

Effective school reform strategy

Taking a *holistic approach to reform*, not a top-down or “reform -of-the-month” approach

Site-based management

Interactive instruction

The Chicago model

The Five Essential Supports developed in the early 1990's at the beginning of LSC-style reform:

1. Effective School Leadership
2. Quality Learning Activities
3. Adult Collaboration and Learning
4. Social Supports for Students
5. Family and Community Partnerships

Local School Councils, elected parent-majority bodies at each school which

- ▶ hire the principal
- ▶ approve the budget
- ▶ approve the annual program plan

Found in some high-performing CPS schools

The research

“Schools strong in most of the essential supports were at least ten times more likely than schools weak in most of the supports to show substantial progress in both reading and mathematics. These schools were also very unlikely to stagnate. In contrast, not a single school that was weak in most of the supports showed substantial improvements in mathematics.”¹

144 previously low-performing CPS elementary schools serving nearly 100,000 students, or about one-third of all CPS elementary students, began to make significant and sustained gains under LSC-powered school reform.²

Very large differences in learning gains were found between the one hundred CPS classrooms that had the most intellectually demanding instruction as compared with the one hundred classrooms with the least challenging instruction.... students in classes where authentic intellectual work was assigned could easily learn 50 percent more over the course of a year than their schoolmates across the hall.³

Notes:

1. “The Essential Supports for School Improvement,” Sebring, Allensworth, Bryk, Easton and Luppescu, Consortium on Chicago School Research, 2006.
2. “The Big Picture”, Designs for Change, 2005.
3. “Instruction and Achievement in Chicago Elementary Schools” Smith, Lee and Newmann, Consortium on Chicago School Research, 2001

PURE FACT SHEET

Truthiness in education politics

Issue	What Chicago's Mayor says ("Truthiness")	The real truth (according to research)
<i>Who's the model?</i>	"In 12 years we have taken the Chicago Public School System from the worst in the nation to the national model for urban school reform."	Chicago is one of the lowest-ranking big urban districts. On 2005 NAEP tests, Chicago ranks just above D.C. schools, 10 th out of 11 in 4 th grade math and 8 th out of 11 in 4 th grade reading. ¹
<i>Test-driven policies</i>	"Test scores are at an all-time high...." (stated each year). Promised to "stay the course with our commitment on the basics."	CPS scores have flatlined over the past eight years. Rising test scores in the early years after the mayoral takeover were probably due to <i>prior improvements under LSCs</i> - scores began to flatten out in the following years. ²
<i>Holding students back</i>	When asked if CPS would flunk students twice in a row: "You better believe it. You want to promote them? You go promote them."	Retention did not work. As is true for this policy across the nation and over decades, retention did not work in Chicago. Retained students dropped out a younger ages and those who remained continued to struggle. ³
<i>School interventions and closing schools</i>	"I won't stand by and let our schools drift. I won't stand by and allow some schools to do better, while others continue to lag and under-perform."	CPS interventions over 15 years did not work. ⁴ Students are being moved from schools closed by the system for poor performance to schools where results are little better, while new charter and contract schools' results are no better overall.

Notes

1. National Center for Education Statistics, Trial Urban District Results 2005.

http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nrc/tuda_reading_mathematics_2005/t0012.asp?printver=

2. "School Reform Chicago-Style" by Anthony S. Bryk, in *No Child Left Behind?* Peterson and West, 2003.

3. "The Effects of Retention," by Jenny Nagaoka and Melissa Roderick, Consortium on Chicago School Research, 2004.

4 "External Support to Schools on Probation: Getting a Leg Up?" by Kara Finnegan and Jennifer O'Day, 2003; *The Big Picture*, Designs for Change, 2005; "What's Wrong with CPS's Renaissance 2010 Plan," www.pureparents.org, : Chicago News

Parents United for Responsible Education

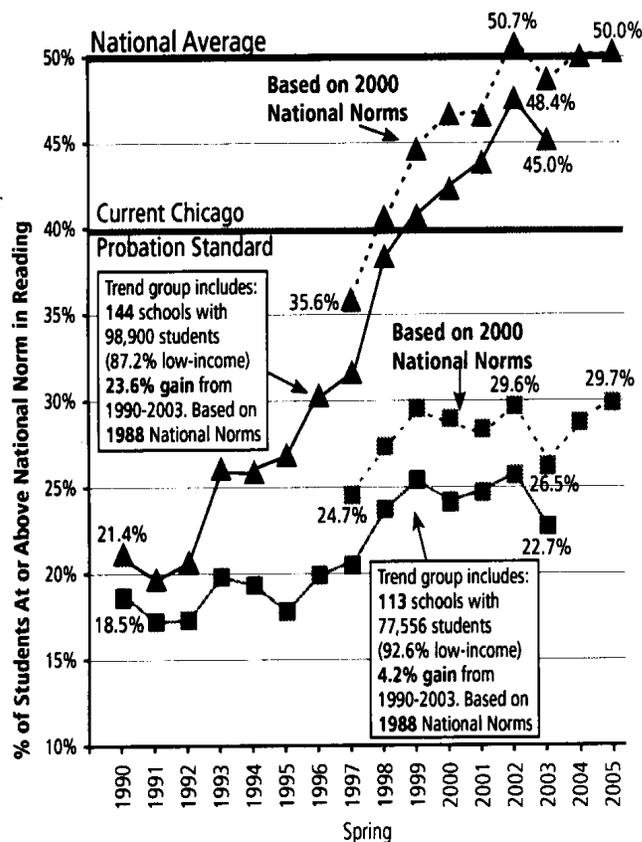
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New reports provide critical facts about Chicago school reform

Schools with LSCs show dramatic improvement

According to “*The Big Picture*,” a 2005 report by Designs for Change, 144 schools which were low-performing in 1999 but escaped Chicago Public Schools (CPS) intervention and **maintained LSC decision making** have improved from an average of 20% to 50% in the percent of students scoring at or above national norms in reading on the ITBS. Improvements in math have been even greater. (See graph, ▲ “Substantially Up” schools)

The report compares those 144 successful schools with 113 other low-performing schools which did not escape CPS intervention and **whose LSCs were no longer allowed to make key decisions for the school**. These schools have **failed to make significant progress** over the years and most remain stuck on probation. Their achievement test scores remain far below the minimum standards required to meet district, state, or federal goals. (See graph, ■ “No Trend” schools). See detail attached and full report at www.designsforchange.org.



Two PURE reports challenge CPS’s rationale for Renaissance 2010:

- ▶ We found that overall, **CPS charter schools have not outperformed regular CPS schools**. CPS bases the claim of superiority on their own internal analysis using unreliable hypotheticals. In fact, in 2004, 12 out of 16 charter schools failed to meet adequate yearly progress under NCLB. It’s more accurate to compare charter schools with non-selective magnet schools which also require an application process. Charters do much worse in that comparison, with an overall 2004 performance of 41% meeting state standards compared with the magnets’ 65%.
- ▶ Under Renaissance 2010, most children in schools slated for closing by CPS in the fall of 2006 **will not be sent to better schools**. The truth is that only Beethoven, the receiving school for Farren, shows significantly higher achievement levels for African-American students. In another Renaissance 2010 change, CPS plans to hand Sherman school over to a private contractor which has a decent track record in one middle class community but **much less impressive results at Dodge**, which like Sherman is nearly 100% African-American.

Details in the reports, “The Renaissance 2010 Hoax” and “Renaissance 2010: The Truth Behind the Hype” which are available on PURE’s web site, www.pureparents.org.

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