



NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR
URBAN SCHOOL
IMPROVEMENT

Accomplishments and Achievements

1997 - 2002

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INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

Good for Kids, Families & Communities



Office of Special
Education Programs

Activities

1) Teacher Practice/Professional Development Efforts

Boston Public Schools

- Five Design Teams (56 participants)
- Ten Leadership Academies (644 participants)
- Presentation of National Institute to district offices
- Sponsored six teachers to Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development Annual Conference
- Two additional visits to the district

Chicago Public Schools

- Three seminars with Central Office (78 participants)
- One networking meeting (120 participants)
- Ten Leadership Academies (373 participants)
- Six additional district meetings

Denver Public Schools

- Fourteen Design Team meetings (125 participants)
- Fourteen Leadership Academies (725 participants)
- Sponsored 15 Teaching Challenge Grants to support schools and teachers in developing and implementing inquiry and action research

District of Columbia Public Schools

- Four Design Team meetings (37 participants)
- Ten Leadership Academies (513 participants)
- Assets Mapping meeting (25 participants)
- Presentation for Special Education Division's Professional Development Day—Accommodations & Modifications for State-wide Testing
- District retreat for Special Education Division to assist them in developing mission and action plan
- Sponsored one Teaching Challenge Grant
- Three presentations to families of children with disabilities
- Three additional visits to the district

Socorro Independent School District

- Thirteen Design Team meetings (155 participants)
- Twelve Leadership Academies (673 participants)
- Sponsored 10 Teaching Challenge Grants to support schools and teachers in developing and implementing inquiry and action research
- Four additional visits to the district

Cross-site networking

2) School Improvement Efforts and Outcomes

- Negotiation of Memoranda of Understandings annually targeting specific school and district outcomes
- Established relationships with districts and continued with yearly debriefing meetings
- Increased district awareness of need for additional data collection from students with disabilities (e.g., high school graduation, referral, etc.)
- One hundred School Leadership Teams established across the country
- In-school action research studies begun/practice-based inquiry supported
- Partner school network established
- Links between universities and school districts in practice improvement
- Improved intra-district communication and articulation of work
- Development and implementation of Assets Mapping processes in districts
- Efforts to develop and implement district-wide information systems to inform and shape strategies and interventions
- Connected central district data departments with Building Leadership Teams

3) Presentations

- More than 60 presentations at national conferences and meetings (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Council for Exceptional Children, The Education and Resource Network-American Educational Research Association, Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children, Office of Special Education Programs' Research Directors Meeting, Council of Urban Boards of Education, Pacific Rim Conference, Chief State School Officers Conference, National Association of State Departments of Special Education Conference, Improving America's Schools Conference of the U.S. Department of Education, Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative, National Staff Development Council, Courage to Risk Conference, PEAK Parent Center Inclusion Conference)
- Presentations at four international conferences (Manchester, UK; Beijing, China; Copenhagen, Denmark; Warsaw, Poland)

Products & Events

- Creation of the National Institute Web site
- Development of Web-based Library Database
- Library Database expanded to 550 entries
- Development and expansion of Links+ Database to over 100 entries
- Creation of *E-News*, the monthly electronic newsletter of the National Institute (over 1,300 subscribers)
- Initial Leadership Team meetings materials notebooks
- Creation of *District Partner Profiles*
- National Institute *Urban Schools Symposium* (1st - 73 participants, 2nd - 83 participants, and 3rd - 85 participants)
- Information disseminated to districts in response to approximately 100 specific requests
- Provision of professional development opportunities for partner school districts
- Focus groups on inclusive practices
- Expanded contact database
- Assets Mapping Roundtable (73 participants)
- Publication of *Improving Education: The Promise of Inclusive Schooling*, the National Institute's *Spotlight on National Institute Activities* series; *On Transformed Inclusive Schools: A Framework to Guide Fundamental Change in Urban Schools*; eight *OnPoints* (brief, focused discussions of urban issues); *Topical Summary*; *Schools on the Move* and *Districts on the Move* booklets; three papers, each focusing on a different aspect of our slogan: "Inclusive Schools: Good for Kids, Families, & Communities;" and a paper on some common misperceptions about inclusive schools. Several of these publications were translated to Spanish.
- Produced promotional materials that raised awareness about inclusive schools: bookmarks, bumper stickers, and posters
- Summer Scholars Urban Institute (40 participants)
- First online event - *Inclusive Approaches to Schooling* (2,000 hits)



- Second online event - *Inclusive Schooling Practices* (28,000 hits)
- Summer Scholars listserv - a weeklong discussion with participants of the Summer Scholars Urban Institute
- Harvard Civil Rights Urban Roundtable on Over-representation
- *National Inclusive Schools Week*, December 3-7, 2001
- Third online event - *Using Children's Literature to Build Inclusive Communities*
- Fourth online event - *What is an Inclusive School?*
- Fifth, sixth, and seventh online event - *Inclusive Schools: Good for Kids*, *Inclusive Schools: Good for Families*, and *Inclusive Schools: Good for Communities*
- Inclusive Schools listserv - created for participants of *National Inclusive Schools Week* (over 350 participants)



Overall Impact

on Students

- 1) Two of our five districts have data that show reductions in referrals in the schools that we have worked in.
- 2) Three of our five districts have National Institute schools where the numbers and percentage of students with disabilities taking school-wide standards-based assessments increased.
- 3) Three of our five districts have National Institute schools where the percent of students reaching proficiency on their standards-based assessments increased over the time that we worked with the schools.

on Teacher Practice Related to Students with Disabilities

- 1) Leadership Academies in all districts built teacher capacity to improve learning for all students by providing content on differentiated instruction, working in collaborative teams, data mining to track student progress, examining models for supporting students with disabilities and their access to the general education curriculum among other topics.
- 2) Practitioners in all National Institute districts and in the Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative received National Institute literature directly relevant to their stated needs and current initiatives throughout the first generation of the National Institute.
- 3) Practitioners in National Institute schools reported that participants in National Institute activities and events valued and appreciated 1) being able to work on important issues (e.g., mission, curriculum alignment, classroom assessments, continuing professional development resource allocation, etc.), 2) being given the time to do such work, and 3) being listened to and heard.

on District Policy and Practice

- 1) Evaluations from the National Institute Leadership Academies were extremely positive and led to changes in the districts' approaches to organizing and providing professional development targeted at school improvement, particularly around the education of students with disabilities.
- 2) In one district, Leadership Academies resulted in a heightened emphasis on working with families and efforts to increase families' interaction and partnership with the district.
- 3) The meaning of "inclusion" has developed to include a wider constituency of students, is used by more of the educational community, and focuses more on practice. Curriculum and Instruction, Title I, and English language learners staff are now speaking about "inclusionary instructional practices" to improve student learning—moving the concept and term outside of the special education community and perspective.
- 4) Central offices work differently with principals. Rather than issuing mandates, they now work with principals to influence how the school systems work to support the needs of students with disabilities as well as all other students in the school.
- 5) Adoption of National Institute's Systemic Change Framework, and use of Building Leadership Teams and Leadership Academies, shifted focus to the needs to support school level capacity building.
- 6) One district hired a special educator for a position in curriculum and instruction to help secondary schools develop inclusive practices.

on National Conversations

Influenced the conversation at the national level outside of the special education community using a variety of strategies (Web site, Web forums, products) including *National Inclusive Schools Week*, December 3-7, 2001.

In preparation for and during *National Inclusive Schools Week*:

- The event was featured on the Web sites of at least 43 organizations and received press coverage in nine publications.
- The National Institute Web site received 99,691 hits.
- More than 150 individuals participated in five online forums.
- More than 350 individuals participated in the Inclusive Schools listserv.
- One hundred forty-two schools or districts across the country notified the National Institute that they held events and disseminated materials.
- Fifteen colleges and universities and 35 local, regional, and national organizations participated.
- Over 3,500 Celebration Kits, 1,800 posters, and 4,000 products detailing why inclusive schools are good for kids, families, and communities were disseminated or downloaded from the National Institute Web site.



List of Publications

- *Blumberg, R., & Ferguson, P. M. (1999). *On Transition Services for Youth with Disabilities (OnPoint)*. Denver: National Institute for Urban School Improvement.
- Ferguson, D. L., & Meyer, G. (2001). *Benito Martinez Elementary (Schools on the Move)*. Denver: National Institute for Urban School Improvement.
- Ferguson, D. L., & Meyer, G. (2001). *Kepner Middle School (Schools on the Move)*. Denver: National Institute for Urban School Improvement.
- *Ferguson, D. L. (1999). *On Reconceptualizing Continuing Professional Development: A Framework for Planning (OnPoint)*. Denver: National Institute for Urban School Improvement.
- *Ferguson, D. L. (1999). *On Teacher Preparation and Support in Inclusive Schools (OnPoint)*. Denver: National Institute for Urban School Improvement.
- Ferguson, D. L. (1999). *On Working Together: Groupwork, Teamwork, and Collaborative Work Among Educators (OnPoint)*. Denver: National Institute for Urban School Improvement.
- Ferguson, D. L., Kozleski, E. B., & Smith, A. (2001). *On Transformed, Inclusive Schools: A Framework to Guide Fundamental Change in Urban Schools*. Denver: National Institute for Urban School Improvement.
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- Ferguson, P. M., & Blumberg, R. (2001). *JC Nalle Elementary (Schools on the Move)*. Denver: National Institute for Urban School Improvement.
- Gersten, R., & Baker, S. (2000). *An Overview of Instructional Practices for English-Language Learners: Prominent Themes and Future Directions*. Denver: National Institute for Urban School Improvement.
- *Meyer, G. (2001). *On Time and How to Get More of It (OnPoint)*. Denver: National Institute for Urban School Improvement.
- Meyer, G., & Patton, J. M. (2001). *On the Nexus of Race, Disability, and Overrepresentation (OnPoint)*. Denver: National Institute for Urban School Improvement.
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- Payzant, T. W., & Durkin, P. (2001). *Unified Student Service in Boston Public Schools: Building a Continuum of Services through Standards-based Reform (Districts on the Move)*. Denver: National Institute for Urban School Improvement.
- *Staub, D. (2000). *On Inclusion and Other Kids: Here's What Research Shows so Far About Inclusion's Effect on Nondisabled Students (OnPoint)*. Denver: National Institute for Urban School Improvement.

*Publications are available in Spanish.

To download these references, visit our Web site: www.edc.org/urban.

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