups, facilitated teacher groups that, among other things, review student work, teaching strategies and current research. HISD and the Challenge have collaborated on a comprehensive after school programs that fosters students’ academic growth and social development. HAC has provided direct assistance and support to HISD schools pursuing whole school reform.

Schools for a New Society: Original Plan

Goals:

The overarching goal of Houston Schools for a New Society (HSNS) is “to create high schools that are centers of excellence for all students.” Contained in this are twin sub-goals of improving student performance and increasing the capacity of high schools to provide a

high-quality education to all students through systemic whole school reform. Under the sub-goals is a series of 10 objectives.

Objectives:

1. Reduce the gap between minority and majority groups in major subject areas
2. Increase graduation rate
3. Increase student participation in academically rigorous curricula
4. Increase the number of graduates prepared for higher education or the workforce
5. Increase the academic success of ninth graders
6. Increase student engagement in their own learning
7. Increase staff knowledge of and ability to implement school reform models
8. Significantly decrease the isolation and anonymity of high school students
9. Significantly increase all community stakeholder support involvement and sense of responsibility for improved student achievement
10. Significantly increase the capacity of high schools to implement deep systemic reform

Framework to Guide Reform:

There are four strands that frame the work school faculties, HISD staff as well as HAC staff are undertaking to transform the district's high schools.

1. Professional and organizational learning. HISD and HAC will, among other things:
 - a. provide continuous professional development determined by needs
 - b. ensure quality professional development
2. School restructuring. HISD and HAC will, among other things:
 - a. provide every student with opportunities to acquire academic literacy
 - b. provide students with a challenging and rigorous curriculum
 - c. expand performance assessment
 - d. personalize the school environment
 - e. replicate tested, validated whole school reform models
3. Community engagement. HISD and HAC will, among other things:
 - a. engage all stakeholders in activities that support and sustain reform
 - b. facilitate youth engagement
4. District change and support for transforming high schools. HISD and HAC will, among other things:
 - a. provide structures for continuing and ongoing internal and external dialogue and communication
 - b. redirect financial resources to transforming schools

Key Reform Components

Schools

1. Redesign schools as small learning communities of 300 – 400 students who stay together for at least two years with 4 – 8 teachers. Schools will select among district-approved whole school reform models.
2. Institute rigorous curriculum that is linked to real world and is vertically and horizontally integrated.
3. Place a school facilitator in each school who will guide and support the change process.
4. Identify a literacy coach at each school who will support teachers.

District

1. Continue decentralization including student-based budgeting at the school level.
2. Develop an online Resource Center so that school faculties will have access to research, information about best instructional practices and more.
3. Redefine responsibilities of administrative district personnel so that they serve as coaches, modelers and mentors to school faculty.

HAC

1. Coordinate community activities
2. Provide training in schools
3. Assist in generating additional funds to support HSNS

Providence Public Schools/Rhode Island Children's Crusade for Higher Education

Providence Public Schools

Superintendent: Donnie Evans

Number of students: 25,742

Number of high school students: 8,201

Number of high schools: 12

Student Ethnicity

White	13.0
Black	22.0
Hispanic	57.0
Asian	7.2
Native American	0.7

Economically disadvantaged: 78.7 percent

	New Standards Reference Exam High School ¹⁰		
	2002	2003	2004
English Language Arts			
Below standards	40.9	43.0	28.3
Nearly achieved standard	35.0	33.0	33.5
Achieved standard	22.3	21.8	22.2
Achieved standard with honors	1.6	1.9	1.9
Math			
Below standards	80.4	75.1	65.0
Nearly achieved standard	7.2	10.6	12.4
Achieved standard	8.6	11.2	15.5
Achieved standard with honors	3.5	2.9	7.0

Source: Rhode Island Department of Education

Since 1999, Providence has been a district focused on reform. That year, the then-superintendent, Diana Lam led the development of a district-wide reform plan, Rekindling the Dream. The plan had three goals: increasing student achievement, creating capacity within the district to support reform and foster learning, and, strengthening parent and public engagement. It also had 10 strategies for achieving these goals, including one targeted to high schools – “redesign all secondary schools to become more nurturing, academically rigorous environments.” The district was awarded a grant of \$13 million from the Gates Foundation to support implementation of its plan; it was well-positioned to seize the

¹⁰ The source of assessment data for 2002 and 2003 is the 2003 district-level report card prepared by the state; it presents exam results for 10th graders. The 2004 assessment data is drawn from the 2004 district-level report card prepared by the state; it presents exam results for 11th graders, not 10th.

opportunity provided by Carnegie's invitation to prepare a proposal to reform its high schools.

In 2002, Superintendent Lam left Providence; she was replaced by Dr. Melody Johnson, who had served as Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning in the district. In spring 2005, Superintendent Johnson resigned from her position. She was replaced by Dr. Donnie Evans in September 2005.

Rhode Island Children's Crusade for Higher Education

President: Mary Silvia Harrison

Number of staff: NA

Number of staff dedicated to SNS: NA

The Crusade was founded in 1989 by a public-private partnership to increase access to and success in college among low-income and minority children. These children confront an array of hurdles along the pathway to postsecondary education, which often prevent them from enrolling in and completing postsecondary education. The Crusade offers research-based programs designed to ensure that at-risk students are that focus on preparing students for higher education. The programs focus on four core areas: academic enrichment, social-personal development, career awareness and postsecondary preparation. The Crusade does not limit its programs to high school or even middle school students; it begins working with students in the third grade.

Partnership History

The Crusade partners with schools in five districts, including Providence, in which 80 percent or more of students qualify for the federal free and reduced lunch program. Its support programs are offered through these school-based partnerships.

The SNS initiative is the first district level collaboration between the Crusade and Providence Public Schools. In the SNS planning period, then-superintendent Lam sought out the Crusade's assistance because of its expertise in youth development and its experience in community engagement, both in reaching out to parents and to other sectors of the community around youth issues.

The district has also engaged other external groups – most notably the Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh and the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University – with which it works closely on such critical reform issues as instruction, learning and organizational structures.

Schools for a New Society: Original Plan

Goals:

The overarching goal of SNS in Providence was “to transform Providence high schools into learning communities where all students meet or exceed high academic standards and are prepared for success in life and the labor market.

Framework to Guide Reform:

1. Focus on the core; substantive change must occur at the heart of education – the instructional core.
2. Provide continuous job-embedded professional development for all professional staff that is linked to what students need to know and be able to do.
3. View change as systemic; set priorities within a comprehensive and systemic plan and do a few things extremely well.
4. Reform for all; improvement should affect every child, every teacher, every classroom and every high school, while at the same time decreasing the variation among these units.

Key Reform Components:

Providence created nine primary reform strands and an array of strategies within each strand. The strands and examples of strategies are listed below.

1. Create small, personalized learning communities where every student is known as an individual.
 - a. Implement ninth grade plans, including teams and summer transition programs
 - b. Implement tenth grade teams and school specific designs for small, personalized environments, including the vertical academies, creation of advisories and mentoring programs, flexible schedules and individual learning plans
2. Ensure that all students are held to the same high standards and have access to academically rigorous, high quality instruction.
 - a. Review and revise existing policies, procedures and practices that impact high expectation and access, including graduation requirements.
 - b. Implement AP courses, including training, materials and exams.
3. Provide all students with standards-base curriculum and instruction that is aligned across grades, content areas and with assessments.
 - a. Complete initial phase of standards implementation plan including course scope and sequence development and standards mapping to electives and small learning communities.
 - b. Develop student performance products and benchmarks and rubrics for assessments.
4. Structure networks supporting student success that include students, parents, staff and the broader community.
 - a. Hire high school parent engagement coordinator.

- b. Develop and implement high school plans for family engagement – including development of PTOs, web sites, community forums, parent-teacher-student meetings, etc.
- 5. Embed principles and practices of youth development in teaching, learning and school organization.
 - a. Implement community study circles.
 - b. Train district and school-based staff, students and parents in 40 developmental assets.
- 6. Make curriculum and instruction relevant by situating learning in real world contexts including strategies such as service learning, apprenticeships and project-based learning.
 - a. Develop and implement curriculum at the high school level.
 - b. Develop district instructional frameworks and standards alignment.
- 7. Enable high quality teaching through job-embedded professional development shaped by district-wide instructional frameworks, which promote social learning for the collective good.
 - a. Literacy coaches and lead teams implement school-based professional development.
 - b. Implement team teaching/common planning.
- 8. Implement an organizational structure that connects leadership and learning.
 - a. Restructure central office roles to reconnect to classroom in order to assist high schools in implementing learning teams and wheels of assistance.
 - b. Reevaluate and restructure school-based positions and duties.
- 9. Use data systematically and systemically to drive decisions about equity, quality, accountability and instructional improvement.
 - a. Install Socrates Data Web, develop database, refine reports and system development at school and district level.
 - b. Build district-level capacity to use data to inform redesign process and evaluate program effectiveness and classroom-level capacity to use data to inform practice and improve individual student learning.

Expected Outcomes:

Student Outcomes:

- 1. All students in the learning communities will complete a core standards-based program and will demonstrate essential learnings through a defined set of products and exhibitions.

2. All students will be positively engaged with the schools as a learning community as shown by higher attendance and lower dropout rate, students demonstrating a sense of responsibility for their own learning, and participating in school redesign/governance.
3. Literacy and numeracy achievement will increase and gaps in English and math performance will decrease, as shown by performance trends on such measures as the RI New Standards Assessments and Stanford 9 Assessments.
4. All high school students will demonstrate performance improvement on multiple indicators as they progress through the grade levels.

Long-Term Outcomes

1. High schools restructured into small learning academies that offer personalized support and a rigorous, standards-based curriculum to all students.
2. Graduation requirements that reflect high expectations.
3. Focused professional development that results in teachers effectively engaging students in the learning process and developing essential proficiencies.
4. Parents more engaged as partners in their children's education.
5. Community and district partnership that create opportunities for apprenticeship learning.
6. District and school leadership structures and data-use capacities that support improvement.

Sacramento City Unified School District/LEED

Sacramento City Unified School District

Superintendent: Maggie Carrillo Mejia

Number of students: 51,420

Number of high school students: 14,708

Number of high schools: 6¹¹

Student Ethnicity (percent)

White	22.0
Black	22.0
Hispanic	30.2
Asian	20.8
Native American	1.4
Pacific Islander	1.1
Filipino	1.1

Economically disadvantaged: 64.5 percent

California High School Exit Exam Percent Passing

	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA
Total	46	75	45	69	39	59	68	68	62	66
Economically Disadvantaged	34	63	36	57	31	45	62	60	57	61
Non-Economically Disadvantaged	51	82	52	78	44	70	78	82	71	89
English Language Learners	11	31	25	39	23	34	58	46	29	29

CA Standardized Testing & Reporting Grade 10

2003 2004 2005

English Language Arts

% Advanced	9.0	12.0	11.0
% Proficient	16.0	18.0	20.0
% Basic	29.0	31.0	27.0
% Below Basic	27.0	25.0	23.0
% Far Below Basic	20.0	15.0	19.0

Geometry

% Advanced	1.0	0.0	1.0
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¹¹ The district also has four charter high schools and an independent study school that serves K-12.

% Proficient	14.0	7.0	8.0
% Basic	37.0	36.0	23.0
% Below Basic	44.0	47.0	45.0
% Far Below Basic	4.0	9.0	23.0

Algebra II

% Advanced	12.0	7.0	5.0
% Proficient	31.0	19.0	23.0
% Basic	35.0	37.0	33.0
% Below Basic	16.0	29.0	24.0
% Far Below Basic	5.0	8.0	15.0

Biology/Life Sciences

% Advanced	4.0	4.0	3.0
% Proficient	20.0	15.0	12.0
% Basic	37.0	42.0	40.0
% Below Basic	24.0	24.0	29.0
% Far Below Basic	14.0	16.0	16.0

Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD) has pursued comprehensive reform of both schools and the district for almost a decade. In 1997 the school board hired Jim Sweeney to serve as superintendent with a charge to improve schools and outcomes for students. In 1998, Sweeney presented to the board a plan for district reform, *High Standards, Great Results*, which the board approved. Early results of reform efforts were promising for elementary and middle schools; they were less so for high schools, which were proving to be difficult to change. The opportunity offered by the Carnegie Corporation was a chance to focus more deeply on transforming high schools.

Sweeney resigned in 2003, in part due to his advocacy for closing one of the district's traditional high schools and re-opening it as a charter school. He was replaced in 2004 by the current superintendent, Carrillo Mejia.

Linking Education and Economic Development (LEED)

Interim Chief Executive Officer/Director of School Redesign: Akili Moses Israel

Number of staff: 14

Number of staff dedicated to School Redesign: 5

LEED was in 1992 by a consortium of business leaders from throughout the Sacramento area who were concerned that emerging workforce needs would not be filled without greater communication, interaction and collaboration between the business community and educators. LEED seeks to strengthen the Sacramento-area economy by facilitating partnerships across the business, non-profit and educational sectors in to improve education and workforce training. Its work falls into four primary categories: workforce development; school redesign (high school reform); youth development; and public education fund. LEED's activities serve more than 23 separate high school districts and 60 comprehensive high schools.

Partnership History

LEED's workforce development initiatives include programs that bring business leaders to schools to speak with students about their own experiences and career exploration, enable teachers to learn from employers in various fields about the skills and knowledge their students will need, place students in internships where they can gain critical experiences, and connect students to the workplace by spending a day shadowing workers in different fields and positions. Students and teachers from SCUSD participated in these activities.

Schools for a New Society: Original Plan

Goals:

Broadly, the purpose of the partnership between SCUSD and LEED is to create centers of teaching and learning "where students prepare themselves for the world of work and life, teachers facilitate learning based on student needs, principals are truly instructional leaders, and parent and community fully participate because they have meaningful roles."

SCUSD and LEED also set specific goals, which are essential in realizing this vision:

1. Implement a systems framework and administrative structure at the site and district levels that ensures achievement of systems goals
2. Create small, caring and personalized learning communities
3. Develop a student-centered education system with student supports and safety nets
4. Develop student pathways to the world of work and postsecondary education
5. Provide rigorous, relevant, standards-driven teaching and learning to meet the needs of all students
6. Create a culture of continuous learning
7. Create a culture of collective responsibility, ownership and partnership across neighborhoods and the community
8. Develop and sustain strong and meaningful home-school-community alliances

Framework to Guide Reform:

Underlying and leading to their goals for high school transformation, SCUSD and LEED identified seven essential elements that frame their reform work.

1. Small, caring and personalized learning communities
2. Student-centered system with student supports and safety nets
3. Student pathways to the world of work and postsecondary education
4. Rigorous, relevant, standards-driven teaching and learning
5. Culture of continuous learning
6. Collective responsibility
7. Home-school-community alliances

Key Reform Components:

SCUSD and LEED planned an array of strategies to reach each goal, examples of which follow.

Goal 1: Implement a framework and administrative structure at site and district levels that ensures achievement of systems goals.

- a. implement district-wide structural framework (e.g., divide schools into lower and upper divisions)
- b. redesign the central office and high school support structures to sustain transformation (e.g., establish School Improvement Facilitators – SIFs – to manage implementation at site level)

Goal 2: Create small, caring and personalized learning communities

- a. transform existing high schools into autonomous, theme-based small learning communities (SLCs) (e.g., create communities of approximately 200 students and a team of 6 – 10 staff at each high school)
- b. develop and implement small, specialty schools (e.g., map existing learning opportunities across the district)

Goal 3: Develop a student-centered education system with student supports and safety nets

- a. provide enriched and diverse opportunities for students to learn, perform and be recognized (e.g., develop and implement a repertoire of instructional strategies that includes work-based learning, service learning and project-based learning)
- b. provide students with support, services and safety nets (e.g., implement ninth grade transition programs)

Goal 4: Develop student pathways to world of work and postsecondary education

- a. ensure all students have a clear pathway to postsecondary education and careers (e.g., develop individualized academic and career plans for all students)
- b. restructure schools to provide students with clear pathways to postsecondary education and the world of work (e.g., create partnerships with two- and four-year colleges, businesses, community-based organizations, the city, the county and the state)

Goal 5: Provide rigorous, relevant, standards-driven teaching and learning to meet the needs of all students

- a. align standards, curriculum and assessment (e.g., define the skills, knowledge and abilities students will master by graduation)
- b. design and implement curriculum and instruction that meets high standards, is relevant to students' present and future lives and addresses the diverse learning needs of students (e.g., create instructional leadership teams at each school)

Goal 6: Create a culture of continuous learning

- a. institute district-wide structures to support capacity building (e.g., develop individual learning plans for all staff)

- b. build the capacity of staff to deliver quality instruction and facilitate learning (e.g., implement instructional leadership academy for principals, vice principals and other instructional leaders)

Goal 7: Create a culture of collective responsibility, ownership and partnership across neighborhoods and the community

- a. ensure high expectations and requirements are established and communicated to all stakeholders (e.g., identify and articulate collective responsibility targets)
- b. ensure staff, students and educational partners understand their roles and responsibilities (e.g., develop performance contracts)

Goal 8: Develop and sustain strong and meaningful home-school-community alliances

- a. establish an effective, two-way, customer-service oriented communication system between schools-homes-community and central office-homes-community (e.g., secure parent liaisons)
- b. build the capacity of educational partners to support teaching and learning (e.g., conduct educational forums and workshops on topics relevant to high school transformation)

Expected Outcomes

1. Ensure youth develop a set of core assets
2. Increase the percentage of students graduating from high school
3. Increase attendance and decrease truancy
4. Increase student proficiencies in reading and math
5. Increase overall student achievement
6. Decrease incidences of conflict and violence
7. Increase the percentage of students who successfully transition to postsecondary education and/or careers

**San Diego City Schools/CREATE, University of California, San Diego &
New American Schools**

San Diego City Schools

Superintendent: Carl Cohn

Number of students: 134,709

Number of high school students: 38,090

Number of high schools: 27

Student Ethnicity

White	25.9
Black	14.5
Hispanic	41.9
Asian	16.2

Economically disadvantaged: 55.5 percent

English language learners: 28.4 percent

**California High School Exit Exam
Percent Passing¹²**

	2001		2002		2003		2004	
	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA
Total	44	68	26	42	44	66	74	75
Economically Disadvantaged	27	52	20	36	32	51	61	61
Non-Economically Disadvantaged	57	80	32	49	52	74	85	89
English Language Learners	11	24	13	23	18	25	41	28

**CA Standardized Testing
& Reporting
Grade 10**

	2003	2004	2005
English Language Arts			
% Advanced	11.0	14.0	13.0
% Proficient	24.0	21.0	23.0
% Basic	31.0	31.0	30.0
% Below Basic	22.0	21.0	19.0
% Far Below Basic	13.0	13.0	13.0
Geometry			
% Advanced	0.0	0.0	0.0
% Proficient	3.0	3.0	4.0
% Basic	16.0	19.0	17.0
% Below Basic	60.0	56.0	49.0

¹² Students may take the California High School Exit Exam beginning in the tenth grade.

% Far Below Basic	20.0	22.0	30.0
Algebra II			
% Advanced	5.0	3.0	3.0
% Proficient	21.0	16.0	18.0
% Basic	28.0	27.0	28.0
% Below Basic	27.0	35.0	30.0
% Far Below Basic	19.0	19.0	21.0
Biology/Life Sciences			
% Advanced	7.0	7.0	11.0
% Proficient	23.0	17.0	17.0
% Basic	38.0	35.0	38.0
% Below Basic	19.0	22.0	23.0
% Far Below Basic	13.0	18.0	12.0

San Diego City Schools (SDCS) is the second largest school district in California and the 13th largest district in the country. It is economically and ethnically diverse and a significant portion of its students are English Language Learners. SDCS's pursuit of comprehensive systemic reform pre-dates its involvement in the Carnegie Corporation's Schools for a New Society Initiative. In 1999, SDCS, under the direction of its then-superintendent Alan Bersin, created a far-reaching plan, *Blueprint for Student Success*, to improve all of its schools, elementary through high school; the board of trustees approved the plan in 2000. Key elements of the plan included a more rigorous curriculum, enhanced school-level leadership, and more effective instruction. The high school reform plan developed for Carnegie builds on the *Blueprint*.

In the January 2005, following the election of a new school board, many of whom did not support his reforms, in November 2004, Bersin agreed to leave the superintendency. Dr. Cohn succeeded him in July 2005.

CREATE – University of California at San Diego

Director: Hugh “Bud” Mehan

Number of staff: 5

Number of affiliates: 23¹³

The Center for Research on Educational Equity and Teaching Excellence (CREATE) at the University of California San Diego (UCSD) was established in 1997 to cultivate a diverse student body on campus in large part by helping to increase the number of low-income and minority students qualified for postsecondary education. It seeks to fulfill this goal through four primary means:

1. Collaborating with districts and schools to provide, among other things, enrichment activities and professional development to teachers.

¹³ Most affiliates are faculty members at UCSD who hold appointments in other departments such as sociology, economics or education. They do not work full-time at CREATE.

2. Conducting research on strategies to improve educational opportunities for at-risk students
3. Offering high-quality education at UCSD's on-campus model school
4. Providing professional development to local educators

New American Schools

New American Schools (NAS) is a non-profit organization that provides technical assistance and support to schools, districts and state education agencies that are pursuing or facilitating comprehensive school reform strategies. With generous funding from the business and philanthropic communities, NAS has identified a cluster of research-based comprehensive school reform strategies that have demonstrated effectiveness in improving education and assists schools and districts in implementing them. It also conducts and supports extensive research on these reform strategies to continue refining and improving them as well as other aspects of reform.

Partnership History

Prior to the initiation of the high school reform effort, CREATE worked closely with nine SDCS to improve teacher quality through professional development. It also provided in-class tutoring, after-school enrichment programs and information to parents about the college-going process.

NAS was not initially a partner with SDCS and CREATE when high school reform was launched. It joined the effort in 2003, becoming the district's lead partner in high school reform, to assist the district in re-creating three large high schools as 18 small schools. NAS also provides guidance and support to the district in restructuring its systems and policies to facilitate reform at the school level.

Schools for a New Society: Original Plan

Goals:

Overarching goals for high school reform are:

1. Improve the quality of instruction
2. Improve the quality of instructional leadership

Within these overarching goals are three sub-goals or objectives:

1. Improving academic press or the environment, comprised of school policies, practices, norms, expectations and rewards, that surrounds students and teachers
2. Developing leadership within schools
3. Increasing personalization

Key Reform Components:

Reform elements fall within three broad strands:

1. Improving instruction through ongoing professional development tied to quality curriculum frameworks, standards and materials
2. Developing instructional leadership through work with principals, site subject administrators, and counselors to improve their ability to support quality teaching and increase their accountability for instructional outcomes
3. Providing students with multiple learning opportunities and supports to help them achieve standards, meet graduation requirements and prepare for postsecondary education and careers

Improving Instruction: Selected Strategies:

- a. site-based professional development (site administrators, coaches, staff developers) in literacy and math
- b. intensive institutes in math and science
- c. integrated assessments

Developing Instructional Leadership: Selected Strategies:

- a. intensive institutes for principals
- b. study groups for principals
- c. principal support groups led by mentor principals

Providing Students Learning Opportunities and Supports

- a. creating educationally coherent pathways of study based on high-quality core courses and sequential elective courses
- b. providing enhanced learning opportunities through, among other things, dual enrollment, career academies, internships and extended learning time
- c. building smaller schools

Expected Outcomes:

1. All students in San Diego City Schools will learn and achieve at a level high enough to meet district and state requirements.
 - a. 100 percent of seniors will have passed the California High School Exit Exam
 - b. 100 percent of the seniors will meet district graduation requirements
 - c. The four-year dropout rate will not exceed the 2000-01 baseline
2. Students graduating from San Diego City Schools will be prepared for a four-year college or university and/or the career field of their choice.
 - a. Two-thirds of SDCS graduates will have met the UC/CSU a-g course requirements
 - b. 100 percent of the students who enroll at a UC or CSU campus will meet the entrance requirements for English and math proficiency
 - c. The Course of Study will describe a clearly articulated series of courses that meet UC/CSU entrance requirements and state Education Code requirements

3. Students will receive the support they need to succeed academically and meet graduation and college entrance requirements.
 - a. 100 percent of the students will be placed in high-quality, rigorous courses and receive support and intervention as needed to ensure their success

Worcester Public Schools/The Hiatt Center, Clark University

Superintendent: James Caradonio

Number of students: 24,538

Number of high school students: 7,106

Number of high schools: 6

Student Ethnicity

Student Ethnicity

White	46.5
Black	12.6
Hispanic	31.8
Asian	8.4
Native American	0.7

Economically disadvantaged: 61.1 percent

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) Tests

	Grade 10 English Language Arts				
	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Advanced	10	7	9	10	5
Proficient	32	30	29	31	24
Needs Improvement	37	39	38	32	37
Failing	20	24	24	27	34

	Grade 10 Mathematics				
	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Advanced	14	11	12	8	8
Proficient	21	19	20	17	17
Needs Improvement	33	34	31	35	34
Failing	32	36	38	40	41

Worcester Public Schools (WPS) is the third largest school district in Massachusetts. Like many urban districts, its student population has rapidly grown more diverse.

The Jacob Hiatt Center for Urban Education, Clark University

Director: Thomas Del Prete

Number of staff: NA

Number of staff dedicated to Schools for a New Society: NA

The Hiatt Center was founded in 1991 to be a collaborative venture between Clark University and Worcester Public Schools (WPS). Much of the Center's work has focused on improving the preparation future teachers receive during their training and strengthening the knowledge and skills of those teachers already in schools. Among other things, the Center established and operates the Professional Development School Collaborative, a partnership of five schools and the Center, through which a community of learners from university faculty to teachers and principals to Clark university teacher education students has been created. The Center also founded a 7-12 school, the University Park campus School, where its students, who are predominantly low-income and minority, are excelling; the school was named a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence in 2001.

Partnership History

As noted, the Hiatt Center was established to work closely with WPS to better understand the needs of urban students and districts and to develop effective responses to those needs, largely by focusing on improving teacher quality. Much of the Center's work has been located within one quadrant of the district – the quadrant that is home to the university and that is economically impoverished and diverse. The Center's work in this quadrant is part of a larger initiative that the university has joined to foster economic rejuvenation in the community. The schools participating in its professional development collaborative as well as University Park Campus School, which the Center opened in 1997 at the request of then-superintendent James Garvey, are within this quadrant.

Schools for a New Society: Original Plan

Goals:

To provide full opportunity for learning, build student resilience, motivation and aspiration, ensure academic growth and high levels of academic achievement for all students, and prepare all students for postsecondary education and participation in a “new society.”

Framework to Guide Reform:

1. Small, personalized learning communities
2. Academic opportunity, support, challenge, growth and achievement
3. Youth development
4. School-community integration and partnership

Key Reform Goals and Sample Strategies

1. Develop small learning communities that unite clear expectations for high academic achievement, a unified curriculum philosophy and personalized peer and adult support.
 - a. Establish looping, interdisciplinary teams or multi-grade clusters in middle and high schools
 - b. Phase in conversion of large schools to small schools

2. Integrate literacy development, numeracy and academic learning across the curriculum; build academic competence; provide opportunity for inquiry-driven and interdisciplinary team-based projects; base learning on proficiency and mastery of standards rather than time; combine rigor and relevance-connected curriculum and community life.
 - a. Literacy coaches and core academic teachers implement literacy development strategies across the curriculum such as reading and writing workshops.
 - b. Establish “Preparation Academies” focused on content-based literacy development and numeracy for lowest quartile of students
3. Develop active roles for students in every aspect of school life.
 - a. Involve students in team and school governance through a variety of councils, committees and teams
 - b. Students have opportunities to participate in peer leadership and mentoring programs, community problem-solving, community service and community-based internships and recreation programs
4. Develop learning communities based on collegiality, sharing, reflection, inquiry, collaboration and commitment to knowledge developing content expertise and best practice.
 - a. Teachers meet regularly to assess student work and growth against disciplinary standards and “exemplars,” to assess student needs based on test data, to develop strategies for supporting students in challenging courses, and to develop curriculum and teaching based on “best practice”
 - b. District curriculum liaisons help teachers co-plan projects, assess student work, and establish goals for and plans to implement best practice.
5. Develop an assessment system that focuses on intellectual and academic growth, that stimulates learning for both students and adults, and that guides teaching.
 - a. Teachers and students use multiple and authentic assessment strategies
 - b. Curriculum liaisons work with principals, literacy coaches and interdisciplinary teacher teams to provide coaching in the assessment process and to review and discuss benchmarks and exemplars.
6. Develop strategies to expand and sustain a new base of parental support and involvement.
 - a. The school district will adopt the Epstein model and apply it in the required school improvement process.
 - b. Involvement of Latino, African-American and Asian-American constituency groups in activities that support student achievement
7. Build awareness, support and partnerships with key constituencies; develop general community awareness and support; help put education back at the heart of civic life.

- a. WEP continues sponsor-ship of community forums on secondary school change, student performance and youth development
 - b. WEP continues to support the mobilization and organization of African-American and Asian American groups.
8. Develop small schools and other partnerships focused on professional development, curriculum enhancement, teacher education, and direct support for student academic learning and transition to college.
 - a. College students tutor secondary students based on needs
 - b. Professional Development School collaborations on secondary teacher preparation continue or develop between Clark, Holy Cross, Worcester State College, Worcester Polytechnic Institute and the A.L.L. School, Burncoat High, Sullivan Education Complex small schools, South High Complex small schools
 9. Develop a coordinated school-community effort to promote youth development.
 - a. District and school student support services and community partnerships are evaluated with input from WEP Youth Development Subcommittee
 - b. Incoming ninth graders have a Student Success Plan that is developed by the student, family, teachers and community partners.
 10. Build and coordinate community-school collaborations that strengthen connections between academic curriculum and community life, foster new, powerful learning experiences and meet high standards.
 - a. Cultural and educational institutions pilot ninth grade community-connected curriculum models developed by members of the WEP Community Curriculum Committee in light of newly developed curriculum criteria
 - b. A city-wide system for co-planning and professional development is established; summer professional development institute is planned and implemented

Expected Outcomes:

1. The number of minority students, ELL and low-income students who pass ninth grade and achieve in core academic courses increases yearly.
2. The number of minority, ELL and low-income students who achieve the “proficiency” standards on the MCAS tests in English Language Arts and Mathematics required for graduation increases yearly.
3. Student performance on the open-ended portions of the MCAS Language Arts and grade dropout rate decreases for all students.
4. Minority, ELL and low-income student enrollment in advanced placement program increases.
5. Minority, ELL and low-income student participation college level courses at higher education partner sites and in the Diploma Plus program with Quinsigamond College increases yearly.
6. The number of minority, ELL and low-income students who enter a four-year college program upon graduation increase.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEWEES AND FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Name		Organization
Armando	Alaniz	Houston Independent School District
Lili	Allen	Jobs for the Future
David	Andrews	Providence School Department
Cathy	Astrella	Worcester Public Schools
Steve	Ball	Hamilton County Department of Education
Richard	Barajas	Houston Independent School District
John	Bassett	Clark University
Alan	Bersin	San Diego City Schools
Monica	Bond	UCALAA (United, Caucasian, Asian, Latino, African American, Native American and Black)
Bernard	Bowler	LEED
James	Cardonio	Worcester Public Schools
Daniel	Challener	Public Education Foundation
Maureen	Ciccone	Worcester Public Schools
Linda	Clarke	Houston Annenberg Challenge
Mike	Clifford	Worcester Public Schools
David	Cowan	Hamilton County Department of Education
Chris	Coxon	Boston Public Schools
Bernie	Davitto	Consultant, Sacramento City Unified School District
Tom	Del Prete	Clark University
John	DeVore	San Diego City Schools
Joe	DiMartino	The Education Alliance
Lisa	Dyer	Worcester Public Schools
June	Eressy	Worcester Public Schools
Michelle	Feist	Academy for Educational Development
Jack	Foley	Clark University
Alethea	Frazier Raynor	Annenberg Institute for School Reform
Dan	French	Center for Collaborative Education
Norman	Fruchter	Institute for Education and Social Policy
Veronica	Garcia	Boston Plan for Excellence
Libia	Gil	New American Schools
Catherine	Giron Pino	Carnegie Corporation of New York
Michael	Grady	The Education Alliance
Jane	Grady	Worcester Public Schools
Ellen	Guiney	Boston Plan for Excellence
Deanna	Hanson	LEED
Mary Sylvia	Harrison	Rhode Island Children's Crusade
Mary	Hopper	San Diego City Schools
Akili Moses	Israel	Sacramento City Unified School District
Melody	Johnson	Providence School Department

Name		Organization
Dawn	Johnson	UCALAA (United, Caucasian, Asian, Latino, African American, Native American and Black)
Lamonte	Jones	Sacramento City Unified School District
Beth	Kay	Sacramento City Unified School District
Wade	Kelly	Hamilton County Department of Education
Bill	Kennedy	Public Education Foundation
Cheryl	King	Providence School Department
Kathy	Klock	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Rick	Larkey	Sacramento County Office of Education
Robert	Layne	UCALAA (United, Caucasian, Asian, Latino, African American, Native American and Black)
Misha	Lesley	Houston Independent School District
Jeffrey	Liberty	Boston Public Schools
Marvin	Lott	Hamilton County Department of Education
John	Lozada	Boston Private Industry Council
Karen	Mapp	Boston Public Schools
John	McFadden	Worcester Public Schools
Bud	Mehan	University of California San Diego
Maggie	Mejia	Sacramento City Unified School District
Ron	Millican	The Education Alliance
Steve	Mills	Worcester Public Schools
Nancy	Mullen	Providence School Department
Kathi	Mullin	Boston Public Schools
Teri	Munger	LEED
Jack	Murrah	Lyndhurst Foundation
Larry	Myatt	Boston Public Schools
Rochelle	Nichols Solomon	Academy for Educational Development
Joe	Nuber	Houston Independent School District
Keith	Nuthall	San Diego City Schools
Jeff	Olingy	Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce
Thomas	Payzant	Boston Public Schools
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Luis	Perez	Worcester Latino Institute
Michele	Pola	Houston Annenberg Challenge
Robin	Purdy	Sacramento Employment and Training Agency
Jesse	Register	Hamilton County Department of Education
Cathy	Robbs	Hamilton County Department of Education
Al	Rogers	Sacramento City Unified School District
Anita	Royston	LEED
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Stephanie	Sibley	Boston Plan for Excellence

Name		Organization
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Chris	Smith	Boston Private Industry Council
Adria	Steinberg	Jobs for the Future
Robert	Stockwell	Houston Independent School District
Margaret	Stroud	Houston Independent School District
Neil	Sullivan	Boston Private Industry Council
Jim	Sweeney	Sacramento City Unified School District (formerly)
Jean	Thomases	Academy for Educational Development
Constancia	Warren	Carnegie Corporation of New York
Cynthia	Wilson	Houston Independent School District
Susan	Yonezawa	University of California San Diego
Sheila	Young	Hamilton County Department of Education

APPENDIX C: ABOUT KRONLEY & ASSOCIATES

ABOUT KRONLEY & ASSOCIATES

Kronley & Associates has more than twenty years' experience in providing strategic consulting services to philanthropic organizations (including family, independent, company-sponsored and community foundations), nonprofits, corporations, public agencies and individuals. The firm's work includes policy and program analysis, strategic planning, evaluation and targeted advice on change issues. Substantive areas of interest include education reform, community and economic development, social services, youth development, equity, and philanthropic and corporate giving. The firm works closely with clients to chart pathways to change as well as to develop deep understanding about the impact of possible strategies on outcomes and goals. Each client is treated as a unique entity, and the firm strives to develop creative approaches to needs and issues.

Some current and recent clients include: the Annenberg Institute for School Reform, the Ball Foundation, the BellSouth Foundation, the Benwood Foundation, the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation, the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, the Community Care Foundation, the Community Memorial Foundation, the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, the Forum for Education and Democracy, The Foundation for the Carolinas, the Joyce Foundation, the Meridian Public School District, the Panasonic Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Southeastern Council of Foundations, and the Tupelo Public School District.

The project team that developed *Challenging Myths: The Benwood Initiative and Education Reform in Hamilton County* was comprised of the following persons:

Robert A. Kronley is President of Kronley & Associates. Areas of focus include policy analysis, strategic planning, evaluation and program dissemination. Mr. Kronley has written extensively on education, philanthropy and public policy.

Claire Handley is Senior Associate at Kronley & Associates. Her focus there includes research, data collection and analysis, program evaluation, and strategic planning. She has written extensively on public policy, education and philanthropy and has provided strategic advice to numerous philanthropic and nonprofit clients.