Bay Area School Reform Collaborative:
Phase One (1995-2001) Evaluation

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Table of Contents

Figures

Executive Summary

Bay Area School Reform Collaborative: Phase One 1995-2001

The Bay Area School Reform Collaborative formed in response to a national challenge from philanthropist Walter Annenberg and his 500 million dollar gift to American public education. William Hewlett and the Hewlett Foundation responded with 25 million dollars to support the creation of a regional education reform initiative, matching Annenberg's 25 million-dollar gift. The Bay Area School Reform Collaborative (BASRC) was created in the spring of 1995 to design and manage the Hewlett-Annenberg Challenge initiative. By the fall of 1999, this 50 million dollars had been matched by 62 million dollars more in public and private funds.

BASRC aims to enhance education quality for all Bay Area students and to close the achievement gap between students of different race, class, and language backgrounds. BASRC pursues its mission by making grants to support schools' reform work and by establishing a regional collaborative of member schools, districts, support organizations, and funders. During the first five years of its work (Phase One), BASRC funded 87 "Leadership Schools" in Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara counties. These schools received grants of approximately 150 dollars per student for three to five years after successfully completing a rigorous peer-reviewed application process. Beyond this cadre of funded Leadership Schools, BASRC's regional membership included an additional 146 Membership Schools, 40 districts, and a majority of the region's school reform support organizations and funders that received no funding but committed to participate in the work of the Collaborative.

The Collaborative's design reflects two broad purposes. First, as an intermediary organization, BASRC would be a source of funding, support, and pressure for Leadership Schools' work on inquiry-based, whole school reform. BASRC provided tools, funds for schools to provide professional development, and onsite support to its Leadership Schools, while pressuring them toward relationships of mutual accountability for progress toward BASRC's reform vision both within and across member schools. Second, as a collaborative of reforming Leadership Schools, BASRC would be a vehicle for scaling up reform in the region by spreading knowledge of successful reform practices within and beyond the Collaborative. BASRC's reform strategies reflected a *theory of school change* that positioned inquiry around a focused effort as the "engine" of change in elements of school culture assumed essential to improved classroom practice and student outcomes. The Collaborative's *theory of changing schools* defined its role as an intermediary organization in terms of pressure and support for a shared school reform vision, regional reform networks and collaboration, and the development of Leadership Schools able to inspire and inform reform in other Bay Area public schools.

Outcomes for schools and students

BASRC met many of its objectives for Phase One. Most BASRC Leadership Schools made progress on inquiry-based reform, and those most advanced in using evidence about student outcomes to evaluate and change their practice showed the greatest SAT-9 gains. Overall,

BASRC Leadership Schools made significantly greater improvements in their students' performance on SAT-9 basic skills tests than did schools in the evaluation's control group. Moreover, BASRC schools serving large populations of high-poverty students consistently did better on this standardized assessment than did similar schools in the region. However, BASRC fell short on other of its goals. Leadership Schools did not do as well as other Bay Area schools in closing within-school achievement gaps. BASRC's activities generally were rated favorably by Leadership Schools, but not all schools had the capacity to take advantage of, or profit equally from, the Collaborative—most particularly, those high-poverty schools pressed on multiple fronts. And, while most Leadership Schools made progress with inquiry-based reform, a minority achieved mature or advanced levels of inquiry in the course of Phase One.

Lessons for the field

BASRC's Phase One experience provides important lessons for the field about school change, changing schools, and new institutional arrangements to support reform.

Inquiry-Based Reform. BASRC Leadership Schools affirm the power of inquiry-based strategies for changing school workplace culture and provide strong support for the claim that teachers and administrators need evidence about school-level patterns of performance in order to consider such fundamental issues as curriculum choice, resource allocation, and strategies for change. Their experiences also point to conditions of context and technical assistance that enable and sustain school progress on inquiry-based reform.

- *Developing the skills and norms essential to inquiry.* It takes time to develop inquiry skills and norms. For many Leadership Schools, their three to four years' participation was insufficient for teachers to master the technical skills required by the Cycle of Inquiry, or to adopt the norms and expectations essential to effective use of data to improve practice.
- *Context effects on inquiry.* School contexts affected progress on inquiry practices, most especially the character of teacher community, school leadership, and district support. Further, poor urban schools confronted particularly high levels of teacher, administrator, and reform coordinator turnover, in addition to myriad daily stresses that supplanted attention to inquiry. Additionally, school and district infrastructure were essential to sustaining inquiry practices in the face of the corrosive effects of personnel churn at both levels as well as uncoordinated or conflictual state policies. Leadership Schools' experiences highlight the importance of a reform initiative's simultaneous focus on school reform and larger system transformation
- *Dedicated resources to support and sustain inquiry.* Phase One experience suggests that schools' demand for support providers, the individuals and organizations who provided technical assistance to Leadership Schools, outstripped supply. School-based reform coordinators facilitated the Cycle of Inquiry and provided essential logistical and technical support. Even schools making substantial progress with inquiry may not be able to sustain it beyond Phase One without these dedicated resources.

BASRC as intermediary organization and change agent. The outcome of BASRC's theory of changing schools and strategy for regional reform turns significantly on the way the organization designed and carried out its intermediary role. Leadership Schools showed how

a combination of pressure and support could bring about school change; rigorous standards for school reform practice and peer evaluation of Leadership School progress could galvanize schools' engagement with reform. However, by design and capacity, BASRC's Phase One operation also surfaced strategic issues about how an intermediary such as BASRC functions as an agent of reform.

- *Potential of an extra-system intermediary.* Phase One points out the potential and limits of an extra-system intermediary as public education reform agent. While BASRC's ability to work outside and between existing systems was a strategic asset, its independence also limited its ability to leverage government and other systems and negotiate authority.
- *Diverse members under the Collaborative umbrella.* BASRC's ability to respond to schools with significantly dissimilar needs and capacity was challenged throughout Phase One. Schools with limited reform experience and capacity were especially stretched to complete various BASRC reporting and accountability requirements. High-poverty urban schools in particular felt they needed both different and additional support from BASRC. In contrast, Leadership Schools experienced with inquiry or other aspects of reform sometimes found BASRC's assistance efforts too elementary. BASRC had limited capacity to differentiate its resources and supports.
- *Developing an organization and leading a change effort at the same time.* BASRC benefited from the absence of institutional baggage, as planners intended, but it also faced problems inevitable when simultaneously creating a new organization and implementing a large-scale change effort. The organization needed to balance its own efforts to act on new information with schools' needs for predictability and timely communication about their responsibilities.

Reform on a Regional Scale. BASRC intended to foster reform on a regional scale through Leadership Schools' examples and efforts to foster inquiry-based change in other schools and through crossover structures to build a regional reform community and opportunities to share experiences.

- *A Leadership School strategy.* BASRC's Leadership School strategy to scale-up reform did not evolve as envisioned. While many Leadership Schools opened their doors to visitors and shared their experiences at Collaborative meetings, most neither understood what it meant to "lead" nor had sufficient time, resources or capacity to take a proactive role in leading other schools' reform efforts. Nor were "followers" evident in large numbers.
- *Building a regional learning community.* Crossover structures that BARSC constructed to foster a regional learning community—role-specific networks, Collaborative Assembly gatherings, and critical friends for example—nurtured a regional reform vision and an appetite for such a regional resource, but they had limited success in practice. Communication strategies and structures within the Collaborative were insufficiently developed and opportunities for BASRC participants to learn about the activities of Leadership Schools were limited.

- *The region as locus for reform.* The Bay Area region is a construct, not a political or regulatory entity. This lack of recognized jurisdiction constrained BASRC's ability to pursue reform on a regional basis.
- *Working within multiple systems.* BASRC confronted tensions by virtue of its "in-betweeness." The intermediary had to navigate among shifts in the state policy context and new accountability pressures on schools and districts, while maintaining fidelity to its own reform vision and theory of change. In some school settings, the demands of California's high stakes accountability swamped BASRC's vision.

*   *   *

The Hewlett-Annenberg Challenge provided opportunity to test out promising reform ideas on large-scale— ideas about the power of inquiry to reculture schools and improve teaching and learning, strategies for leveraging change on a regional basis, and the role a new intermediary in nurturing regional capability for educational reform. The Collaborative's careful work, thoughtful attention to evidence, and commitment to learning from experience moves the conversation forward in substantial ways and provides crucial grounding for education reform's next generation.

GLOSSARY

A and B Questions – Step 2 of the six-step Cycle of Inquiry process designed to focus a school's inquiry more explicitly on the link between student learning and school practice. BASRC required schools to identify "which students" are having problems in a particular academic area (A question) and then to identify "which practices/strategies" could close the achievement gap (B question).

Accountability Event – A meeting of school faculty, parents, students, community members, and others to discuss school issues, particularly including student achievement data. School people share data with participants and engage in a dialogue about possibilities for improvement based on this data. BASRC Leadership Schools, until Year 4, were required to host at least one of these events each academic year.

Affinity Groups - Action research groups that existed during the first two years of BASRC funding. Groups met monthly to learn and use the Cycle of Inquiry to investigate a particular question about school reform that could impact classroom practice at their school site. Specifically, the Affinity Groups focused on a range of topics including diversity, standards and assessment, whole school change, and literacy.

BASRC Phase One – The period covering the first five years of BASRC from 1995 to summer 2001. During this period, BASRC funded 87 Leadership Schools.

BASRC Phase Two – The period covering the next stage of BASRC from fall 2001 to 2004.

Collaborative – The regional network of reform minded schools (including Leadership and Membership Schools), districts, reform support organizations, and funders that would engage in meaningful work towards the common purpose of scaling-up whole-school reform at multiple school levels. The Collaborative would support change at the school level and spread the reform vision and its corresponding processes and tools across the region.

Critical Friends - Teams consisting of three to five schools that alternate site visits to observe classrooms and give feedback on each school's focused efforts. A typical Critical Friendship visit usually begins with a meeting where visitors are introduced to the school and are acquainted to the questions the host school would like the visitors to reflect. The visitors sit in on classes and then discuss the school's progress and challenges with faculty and students. At the end of the day, schools debrief and reflect about what they observed.

Cycle of Inquiry –The multi-step process by which schools and teachers collect, analyze and use data on student learning to evaluate and reform their school and classroom practices to improve student achievement.

Focused effort – A focus for whole-school reform such as literacy around which Leadership Schools organized their reform activities. A focused effort, BASRC assumed, would bring coherence to a school's reform work; if done deeply and well, it would impact the entire adult community of the school and students' learning.

Funders Learning Community brought funders together to critically examine funding practices, learn more about whole school change, and learn more about how schools engage with BASRC processes and tools.

II/USP (Immediate Intervention / Underperforming Schools Program) part of SB 1X – Of 87 BASRC Leadership Schools, XX were at one point in time designated II/USP schools – a program in which schools in the bottom 5 deciles on the API who do not meet their API growth targets receive a planning grant during their first year of participation in the program to contract with an external evaluator to develop a school site level action plan. At the end of the two years, the schools must meet API growth targets.

Leadership School – The total 87 schools funded by BASRC, which were expected to be regional reform leaders demonstrating tangible enactments of the BASRC vision. These schools represented the diversity of Bay Area schools in terms of race and ethnicity, language composition, school grade levels and size, and socioeconomic levels within the Bay Area.

Membership School – The 146 schools BASRC selected to facilitate regional spread. BASRC attracted and admitted a tier of schools beyond Leadership Schools that were assumed to be most receptive Leadership Schools' work. Broader membership in the BASRC Collaborative was established for schools that had the will and potential to succeed as examples of school reform but did not seek, or did not succeed in obtaining, funding through BASRC.

Portfolio readings – The application and review process conducted during Years 1-3 of BASRC to select Leadership and Membership Schools. Involving hundreds of educators from schools, districts, school support organizations, and private foundations, this process also initiated leadership in the region by organizing the opportunity for educators to better understand, and eventually spread, the Collaborative's reform vision.

R & D initiatives – A regional collaboration among 2-10 Leadership and Membership schools intended to develop and disseminate new knowledge in the region about particular facets of whole-school reform. R&Ds included: School to Career, School-University Partnerships, Technology (including the Bay Area National Digital Library, Digital High School, and Technology and School Change), Leadership (including work with principals, districts, and support organizations), Equity, and the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards.

Reform Coordinator – Member(s) of the school community serving as the point of contact for BASRC within the school and frequently attends regional BASRC events. Typically, a portion of BASRC funding in each Leadership School was used to free up one teacher from approximately half of his/her classroom responsibilities to take on this role which included process management, collecting and analyzing data, coordinating professional development and coaching opportunities with support providers, and maintaining communications within and outside the school.

Regional Open Houses, or **School Visits** - BASRC Leadership and Membership Schools across the region opened their classrooms for one day, two times a year, to non-BASRC schools, district

representatives, parents, community members, and media to show the public what the process of school change looks like.

Review of Progress (ROP) – A parallel to the portfolio readings, this review process was designed to refresh and build schools' commitments and shared understanding of the Collaborative's vision of school culture change, as well as to hold schools accountable for making reasonable progress on reform. Leadership Schools turned in documentation of their reform work that was read by review teams. Afterwards, the review team discussed strengths and areas for improvement with school representatives.

ROP Rubric – A BASRC-developed system map intended to describe the stages of reform through which a Leadership School should move - from a *beginning* stage to an *emerging* stage to *systematic* and to *sustainable* stages of reform. The rubric emphasizes change in the cultural conditions of schools that promise deep and sustained improvement in teaching and learning.

SB 1193 – California state bill that repealed "student-free" staff development days beginning in 1998-99. The program provides funding for staff development days outside of the regular school year only.

Speakers' Bureau – Strategy during Year 4 of the initiative intended to build the capacity for BASRC educators to speak to the public about the process of school change and the fundamental principles of the BASRC vision.

Summer Institute: A weeklong leadership institute during which school teams (typically, four to eight representatives) learn BASRC concepts and tools, meet potential Critical Friends, and develop preliminary plans for their school's work plan.

Support Provider - An individual or organization that provides technical assistance in content areas such as literacy or mathematics, or support for school change processes, as knowledge resources independent of a single school or district.

Workdays – Daylong events convened around specific topics such as equity, data, and accountability, for school people to learn from BASRC staff and network with other Leadership and Membership Schools. During workdays, a limited number of personnel from each school engaged in substantive activities such as mapping the Cycle of Inquiry and developing plans for sustaining BASRC work into the future. Those in attendance were expected to return to their schools and share what they had learned with the entire school community.

1
Introduction

T he Bay Area School Reform Collaborative formed in response to a national challenge from philanthropist Walter Annenberg and his 500 million dollar gift to American public education. William Hewlett and the Hewlett Foundation responded with 25 million dollars to support the creation of a regional education reform initiative, matching Annenberg's 25 million dollar gift. The Bay Area School Reform Collaborative (BASRC) was created in the spring of 1995 to design and manage the Hewlett-Annenberg Challenge initiative. By the fall of 1999 the initial 50 million dollars had been matched and surpassed by 62 million dollars more in public and private funds. BASRC aims to enhance education quality for all Bay Area students and to close the achievement gap between students of different race, class, and language backgrounds. "The 'mission impossible' of the Bay Area School Reform Collaborative is to transform teaching and learning for all students in the six county Bay Area region" (BASRC, Member and Leadership School Activities, 1996, 2).

BASRC pursues its mission by making grants to support schools' reform work and by establishing a regional Collaborative of member schools, districts, support organizations, and funders. During the first five years of its work (Phase One), BASRC funded 87 "Leadership Schools" in Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara counties. These schools received grants of approximately 150 dollars per student for three to five years after successfully completing a rigorous peer-reviewed application process. BASRC's decisions to fund schools depended on evidence that they would engage in a focused reform effort capable of improving achievement and closing achievement gaps among students in their school. Beyond this cadre of funded Leadership Schools, BASRC's regional membership included an additional 146 Membership Schools, 40 districts, and a majority of the region's school reform support organizations and funders that received no funding but committed to participate in the work of the Collaborative.

The Collaborative's design reflects two broad purposes. First, as an intermediary organization, BASRC would be a source of funding, support, and pressure for Leadership Schools' work on inquiry-based, whole-school reform. BASRC provided tools, funds for schools to provide professional development, and on-site support to its Leadership Schools, while moving them toward relationships of mutual accountability for progress toward BASRC's reform vision both within and across member schools. Second, as a Collaborative of reforming Leadership Schools, BASRC would be a vehicle for scaling up reform in the region by spreading knowledge of successful reform practices within and beyond the Collaborative. BASRC's regional reform strategy took up the challenge of creating new coalitions among a broad set of actors that previously had little, if any, contact and building their commitment and capacity to spread and sustain school reform in the Bay Area.

BASRC met many of its objectives for Phase One and fell short on others. It successfully promoted most of its Leadership Schools' progress on inquiry-based reform and, on the whole, these schools made greater gains on the SAT-9 basic skills assessments than

comparable Bay Area schools. Lending support to BASRC's design for supporting and leveraging school reform are evaluation findings that reform progress was greatest among schools that had been most involved in the work of the Collaborative and that student outcomes were strongest among schools most advanced in inquiry practices. BASRC Leadership Schools serving the least advantaged students show exceptional progress narrowing the between-school achievement gap in the region. At the same time, Leadership Schools performed poorly on their goal of narrowing within-school achievement gaps, and made less progress than their regional counterparts closing the achievement gap between historically low- and high-achieving student groups.

BASRC struggled during Phase One to forge relationships of mutual accountability among Collaborative members, and its design for scaling up inquiry-based reform through Leadership Schools' example and efforts was generally unsuccessful, working only in rare instances when a school was highly advanced in their reform work or when a district took a proactive role.

This report provides an overview and summative assessment of BASRC's work between 1995 and 2001. It highlights Phase One results of this ambitious school reform initiative for participating schools and their students and for the region's capacity to sustain and spread inquiry-based school reform.

The evaluation's theory of action framework

The evaluation uses a "theory of action" approach to assess results of BASRC Phase One.[1] We assess not just overall student outcomes of the initiative but also the assumptions about cause-effect relationships that ground BASRC's explicit and implicit theories about how and why the initiative will work. This approach has become increasingly popular for evaluations of education reform initiatives, because it offers the field knowledge of the *where, how,* and *why* of the initiatives' successes and failures along with judgments of *whether* and *how much* BASRC made a difference for student outcomes. A theory of action evaluation makes explicit the premises that guide the initiative, specifies the strategies implemented to foster and sustain intended changes, and identifies context conditions that aid or constrain strategies' effectiveness. In an era of massive public and private investment in a wide variety of initiatives and programs to improve American education, evaluations of how their reform theories and implementation strategies play out in the field are critical to improving reform practice and investments.

BASRC's theory of action is complex and unusually rich in the lessons it can offer the field. BASRC combines a theory of school change with a theory of changing schools. At its core is an "inquiry-based reform" model grounded in particular assumptions and knowledge about how schools improve teaching and learning. Given considerable disagreement in the field about what it takes to reform schools and limited knowledge of this particular approach to reforming schools, BASRC Leadership Schools' experiences with inquiry-based reform offer important new knowledge about the practices and outcomes of this school change model.

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[1] For more about theory-based evaluation, see Carol Weiss, Nothing as practical as a good theory: Exploring theory-based evaluation for comprehensive community initiatives for children and families, in Connell, Kubisch, Schorr and Weiss, eds., 1995, *New approaches to evaluating community initiatives: Concepts, methods, and contexts,* Washington, D.C., The Aspen Institute; Huey-Tsyh Chen (1990) *Theory-driven evaluations.* Newbury Park: Sage.

BASRC's Phase One work as an intermediary reform organization was based, further, in assumptions about how best to support and leverage schools' inquiry-based reform. Its theory of changing schools was refined through its learning and adaptation to state policy context shifts over the course of this five-year period. Even among the researchers who have studied inquiry in schools and among school reformers who promote this approach, there is little documentation or shared knowledge about how to implement inquiry practices for whole-school reform. BASRC's Phase One experiences with the strategies and practices it designed to leverage and support inquiry-based reform thus offer the field valuable lessons about prospects and challenges in implementing this reform model on a large scale.

Another facet of BASRC's theory of changing schools is its assumptions about how to scale up its school reform vision and practices. BASRC's goal of spreading inquiry-based reform throughout the region and its Phase One efforts contribute important new knowledge to a growing body of research on scaling up school reform designs and to a pressing problem for American education.

This summative evaluation of BASRC Phase One surfaces key assumptions and design strategies for each facet of BASRC's 1995-2001 theory and practice and describes how they played out for the funded Leadership Schools and the region. Lessons for the field come especially from Leadership School teachers' experiences with Collaborative work and with their efforts to improve teaching and learning through the inquiry practices that BASRC promotes. Also important is evidence concerning capacities these reforming schools require to lead reform in their districts and the region.

The evaluation's research design

The evaluation design combines breadth and depth of analysis to assess processes and outcomes of BASRC's theory of action for Phase One. Longitudinal case studies of ten diverse Leadership Schools document schools' experiences with BASRC work and their efforts to implement inquiry practices. Less intensive field-based research was conducted with a broader set of 21 Leadership Schools included in satellite studies – a study of reforming high schools, a leadership study, and a study of equity-oriented inquiry in a BASRC elementary school. Further breadth of data comes from surveys of teachers in eighteen Leadership Schools, of principals of all Leadership Schools, and of all BASRC Reform Coordinators. (See Appendix B for characteristics of individual schools included in each of these evaluation samples.) Data for all Leadership Schools also come from BASRC 1999, 2000 and 2001 Review of Progress (ROP) documents, a 2001 ROP survey, and California Department of Education data on school characteristics and student assessments. Details of the evaluation samples and methods are provided in Appendix A; here we highlight our use of the data to assess BASRC's theory of action.

To address the question of whether BASRC mattered for students in the funded Leadership Schools, we statistically compare SAT-9 trends for these schools with trends for a sample of schools carefully matched on student demographics and school characteristics (see Appendix D for details). We also compare trends for Leadership Schools and comparison schools on closing within-school gaps in student achievement, using California's API data on test scores of racial/ethnic and socioeconomic groups within schools. Evaluation case studies assess a broader range of student outcomes of inquiry-based reform, including students' sense of respect from teachers, their active role in the classroom, and their class self-efficacy.

To evaluate BASRC's design for promoting inquiry-based reform among Leadership Schools, we use survey and case-based data to assess both whether and how schools' participation in BASRC work mattered for their reform progress. Both teachers and Reform Coordinators gave survey rated the value of particular BASRC activities to their school's reform progress, which in turn are analyzed as predictors of school progress on inquiry practices. Case-based interviews and observations interpret and elaborate these quantitative patterns. Data concerning BASRC's progress on its agenda for scaling up inquiry-based reform in the region come from the 2001 ROP survey, observations of Collaborative work, interviews with case study participants, and interviews with BASRC leaders.

To assess BASRC's theory of school change, we use longitudinal survey data on school inquiry practices and culture and case studies of schools that began BASRC with different reform histories and readiness for inquiry-based reform. The survey data provide an overall picture of Leadership Schools' progress on inquiry practices and how this relates to other conditions of school culture and school context. These data also are used to statistically assess effects of school inquiry practices on student outcomes on SAT-9. The intensive case studies – including repeated interviews with principals, reform leaders, and teachers and observations of the school's BASRC work on-site and off-site – reveal developmental stages of inquiry-based school reform and highlight the promises and challenges of implementing BASRC's reform model on a large scale.

Together these data and lines of analysis provide a summative evaluation of BASRC's Phase One payoff for participating Leadership Schools in terms of their students' progress on basic skills, of its design for changing schools, and of its theory of school change.

How the report is organized

The report begins in Chapter 2 with an overview of BASRC's theory of action – its view of the problem for school reform and goals for the initiative, its assumptions about how to achieve its goals, and the strategies and actions pursued. This chapter provides considerable detail on BASRC's design for the work of the Collaborative and its evolution over the course of Phase One.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of BASRC Phase One outcomes for its funded Leadership Schools and their students. First, it summarizes evidence concerning BASRC Leadership Schools' progress implementing inquiry practices. Then it examines effects of BASRC reform practices on student gains on SAT-9, asking if schools most advanced in inquiry-based reform made greater progress over four years than other schools. Finally, it provides an overall assessment of BASRC's effect on schools' SAT-9 trends, on closing achievement gaps between schools in the region, and on closing achievement gaps between student groups within schools.

The next three chapters evaluate BASRC's interlocking theories of action and designs for Phase One work in the Collaborative in terms of their effects on school reform progress. Chapter 4 assesses BASRC's theory for leveraging and supporting Leadership Schools' progress on inquiry-based reform. It describes Leadership Schools' patterns of participation in the range of activities that BASRC organized to leverage and support inquiry-based reform, analyzes participants' ratings and experiences of these activities, and assesses effects of schools' differential participation in BASRC activities on their implementation of inquiry practices.

Chapter 5 assesses the core strategy of inquiry-based school change that underlies BASRC's work. It analyzes developmental stages and processes of inquiry-based school reform, and expected school culture outcomes of inquiry practices. It then identifies context conditions that affect schools' reform progress, and considers prospects for Phase One schools to sustain their inquiry-based reform work.

Chapter 6 assesses BASRC's Phase One strategy for scaling up inquiry-based reform through its Leadership Schools and regional Collaborative work. It describes schools' experiences with leading reform and learning from others in the Collaborative, analyzes challenges that BASRC encountered in its efforts to build capacity for supporting inquiry-based reform in the region, and considers both promising signs and challenges of BASRC's regional reform strategy.

The last chapter considers key evaluation findings in terms of their significance for the field. Chapter 7 highlights lessons from BASRC concerning effective practices to support whole-school reform, developmental processes of inquiry-based reform and results for students, context conditions that affect school reform progress, and special challenges that a regional, equity-oriented reform strategy poses for reformers.

2

BASRC's Theory of Action: Interlocking Theories of School Change and Regional Education Reform

BASRC's Phase One design marries a vision of school change with a regional reform agenda to create interlocking theories of school change and regional education reform.[2] Its theory of action is grounded in research and experience on organizational change, professional communities and networks, and teaching and learning. Figure 2.1 represents the interlocking zones of BASRC's theory of action for achieving school reform across the region. We distinguish analytically BASRC's theory of school change (the far left of the diagram), BASRC's theory and design for its work to impact school change (the intersecting portion of school change and regional work), and BASRC's regional strategy for scaling up school reform.

Figure 2.1 BASRC's Theory of Regional Reform: Interlocking Theories of Action

Focused effort and inquiry process

School culture change: professional community, broadened leadership, and accountability to community

Increased student achievement and closing of achievement gaps

Pressure and support

"Gap Filling"

Shared vision, flexible funding to Leadership Schools, broader membership

Standards for school reform, Collaborative projects

Knowledge building tools

Network of accountability and community

Spread of BASRC reform vision, standards, and knowledge

Regional support networks

Public advocacy

Phase Two: Explicit strategy for school leadership and regional spread

Theory of School Change: Inquiry-Based Reform

The intermediary organization's theory of changing schools

Regional Strategy for Scaling Up School Reform

Outcomes can differ among elements of BASRC's theory of regional reform. For example, its theory of school change might be supported by evidence at the same time that its assumptions about how to leverage or support the theory receive no support; or, both of these elements of BASRC's theory of action might receive support while its assumptions about scaling up reform in the region are challenged by available data. Given the multi-faceted character of BASRC's theory of school reform in the region, we address the interlocking theories separately.

Theory of School Change: Inquiry-Based Reform

BASRC locates the problem for school change in school culture. As BASRC's Executive Director Merrill Vargo put it:

> Schools, according to BASRC, are prevented from engaging in systematic improvement by cultures that emphasize isolation, weak leadership, lack of accountability, intuitive – rather than data-driven – decision making, and that accept certain patterns of [inequality in] student achievement as the norm. (2001, 2)

This view of school as the unit of change and school culture as a fundamental problem for American education distinguishes BASRC's theory of action from special project or curriculum-focused reforms – for example, state curriculum frameworks and standards, preservice education, off-site professional development, or school size reduction and restructuring. BASRC assumes that schools' responses to any of these popular reform strategies ultimately depend upon conditions of its culture.[3] Its theory of school change reflects several key assumptions about changing schools:

- Reform must occur at the school level;
- Effective changes in curriculum and instruction link performance standards to students' learning needs in a particular school;
- Commitment and capacity for school change build around evidence that student learning falls short of standards;
- Structural changes serve, rather than drive, schools' change efforts; and
- Teacher learning needs are informed by evidence of their students' learning needs.

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[2] The marriage of BASRC's vision of school change with a regional reform agenda was initially framed by the terms of its founding. The Hewlett Foundation launched a regional initiative that would both satisfy the scale requirements for an Annenberg Challenge grant and develop capacity for large-scale school reform across schools and districts in the Bay Area. The Annenberg Challenge took the school as the unit of change and required that funding in support of reform go directly to schools, rather than through districts. Given these constraints, BASRC was launched in 1995 as a grant-making intermediary organization in a region of 118 districts and approximately 1,200 schools. As an organization existing outside education bureaucracies, BASRC faced the challenge of developing non-regulatory incentives and accountability for school reform.

[3] Research lends support to this assumption. For example, Fred Newmann and colleagues (1996) found in a national study of restructured schools that only those schools with strong Collaborative teacher communities were using new structures to enhance instruction for students; McLaughlin and Talbert (2001) found that high school math teacher learning communities were using state curriculum guides and professional development opportunities to enhance instruction and student learning, while traditional departments were using standards to fail increasing portions of their students; Cynthia Coburn (2001) found that school communities mediated teachers' knowledge about and responses to state policies on reading instruction in primary grades.

BASRC's vision of the process and the product of school reform involves fundamental changes in the culture and core practices of schools – changes that are expected to make a difference ultimately in student learning. BASRC expects schools to change the ways in which teachers assess and understand their practice, how and where they seek opportunities for professional growth, and the character of school leadership.[4] BASRC's conception of school change challenges deeply held values about teachers' roles and relationships and the ways in which schools typically do business.

BASRC's theory of school change shaped its strategies and tools for leveraging and supporting schools' reform efforts—or theory of changing schools. Here we highlight the school change theory, and then focus on BASRC's design as an intermediary reform organization. As Figure 2.2 shows, the centerpiece of BASRC's theory of school change is inquiry connected to a focused reform effort – in which data on student outcomes and their links to school practice generate knowledge for improvement.[5] With inquiry as the "engine" of reform, school practices and culture should change in ways that enhance the quality and equity of teaching and learning. The theory posits that as a school learns to focus and systematize inquiry to improve student outcomes, its professional community becomes more Collaborative and mutually accountable and leadership becomes more distributed, proactive, and sustainable. These conditions of school culture, in turn, strengthen the school's capacity to reform itself through systematic inquiry.

Inquiry around a Focused Effort

BASRC's theory of change positions a "Cycle of Inquiry" as the driving force of education improvement and school reculturing. It assumes that school reform must begin with a clear and coherent focus on inquiry into student outcomes and their link to school practices. Toward this end, BASRC required its Leadership Schools to determine a **focused effort** for their school's reform effort**,** such as literacy or student retention, and to allocate BASRC funds toward improving its practices and outcomes in this area. A focused effort, BASRC assumed, would bring coherence to a school's reform work; if done deeply and well, it would impact the entire adult community of the school and students' learning.

While BASRC's flexible funding enabled schools to choose the problem that would focus their reform work and how they used their grant funds, Leadership Schools were required to use an inquiry process as the basis for making these decisions. Among the tools BASRC provided schools to guide the process, its model of a **Cycle of Inquiry** has remained the centerpiece – a representation of its theory of action for school change.

BASRC's **Cycle of Inquiry** approach to school reform prompts schools to pose, investigate, and respond to questions about student outcomes and how they are linked to

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[4] Theory and research point to the central role that joint work and shared commitment to improvement plays in the development of professional learning community (McLaughlin & Talbert 2001; Stein, Silver & Smith 1998; Wenger 1998). A growing body of literature on education leadership suggests, further, that distributed leadership goes hand-in-hand with growth in collective problem solving and community within a school staff (Copland 2001).

[5] This reform approach is grounded in research on learning organizations (Senge, 1990; Fullan, 2001) and research on the development of knowledge to improve instruction through teachers' shared inquiry into their teaching practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999). These literatures show that ongoing processes of collective problem-solving and inquiry into practice are vehicles for developing the kind of local or contextualized knowledge that is essential to effective organizational change.

Figure 2.2 BASRC's Theory of School Culture Change

**Inquiry Around a Focused Effort
as the Engine of Reform**

Changes in School Culture

School Outcomes

Systemic reform and capacity for improvement

- Proactive, sustainable management of context
- School reform leadership in the region

Student Outcomes

- Increased quality and equity of student learning opportunities
- Enhanced student learning
- Narrowing of achievement gaps

Professional

TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS CHANGE FROM…

Isolation → Collaboration
Collegiality → Work
Sporadic PD → Ongoing Learning
Superficial talk → Dialogue
Privacy → Mutual Accountability

Shared Leadership

LEADERSHIP AT THE SCHOOL CHANGES FROM…

Command & Control → Collaboration
Individual → Distributed Leadership
Static/Reactive → Proactive
Fragile → Sustainable
Exclusive → Inclusive of Stakeholders
Local → Regional

Cycle of Inquiry

LEARNING AT THE SCHOOL SHIFTS FROM…

Random → Focused
Process → Content
Exploratory → Consensual
Individual → Shared
Idiosyncratic → Synchronized
Ancillary → Systemic
Safe → Risky
Static → Dynamic

School context changes over time…

school policies and practices. After several iterations, BASRC specified the inquiry process in the six steps shown in Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3 Cycle of Inquiry (2001): The Engine of BASRC's Theory of School Change
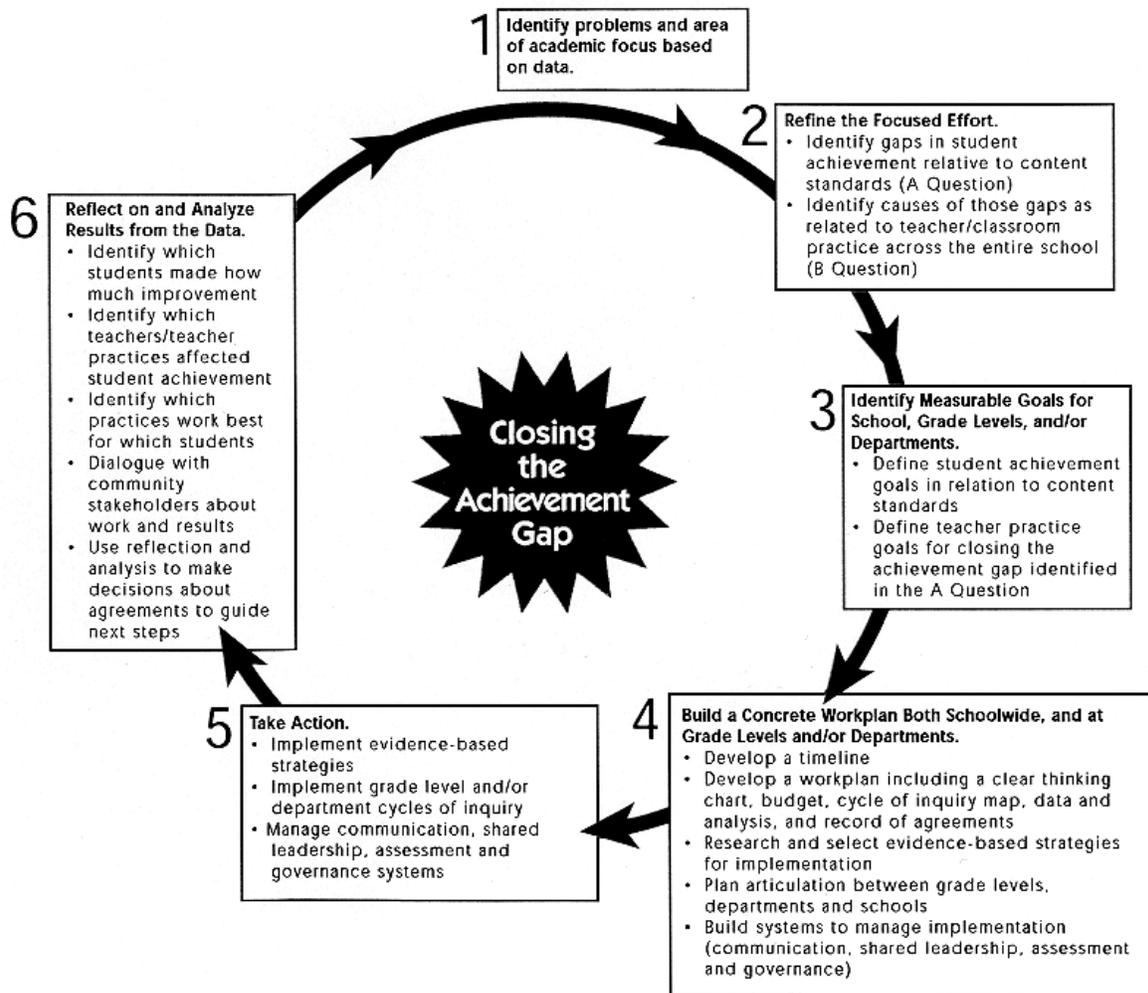
The first two steps in the inquiry cycle consist of identifying a problem and focusing a question for investigation. The next step is to identify measurable goals. This step recognizes that establishing measures and setting specific targets for change are critical to assessing the success or failure of an action. The fourth and fifth steps entail creating and implementing a plan of action – connecting knowing to doing. The sixth step requires collecting data and analyzing results of the action taken. Finally, the cycle returns to the first step of defining or refining the problem statement in light of new evidence. Simply put, BASRC assumed that the Cycle of Inquiry would enable schools to identify key areas for reform and to evaluate their reform actions in terms of evidence of their consequences for students. In this model of reform, schools build knowledge for continuous improvement.

Over time, BASRC emphasized that the Cycle of Inquiry should operate at multiple levels of the school as an interconnected system. At the school, department/grade, and classroom level, the inquiry process should operate to manage and bring coherence to change efforts and, most importantly, to support teacher learning and reflection about relationships between practice and student outcomes. BASRC contends, "[The interconnection of cycles at these levels] was also intended to strengthen the personalization and individualization of support for students, as well as the focus on the achievement gap/underperforming groups, closer to the classroom. Finally, these cycles at multiple levels were meant to help teachers make meaning around the school cycle in regards to their own day-to-day practice" (Internal memo, 12 February 2001).

The Cycle of Inquiry requires schools' use of data and capacity to analyze, reflect, and act on the basis of evidence. Schools' success in using the Cycle of Inquiry depends in part upon technical capacity – their ability to obtain or develop data, to analyze data, and to make sense of the data in terms of practice. The capacity for a faculty to build and use knowledge through data-based inquiry depends further upon the strength of their school community and leadership. Conversely, according to BASRC's theory, inquiry builds collaboration and shared leadership in the community and thus serves as the engine for school re-culturing and the improvement of teaching and learning. As Executive Director Merrill Vargo stated:

> BASRC posited that work on the Cycle of Inquiry would help schools to identify needs, match these with the appropriate areas of learning for teachers, and at the same time help to create school cultures that were more Collaborative, more evidence-based, and more open to new ideas; and fostered a sense of collective responsibility for all children, shared leadership, and peer accountability. The Cycle of Inquiry would allow schools to accomplish two essential – and potentially contradictory things. Schools need to focus on a particular area… and at the same time, work broadly to impact the whole system that is the school. (Vargo, 2001, 6)

School Culture Outcomes: Professional Community and Broadened Leadership

BASRC assumes that schools' capacity for systematic and sustained reform to improve student outcomes depends upon changing key aspects of the school culture—relationships among teachers and the conditions of leadership (See Figure 2.2).

Professional Community - BASRC's assumption that Collaborative professional cultures are essential to effective school reform is grounded in the research literatures on effective schools, on teachers' work, on the social character of learning, and on organizational learning. Evidence from research on schools and other organizations argues that learning and the capacity to change and improve work depend upon shared standards, collective problem solving, knowledge sharing, and collective action. Changes in the professional culture of schools are thus key organizational outcomes in BASRC's school reform theory:

In the school of BASRC's dreams, the culture dictates that teachers' ongoing learning agenda is shaped by data. Improvement is something for which teachers are accountable, and requires collective action by teachers both to agree on a focus and then to support each other to adopt and adapt new practices. In this new kind of school, data about student learning reinforce[s] … an emerging understanding about which classroom practices show promise for improving achievement. (Vargo 2001, 6)

BASRC assumes that teacher learning occurs in school communities focused on students and improving teaching. This assumption challenges traditional notions of teacher professional development in which individual teachers rely on outside resources for improvement. While encouraging schools to exploit knowledge resources in the broader environment, BASRC emphasizes that learning and reform are situated in school communities. In this theory of change, school reform is fundamentally about engendering conditions of ongoing inquiry and learning in professional communities.

BASRC puts forth not just a vision of Collaborative school culture, but also a theory of how such culture develops – through teachers' joint work and inquiry. Building upon the organizational development literature on work redesign, BASRC took a "project-based learning" approach to school change. Its Cycle of Inquiry aims to redefine the work of teaching in terms of collective problem solving, knowledge sharing, and mutual accountability.

Shared Leadership – Conventional understanding of leadership in schools focuses on roles and, in particular, on the principal's role as leader. Yet, as demands on the principalship have grown, and as knowledge of organizational learning and change develops, the field has begun to rethink the question of how schools are led. From the outset, BASRC recognized a need to rethink leadership in schools, and understood this as particularly important in the context of a reform initiative that pushes for significant change in school routines. Reform that goes deeply into school culture calls for leadership work beyond the usual – for stronger and expanded school leadership that is distributed across actors in the school and sustainable through transitions in formal leadership personnel.

BASRC aimed to distribute school leadership through the Cycle of Inquiry. While principals were not a focus of BASRC's intervention, this theory of school change assumed that school administrators would cultivate shared leadership and would gradually turn over leadership functions to others in the school that served in formal and informal leadership roles, in particular, a BASRC "Reform Coordinator." Implicitly in BASRC's theory of school change, principals' roles would move away from instructional leadership that rested on formal authority in the district hierarchy to a practice that can be characterized as leadership of inquiry – asking questions, exploring data, and engaging faculty and the broader community in questions that moved their schools forward. Presumably, administrators' success in making and leading this transition would factor heavily into the success of their schools' reform efforts.

BASRC's theory of school change called for leadership looking outward to the broader school community – especially to establish greater accountability to parents. As

described in a later section, this direction for school leadership and change was gradually de-emphasized, and by the end of Phase One had disappeared. But initially, BASRC asserted that the most important accountability relationship a school has is to the community it serves, encouraging schools to engage in "a two-way conversation about … goals for their students; the program, priorities or school reform activities underway or under consideration, and the impact of these activities on students' learning and experience of the school" (BASRC, Member and Leadership School Activities, 1996, 17). The shift away from local community as central to BASRC's theory of school culture change coincided with the development of California's accountability systems over the last few years. Essentially, demands on schools to meet state accountability pressure swamped BASRC's initial vision of community-based accountability as a lever and part of school reculturing.

Student Achievement as Long-Term Outcome

In BASRC's vision, inquiry and school culture change will result in *improved student achievement and closing of the achievement gap within schools and across the region.* The reculturing of schools involves a fundamental shift toward teaching and learning strategies more focused on each student and on narrowing gaps in learning opportunities and outcomes. As teachers use evidence in meaningful ways, they become more attuned to individual student needs; as they collaborate to improve their practice with students in the school, they improve school level outcomes; as they communicate with other educators within and outside the school, they develop and share approaches to improving performance for all students. The outcome of this systematic approach to improving school practice should be improved learning as well as social-ethical and moral outcomes for all students.

School and Regional Change: the Intermediary Organization for Supporting and Leveraging Inquiry-Based School Reform

BASRC was created as an intermediary organization that – by virtue of existing neither wholly within regular education system boundaries nor wholly outside it – could serve as a resource for building community of educators across district, city, and county jurisdictions. BASRC opted to serve several functions like technical support, funder, Collaborative, and clearinghouse for the purpose of achieving two goals – fostering inquiry-based whole-school change and leveraging this kind of school change across the region. As a newly established organization founded with Annenberg and Hewlett funding, BASRC began with no regular constituency and faced the obvious growing pains of any newly-formed entity. The challenges and opportunities BASRC navigated in its first five years were framed by its responses to the following dilemmas: How does an intermediary organization pressure and support school work at the same time it functions as a Collaborative of reforming school educators who construct their ongoing work amongst themselves? How does an intermediary organization balance the tension between its inward looking goal of fostering inquiry-based change among its Leadership Schools with its outward looking goal of scaling up this kind of reform across the region? How does an intermediary organization manage and shift the focus of its multiple roles given changing system context while maintaining stability in program design for its participating schools?

An intermediary organization's role as a "gap-filler" to support and leverage school level inquiry-based whole-school reform

BASRC defined its intermediary role as "gap filler." In other words, BASRC believed that a key source of its authority to leverage whole school change was its ability to provide supports that were currently weak or absent in the regular school system. For example, when first established, BASRC saw that Bay Area schools operated in a state system where there was a drought of funding, little time for in-school professional development, a new initiative for reducing class size at the K-3 grades, and no common assessment to measure school improvement. Given this, BASRC saw its "gap-filling" role as helping schools to foster school accountability to their local parent communities with a priority on developing local assessments that could demonstrate student progress. As the SAT-9 and the Academic Performance Index [API] came to dominate schools' attention, BASRC shifted its work away from parent accountability to help schools with data management and analysis in order to manage state demands for evidence of student achievement improvement.

BASRC organized its work for helping further school progress on inquiry-based, whole-school reform as a series of projects that provide "support" and "pressure" to schools – for provision of research access, opportunities for collaboration, and technical assistance (support) and for accountability for school level progress (pressure). A central belief for BASRC was that for inquiry-based, whole-school reform to be sustained, the locus of support and pressure for school progress on inquiry must be derived by school staff and the establishment of professional norms for this kind of work. Consequently, BASRC concentrated its strategies around developing a Collaborative of reform-minded schools that would, over time, develop the norms and culture for inquiry-based, whole school change at the regional level.

BASRC's organizing logic for establishing a Collaborative of regional education reformers

BASRC assumes that schools are not likely to begin or sustain serious work on education reform in isolation; they need a broader community of schools for developing commitment, vision, and capacity to reculture their practice. Given this premise, BASRC organized its work centrally around building a Collaborative of reform-minded schools, districts, reform support organizations, and funders that would engage in meaningful work towards a common purpose. A central tenet of BASRC's work as an intermediary organization was that by modeling a learning community at the Collaborative level – the practices and norms shared with like-minded educators from other Leadership Schools would foster development of parallel norms at the school site and the region. The Collaborative would support change at the school level and spread the reform vision and its corresponding processes and tools across the region. Like BASRC's strategies and tools for school change, work within the Collaborative is comprised of projects that foster inquiry, accountability, leadership, and the development of content and process standards that are intended to provide the pressure and support to create a norm-based, vision-driven Collaborative that supports reform across the region.

The BASRC Collaborative was designed as the major strategy for establishing professional norms within Leadership Schools and across the region. An early BASRC communication regarding Member and Leadership School activities for the 1996-97 school

year began with a four-page description of "Design Principles for Networks."[6] These principles would serve both as rationale and as design criteria for joint work within the Collaborative:

- Relationships matter
- Common purposes matter
- Building new norms and habits is essential
- Strike a balance between inside and outside knowledge
- Leadership must be shared
- The focus must be on real work
- Be flexible
- High quality content matters (BASRC, Member and Leadership School Activities, 1996, 3).

Specific elements of BASRC's approach to leveraging and supporting school change are elaborated below. BASRC established a Collaborative of reform-oriented schools and pursued strategies for developing among these schools: a) standards for school reform, b) knowledge-building tools and processes, and c) a network of accountability and community.

Establishing a Collaborative

BASRC's regional reform mission and architecture were established by the terms of its funding – a regional context and approach to school reform and grant-making directly to schools. BASRC's theory of action emphasized that grants to schools provided *flexible funding* of sustainable activities. In its Phase One RFP, BASRC stated, "Grant funds are to be used primarily as investments in changes that can, in the long run, be sustained within normal budgets" (BASRC, Background, Mission and Vision: Information on Membership, Information on Leadership Funding, 1996, 32). Awards of approximately $150 per pupil for three to five years would enable schools to build the capacity around a focused effort and to bring different funding streams into greater coherence. Schools would learn to not only integrate their funds more strategically to achieve educational impact, but they would learn also to selectively choose those grant opportunities that cohere, rather than fragment, their reform work.

Because BASRC's success would rest on the success of schools in enacting the Collaborative's vision and spreading it in the region, schools were taken through a rigorous application process to become funded BASRC **Leadership Schools**. This process included up to two peer-reviewed portfolio readings and a site visit to determine evidence and promise of work currently in progress at the school site and the capacity for meaningful change. The 87 Leadership Schools funded through this process were to serve as sites in the region where tangible enactments of the BASRC vision could be seen. They represented the diversity of Bay Area schools in terms of race and ethnicity, language composition, school grade levels and size, and socioeconomic levels within the Bay Area. As described below, BASRC

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[6] Research cited as grounding the network principles included: Ann Lieberman and Maureen Grolnick (1996) "Networks and Reform in American Education," *Teachers College Record*; and Ann Lieberman and Milbrey McLaughlin (1992) "Networks for Educational Change: Powerful and Problematic," *Phi Delta Kappan* 73(9): 673-677.

established requirements and opportunities for these funded schools to share their reform experiences with the Collaborative.

BASRC established *broader membership in the BASRC Collaborative* to support those schools that had the will and potential to succeed as examples of school reform but did not seek, or did not succeed in obtaining, funding through the Collaborative. To facilitate regional spread, BASRC attracted and admitted a second tier of **Membership Schools** that were assumed to be most receptive to the work of Leadership Schools and to have the potential to engage the BASRC vision even without the incentives and opportunities funding can bring. Through successive application and review processes over the first three years of BASRC's existence, schools were screened for membership status. Of the 233 schools that became part of the Collaborative beginning in 1996, nearly two-thirds did not receive funding. The expectation was that the 146 non-funded Membership Schools would likely initiate the first stage of regional spread that Leadership Schools initiate.

BASRC understood that schools could not engage in reform in isolation from their context and aimed to build broader system support and regional capacity through the Collaborative. To this end, BASRC included in its membership districts of funded schools (as a condition of funding), support providers, and funders who, in its vision, would work together on a common reform agenda and build capacity for school and regional change. In its Annenberg Challenge proposal, BASRC stated that "By creating new partnerships between schools, districts, support providers – partnerships which are focused on a shared commitment to a vision and a set of criteria for their work – the Collaborative seeks to have significant impact not only on schools, but on districts and support providers as well." (BASRC, Annenberg Challenge grant proposal, 1995)

Setting Standards for School Reform

BASRC established and enforced standards for school reform through its application and review processes. A key assumption underlying BASRC's design for the Collaborative was that schools would build their understanding of the Collaborative's vision by participating in the development and use of reform standards and rubrics for scoring schools' progress.

BASRC designed **portfolio readings** as its first joint work project to select schools, districts, and support providers for membership in the Collaborative and to institutionalize a set of standards for school culture. The portfolio reading was the first step a school would take toward receiving funding as a BASRC Leadership School, and thus it represented real and consequential work. This application and review process initiated leadership in the region both by identifying Leadership and Membership Schools and by organizing the opportunity for regional joint work through which schools, districts, and support providers could better understand the Collaborative's reform vision. Executive Director Merrill Vargo stated that the portfolio process:

> … allowed BASRC to work on both process and content at once, and to use administrative processes (e.g., the selection of grantees) to foster understanding of the BASRC vision and approach to reform…toward its regional change goals. The process of developing rubrics, reviewing portfolios and funding applications, and selecting Leadership Schools involved hundreds of people across the Bay Area in work that built understanding of BASRC's view of both reform process and content (2001, 7).

The portfolio standards and rubrics created for schools, support providers, and districts were used to evaluate an organization's progress at that moment in time along the five criteria deemed necessary to achieve whole school change: best practices for teaching and learning, standards, systems to manage the change process, partnerships, and professional community. This was BASRC's first attempt at operationalizing its vision of whole-school reform. Participants in the portfolio readings were asked to score schools according to the evidence they provided regarding each dimension of school culture.[7] The scoring rubrics presented criteria for readers to use to determine the degree to which a school's reform work was aligned with the BASRC vision.

BASRC's strategy of using a collective evaluation process to deepen and enforce shared standards for school reform framed the development of a review process for BASRC Leadership Schools instituted in the third year of Phase One. The **Review of Progress** (**ROP**) was designed to refresh and build schools' commitments and shared understanding of the Collaborative's vision of school culture change, as well as to hold schools accountable for making reasonable progress on reform. Over the first five years of its work, the BASRC Collaborative ultimately decided to defund four of its total 87 grant-funded Leadership Schools after they did not meet the standards in the peer-reviewed Review of Progress and after they were given several opportunities for coaching support from BASRC staff.

BASRC's progress in developing standards for inquiry-based school reform was suggested by changes in reform criteria used in the portfolio review versus in the ROP, as summarized in Table 2.1. In developing a tool for Collaborative-level accountability, BASRC realized that its original criteria and scoring rubrics were inadequate for measuring schools' reform progress.

> The five criteria defined by BASRC in its initial application process described the breadth of the work to be accomplished… They are intended as a system map rather than a theory of action. The original rubrics attempted to describe the *result* of reform, and they did an inadequate job of describing the reform *work*. In contrast, the Review of Progress rubrics are a description of BASRC's theory of action for schools. They describe the work that BASRC imagines would result in transformed schools. (Vargo, 2001, 7)

The application standards established a vision of reformed school culture for the Collaborative; the progress standards described the stages of reform through which a school should move. As such, the ROP scoring rubric defines a developmental model of whole-school reform and expectations for a school's progress – from *beginning* to *emerging* to *systematic* and to *sustainable* stages of reform. BASRC recognized that changes in school culture take time and might not result immediately in increased academic outcomes; therefore the criteria emphasized change in the cultural conditions of schools that promised deep and sustained improvement in teaching and learning. According to BASRC's ROP standards, Leadership Schools were expected to raise student achievement and begin closing the achievement gap by the third year of work.

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[7] The portfolios were measured against rubrics across the five criteria with scores ranging from "1" to "4." A school, district, or support provider needed to score at least a "2" to become a member of the Collaborative. Schools needed to score a "3" on all five criteria to be considered for funding as a Leadership School.

Table 2.1 Setting Standards for the Collaborative: Portfolio Review and Review of Progress Criteria

Portfolio Review ⟶

> Criterion 1: A focus on best practices in teaching and learning and whole school change
>
> Criterion 2: High standards are in place for every student and every adult
>
> Criterion 3: Systems to manage the change process
>
> Criterion 4: Partnership with key stakeholders
>
> Criterion 5: A professional Learning Community
>
> Each criterion was applied across: standards, teaching and learning, culture of continuous improvement, personalization, systems and resources, and accountability

Review of Progress ⟶

> Criterion 1: Equity and achieving high standards
> Standards; equity and the COI; personalization, priorities, and evidence-based practices; partnerships and inclusion
>
> Criterion 2: Depth
> Student/teacher relationships; study and expertise in subject matter; inquiry and adjustment of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment; teacher culture and evidence-based practices
>
> Criterion 3: Breadth
> Stakeholder involvement and accountability; outreach and inclusion; all teachers, all kids, all elements of school; shared leadership
>
> Criterion 4: Making connections beyond the school
> Tapping into outside expertise; managing the policy context; building school-to-school relationships; building partnerships with community organizations
>
> Criterion 5: Building systems to maintain coherence and focus
> Relationships among the parts; focus on priority problems; action, impact, and momentum, resource use and alignment

Refinements in the final diagram include the addition of steps in the inquiry process, most importantly the incorporation of "A" and "B" questions from the accountability framework as the second step of the Cycle of Inquiry. This change was designed to focus the school's inquiry more explicitly on the link between student learning and school practice. BASRC required schools to identify "which students" are having problems in a particular academic area (A question) and then to identify "which practices/strategies" could close the achievement gap (B question). BASRC asked schools to think about which classroom practices were making a difference, and which teachers were succeeding. By adding the question of "which teachers" were making the changes in classroom practice and student achievement, BASRC aimed to help break the norms of teacher isolation and provide school leaders with a robust strategy for managing instructional improvement.

Knowledge-Building Tools and Processes

BASRC's goal of transforming school culture meant that school staffs would need to rethink their practice and learn new ways of working together and in their classrooms. They would need a wide range of supports for building and sharing knowledge of effective inquiry processes and practices to address identified problems, and each school's challenges for learning and change would be somewhat unique. BASRC thus recognized that, for it to

succeed on its "mission impossible" of transforming all Bay Area schools, it needed to develop tools and processes to support schools' ability to access, use, and develop knowledge over time both within and outside schools. As BASRC conveyed to its membership about networks early in the founding of the Collaborative: "Networks aren't particularly effective if they focus on constantly bringing in outside experts or on only tapping into local wisdom to solve any problem. Effective networks both draw on and honor local experience and also connect teachers to the best thinking of outsiders" (BASRC, Member and Leadership School Activities, 1996, 4).

BASRC invested in several design strategies for building knowledge resources in support of inquiry-based school reform.

Linking schools to knowledge resources – From the start, BASRC viewed **support providers** (organizations or consultants who provided technical assistance in content areas such as literacy or mathematics, or support for school change processes) as knowledge resources independent of a single school or district and as key actors in spreading the BASRC vision and helping schools to incorporate BASRC principles into practice. Support providers represented an "outside voice" and could serve as a "resource for teacher buy-in, school-site leadership, and professional development" (CRC, Support Provider Issues for BASRC, 2000). BASRC sought to strengthen relationships between support providers and schools by providing funding for schools to eventually become savvy consumers of support. With BASRC funding, schools had the means to hire a support provider. It was in BASRC's interest, as well as the school's, for the school to hire a provider who espoused BASRC's philosophy of changing school culture through inquiry. Support providers, by working with several BASRC schools at a time, could accelerate and refine the change process in schools and across the region.

Managing knowledge on the school site – The position of **Reform Coordinator** was, in essence, an internal complement to the support provider position. Reform coordinators were the members of the school community responsible for organizing and promoting a vision of school change that aligned with BASRC's vision. A portion of BASRC funding in each Leadership School was used to free up one teacher from approximately half of his/her classroom responsibilities to take on this role which included process management, collecting and analyzing data, coordinating professional development and coaching opportunities with support providers, and maintaining communications within and outside the school. The Reform Coordinator served as the point of contact for BASRC within the school and frequently attends regional BASRC events.

Refining BASRC's role in supporting schools – Initially, BASRC took the role of creating tools and strategies for member schools, but did not serve as a support provider. At first, BASRC Summer Institutes were offered as an intensive way to acquaint Leadership Schools with resources and tools – such as the five whys, helping trios, and fishbowls that have become standard fare at BASRC gatherings. Over time, BASRC realized that some schools needed direct assistance to make progress on inquiry-based reform. BASRC offered direct school coaching to those Leadership Schools that did not meet their progress standard at the annual ROP review. BASRC offered additional

supports on a regional scale. During the second year of its grant giving, BASRC convened **workdays** around specific topics like equity, data, and accountability events, so that schools could learn from BASRC staff and network with other Leadership and Membership Schools. During workdays, a limited number of personnel from each school engaged in substantive activities such as mapping the Cycle of Inquiry and developing plans for sustaining BASRC work into the future. Those in attendance were expected to return to their schools and share what they had learned with the entire school community.

Creating and sharing knowledge in school networks – BASRC also convened opportunities for BASRC Leadership and Membership Schools to create and share knowledge at the regional level through Affinity Groups and the Research and Development initiatives. **Affinity Groups** were action research groups that existed during the first two years of BASRC funding. Groups met monthly to learn and use the Cycle of Inquiry to investigate a particular question about school reform that could impact classroom practice at their school site. Specifically, the Affinity Groups focused on a range of topics including diversity, standards and assessment, whole school change, and literacy. **Research and Development Initiatives (R & Ds)** were intended to develop and disseminate new knowledge and were centered on principles of collaboration. This strategy was designed to generate new knowledge based on gaps identified by schools and generate regional capacity to address those gaps.[8] BASRC's Phase One R&Ds included: School to Career, School-University Partnerships, Technology (including the Bay Area National Digital Library, Digital High School, and Technology and School Change), Leadership (including work with principals, districts, and support organizations), Equity, and the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards.

These strategies and tools for building schools' capacity for knowledge development were designed to work in synergy with school's increasing proficiency with the Cycle of Inquiry. Together they would support Leadership Schools' progress in meeting BASRC's standards for inquiry-based reform.

Building a Network of Accountability and Community

As noted earlier, BASRC's theory of action for establishing a regional school reform Collaborative was framed in important ways by research on the role of professional networks as contexts for education reform. BASRC designed the Collaborative as a source of support and learning for reform and as a body to establish and enforce standards for self-regulation and mutual accountability among its members. Its core strategies for building a regional network of reforming schools used joint work as a vehicle for establishing new relationships and standards as a means of enforcing accountability to the Collaborative's vision.

Refining and using standards for joint work – During its first two years, BASRC staff evaluated Leadership Schools' progress to reach decisions about the renewal of their funding. As described earlier, the Review of Progress (ROP) rubrics and standards were subsequently designed to build common understanding among Collaborative members. The ROP review was intended to achieve two additional goals: to build accountability to

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[8] CRC's evaluation did not address the role or outcomes of the R & Ds.

the Collaborative and to move the work of schools forward. BASRC states, "By accepting membership in a vision-driven Collaborative, members became accountable to each other to make progress toward the vision and to share evidence of this progress with each other. This was intended as a regional step toward creating even more robust peer accountability relationships at the school level." (Vargo 2001, 9).

Using the ROP rubric, reader teams of three people evaluated documents submitted by Leadership Schools on the progress of their work to date and plan for the future. Based on the written document and subsequent interviews, the reader team scored the school on the ROP rubric to determine if the Leadership School was "at standard," "above standard," or "below standard" based on the expectation for their cohort. Cohorts were defined in terms of their year of funding, and BASRC established explicit standards of progress that were applied to its funding cohorts 1, 2, and 3. This process of identifying schools at and below standard provided the means for BASRC to create the "pressure" within the Collaborative's accountability system and to identify targets for support. Schools designated as below standard through the ROP process received additional coaching opportunities and site visits from BASRC to help Leadership Schools get to "at standard" in the next year.

Fostering school leadership and developing the capacity for regional spread – To initiate regional spread, BASRC believed that it needed to do two things: provide Leadership Schools the tools and opportunities to model the BASRC vision of inquiry, standards, and accountability; and foster Membership Schools' receptivity to engage the BASRC vision. BASRC provided Leadership Schools occasions to take on leadership roles by facilitating Affinity Groups (teacher action research groups learning the inquiry process) and, through more traditional routes, by presenting an inquiry session at the annual Collaborative Assembly. But these mechanisms were infrequent. Believing that Leadership Schools needed to meet more frequently and practice what a reciprocal learning, leadership role can look like, BASRC created **Critical Friends** to help break school norms of working in isolation and to initiate the process for regional spread.

Critical Friends were meant to create a safe setting for school people to ask tough questions and discuss their evolving understanding of change. Critical Friends are teams consisting of three to five schools that alternate site visits to observe classrooms and give feedback on each school's focused efforts. For example, School A and School B visit School C. Then Schools C and B visit A, etc. A typical Critical Friends visit usually began with a meeting where visitors were introduced to the school and were acquainted with the questions on which the host school would like the visitors to reflect upon. The visitors sat in on classes and then discussed the school's progress and challenges with faculty and students. At the end of the day, schools debriefed and reflected on what they observed. Through this process, schools should develop greater capacity for reflection on their practice to make improvements.

Involving broader membership in the work of the Collaborative – During the first two years of BASRC, opportunities for Membership School involvement were limited. The lack of participation prevented Membership Schools from learning and incorporating

BASRC tools into their work. Thus, in its third year BASRC implemented numerous Membership School Activities to support their learning and connections to other organizations and schools within the Collaborative. A Membership Fair in 1998 and a Critical Friends Workday exclusively for Membership Schools were some of the events held to generate relationships between Leadership and Membership Schools to initiate regional spread. Membership Schools also attended BASRC workdays that provided a place for conversation across schools and introduced participants to BASRC tools and philosophy. A Membership School Advisory Team, including twenty teachers, principals, support providers, and district administrators, was also created to reflect on and adjust strategies specifically for Membership Schools. This work was not sustained throughout Phase One, as BASRC subsequently shifted its resources to invest more heavily in supporting depth of Leadership Schools' reform work, in trade-off with the breadth of broader member involvement.

The timeline shown in Table 2.2 documents the tools that BASRC used during Phase One to leverage and support schools' progress on inquiry-based reform. Shifts in emphasis and refinements of BASRC's design theory were captured by changes in BASRC's design tools over time.

Regional Strategy for Scaling Up School Reform

BASRC's regional strategy for scaling up inquiry-based school reform was shaped by the terms of its funding. This meant that, unlike other district-based Annenberg Challenge grantees, its reform agenda and strategies would not be fundamentally tied to a large urban school district. BASRC had the luxury and challenge of operating outside the political and bureaucratic constraints of a major urban school district. BASRC recruited reforming schools from over 100 districts in six Bay Area counties – including Oakland, San Francisco, and San Jose Unified School Districts. The 87 Leadership Schools that BASRC ultimately funded had obtained formal commitment from their 40 districts to support their reform efforts.

BASRC faced both opportunities and obstacles to its regional reform strategy. An organizing logic for a regional intermediary organization held two assumptions as key: 1) problems schools face are regional, not district-specific, and 2) schools are not likely to begin or sustain work in isolation and need the support of a reform community. An intermediary organization's focus on the region as context presents the striking opportunity to address the inequities that occur across jurisdictional boundaries.

While BASRC was committed to the premise that region was a reform context that mattered, this dimension of Collaborative work was complicated by the fact that few successful models of regional spread exist in education or other fields. The foremost challenge for BASRC in generating regional participation was that the region had not been previously defined. There was no pre-existing community with which to work.[9] BASRC

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[9] As Bruce Katz describes in *Reflections on Regionalism* (2000) this has been a universal obstacle in regional enterprises: "In most cases the region is nobody's community. This means that getting any action at the regional scale requires creating new Collaborative alignments among interests who previously either didn't believe they shared issues in common, or who knew it but felt no compelling reason to act on it" (Katz 2000).

attempted to overcome a hurdle that has plagued reform in many public arenas. It had to require that it provide individuals and groups with a compelling reason to collaborate where they had not in the past, given scarce resources and ambiguous outcomes. In other words, busy school faculty and administrators would need to be convinced of the ultimate benefit to their schools that regional participation would yield. However, BASRC hoped that, as a regional intermediary, it could leverage coherence across a broader range of actors committed to whole-school reform and develop a coherent network to support it.

Leadership Schools' Role in Scaling Up Reform

BASRC's regional design embraced a contagion model of change.[10] In this view, Leadership Schools were to serve as the catalysts for reform across the region. These funded BASRC schools were expected to move at an accelerated rate toward the Collaborative's school reform vision and to use the Collaborative's venues to communicate their reform experiences with all participating schools, thus providing the information and ideas that could spark regional-level outcomes. In effect, through the power of highly visible Leadership Schools and the strength of the regional network, BASRC's reform vision would catch on throughout the region.

Leadership Schools were additionally expected to leverage change within their district. BASRC assumed that their rapid improvement would garner the attention and recognition of district staff and schools. District administrators, then, would have the incentive to take a more active role in encouraging their other schools to incorporate the BASRC vision into practice.

Regional Support Networks and Capacity

At its inception, BASRC believed that the potential to change regional norms and strategies to support school reform existed, since so many reform initiatives with similar goals were already underway:

> The task of transforming over a thousand schools and their districts would clearly be impossible except for the fact that there is so much good work toward this end already underway…though the Bay Area is a hotbed of school reform, the whole often seems to be less than the sum of the parts. Reform initiatives almost always work in isolation from each other. The examples of reforms working at cross-purposes are as common as the examples of reforms collaborating productively. (BASRC, Member and Leadership School Activities, 1996, 14)

BASRC saw its task for enacting regional change as not only empowering schools to learn and spread the BASRC vision, but also fostering the development of a more coherent and effective network of supports for school change. Towards this end, BASRC initiated opportunities for support providers and funders.

The **Coaches Network**, which BASRC contracted with the Bay Area Coalition of Essential Schools (now the Bay Area Coalition for Equitable Schooling), was intended to

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[10] See Malcolm Gladwell (2000) *The tipping point: How little things can make a big difference*. Boston: Little Brown for an elaboration of this theory of "spread" and scale-up.

create coherence among support providers in their approaches to coaching as well as provide a forum to share ideas and strategies for coaching. Support providers throughout the region convened throughout the second year of BASRC with the multiple goals of developing a theory of action/theory of change, identifying indicators of coaching success, developing a whole school ethic, and creating a community of change agents working on behalf of school reform.

The **Support Provider Seminar Series** was developed to give support providers an opportunity to learn more about each other's work and to discuss topics of regional concern. BASRC and support provider experts facilitated five topic-specific series that focused on district role in reform, diversity, public engagement, whole school change, and literacy.

The **Funders Learning Community** brought funders together to critically examine funding practices, learn more about whole school change, and learn more about how schools engage with BASRC processes and tools. Individuals from various foundations and corporations attended these annual meetings that focused specifically on grant alignment training, theory of action/ theory of change, a broad view of issues in education reform, education policy issues, data and the dilemmas of data, technology in the classroom, and student voice in educational equity. This would be a critical component of developing a regional capacity to sustain and spread inquiry-based school reform. To the extent that funders came to understand and invest in BASRC's reform vision, the Collaborative's work would have ripple effects beyond the life or grant-making capacity of the Hewlett-Annenberg grant.

Public Advocacy

BASRC believed that receptiveness to school change existed not only among Membership and Leadership Schools, but among the general public as well. Understanding that schools need public advocacy for their work, and citing research arguing that the public is more apt to accept what teachers, principals, and students have to say about schools than what politicians say, BASRC aimed to build opportunities and capacity for educators to meaningfully communicate the day-to-day work of schools to the public. Public engagement, BASRC believed, could potentially mobilize those individuals who are not directly involved in education to support and accelerate the process of school change.

Through its **Regional Open Houses**, or **School Visits**, BASRC sought to demonstrate what teaching and learning in action looks like to the public. BASRC Leadership and Membership Schools across the region opened their classrooms for one day, two times a year, to non-BASRC schools, district representatives, parents, community members, and media to show the public what the process of school change looks like. The focus of these school visits ranged considerably from literacy practices to school wide standards to the creation of organizational structures like houses/academies.

The **Speakers' Bureau** intended to build the capacity and create the opportunities for educators within the Collaborative to speak to the public about the process of school change and the fundamental principles of the BASRC vision. BASRC provided

presenters with slides and scripts to scaffold their talks. Educators in the Collaborative used these to speak to district people, schools within their districts, parents, and community organizations about the BASRC vision and their own personal experiences participating in the Collaborative.

                              *   *   *

The chapters that follow assess the ways in which these interlocking theories of school change, changing schools and regional education reform played out in BASRC schools, districts and the region.

Table 2.2 BASRC Tools: The Evolution of BASRC's Phase One Design

	1996-97 YEAR 1	1997-98 YEAR 2	1998-99 YEAR 3	1999-2000 YEAR 4	2000-01 YEAR 5
STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL CULTURE	*Portfolio Review* (began in 1995-96)* School rubric⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯→ Support provider rubric⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯→ District rubric⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯→		*Review of Progress** ROP rubric replaces the school rubric⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯→		*Review of Progress*/Application* ROP rubric shortened to work plan⎯⎯⎯⎯→
INQUIRY MODEL OF SCHOOL CHAGNE	*Cycle of Inquiry**⎯⎯→ Focused Effort	A&B questions introduced	Focused effort has academic, student focus (rather than just a strategy or practice)	Center of Cycle of Inquiry is closing the achievement gap	B questions changed to "Which teachers…"
BASRC SUPPORTS FOR SCHOOL AND REGIONAL CHANGE	*Summer Institute**⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯→ (Required attendance for schools in their first year of funding) Introduction and practice of "consensus building" and "school-building" tools like the fishbowl, protocol, the 5 Y's, helping trios, etc. Contact people⎯⎯⎯→ Cluster managers⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯→ Contact people⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯→ One-on-one coaching / site visits for funding⎯⎯→ One-on-one coaching / site visits for continued funding⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯→ *New roles:* Summer Institute facilitators⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯→ Reform coordinator*⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯→ Support provider*⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯→ *Seminars*⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯→ *Workdays*⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯→ Leadership Portfolio coaching Data & technical support Assessment workshop Public engagement seminars	Renewal process workday	Critical Friends Accountability frameworks Equity Data Open House workday Collaborative Assembly workday Rethinking Accountability(WAC) BASRC Learning Series⎯⎯⎯⎯→	Cycle of Inquiry Data Equity Aligning Resources Collaborative Assembly inquiry sessions	Fall kick-off ROP workday Winter kick-off

	1996-97 YEAR 1	1997-98 YEAR 2	1998-99 YEAR 3	1999-2000 YEAR 4	2000-01 YEAR 5
ACCOUNTABILITY	Community Forum* →	Accountability Event* ———————————————————————————————→			
	Portfolio Membership Funding* ————————→				
		Review of Progress conducted by BASRC* →	Review of Progress by peers* ———————————————————→		
MEMBERSHIP AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION	Affinity Groups ——————————→				
		Critical Friends* ————————————→			
	Annual Meeting* →	Collaborative Assembly* ——————————————————————————→			Work worth sharing* →
	Delegate Assembly and Delegate Council ——————————————————————————————————————→				
			Membership Faire Workdays for Membership Schools ——→		
		School Visits / Regional Open House ——————→			
			Vision Presentation and Speakers' Bureau ——————————→		
	R&Ds ——→				
	School to Career Technology Task Force School University Partnership Task Force	School to Career Technology Task Force School University Partnership (SUP) Equity Task Force Leadership Task Force Literacy and Leadership	School to Career (TASC) SUP Equity Initiative Leadership (principals and districts) BANDL	School to Career TASC SUP Equity Initiative Leadership BANDL NBPTS	SUP Equity Initiative DSLC BANDL
		Principal networking ————————————————————————————————→			
		Reform coordinator networking ————————————————————————→			
	Support provider network ——————————→				

* Indicates tools and assignments BASRC required for Leadership Schools

3

Assessing BASRC Phase One Outcomes: Schools' Inquiry Practices and Students' SAT-9 Performance

B ASRC's theory of school change asserts that improved student outcomes will result from schools' progress on inquiry-based reform. As teachers learn to use data on student outcomes to evaluate and change their practice, teaching and learning should improve and gaps in student achievement within the school should narrow. Key summative evaluation questions for BASRC Phase One concern:

- To what extent did Leadership Schools make progress on inquiry practices; what levels of implementation were achieved over the course of Phase One?
- Does implementation of inquiry practices result in improved student outcomes; is there a link between the strength of a school's inquiry and gains on student outcomes?
- How well did Leadership Schools do overall to improve student outcomes during Phase One, in comparison to similar schools in the region and California?

Quantitative evaluation data reported in this chapter provide an overall assessment of these issues, while later chapters look closely at schools' experiences implementing inquiry practices and factors that influenced their success. Analyses reported here draw on several kinds and sources of quantitative data on school inquiry practices and student outcomes: BASRC Review of Progress ratings; surveys of teachers, principals, and BASRC Reform Coordinators; state record data on student characteristics, SAT-9 test results for 1998-2001, and California's API data for 1999-2001.

Most BASRC Leadership Schools Made Progress on Inquiry

BASRC's annual Review of Progress (ROP) in 1999, 2000, and 2001 tracked all Leadership Schools' progress implementing inquiry practices and developing systems to support and sustain inquiry. The ROP required schools to document activities, accomplishments, and goals, and was intended to provoke reflection, mutual accountability, and planning for the future. The peer review process used a school's documented work as evidence for evaluating practice and determining its progress on inquiry-based reform. Each school was assigned one of four possible overall scores of *beginning, emerging, systematic,* or *sustainable* based on BASRC peers' evaluation using a rubric scoring system across five dimensions of school practice (see Chapter Two for more detail and Appendix E for the BASRC Year 5 ROP rubric). These scores provide an aggregate assessment of BASRC school reform outcomes for all Leadership Schools. Although schools began their affiliation with BASRC at different

points in time and with different levels of readiness for inquiry-based reform, all were expected to make steady progress toward systematic and sustainable inquiry practice.

A comparison of BASRC schools' 1999 ROP ratings with their 2001 ratings shows patterns of progress on inquiry-based reform over a two-year period (see Table 3.1). The data show steady progress on inquiry among most BASRC Leadership Schools. More than half of all schools advanced from one stage to another over two years or maintained a systematic rating (61% of schools rated in 1999 and 2001; 62% of schools rated only in 1999 and 2000). Notably, among those schools for which 2001 ratings are available, the number rated as *systematic* jumped from 10 percent in 1999 to 53 percent in 2001.

Table 3.1 BASRC Review of Progress (ROP) Ratings for BASRC Leadership Schools Funded through 2001

		1999 Rating			
		Beginning	Emerging	Systematic	TOTALS
2001 Rating[1]	**Beginning**	3	2	0	5
	Emerging	4 (8)	11 (12)	3 (1)	18
	Systematic	5	19 (5)	2 (8)	26
	TOTALS	12 (8)	32 (17)	5 (9)	49 (34)

[1] Numbers in parentheses are schools that did not apply for BASRC Phase Two funding and thus for which 2001 ROP ratings are not available. The table shows their ROP ratings in 1999 and 2000.

Apparent in patterns of schools' advance on ROP ratings is the difficulty schools had moving from *emerging* conditions of inquiry to *systematic* conditions. Whereas most (85%) of the 20 schools rated *beginning* in1999 progressed at least to *emerging* within 1-2 years, just over half (59%) of the 32 schools rated *emerging* in1999 advanced to *systematic* in two years. Chapter 5 uses field-based data from ten case study schools to describe the nonlinear trajectory of schools' progress on inquiry-based reform and the particular challenges that schools faced in moving from *emerging* to *systematic* and *sustainable* conditions of inquiry.

Longitudinal teacher survey data for eighteen Leadership Schools document schools' progress on inquiry-based reform over the full course of their Phase One funding. In 1998 and again in 2001, teachers rated their school on a set of survey items comprising an Inquiry Practices scale:

- My school has a clear vision of reform that is linked to standards for student learning and growth
- My school encourages teachers to pursue inquiry into their classroom practice
- Progress toward the school's teaching vision is openly examined and acknowledged
- Teachers collect and use data to improve their teaching
- My school has made changes designed to better meet the needs of our diverse student body
- Teachers are engaged in systematic analysis of student performance data
- Assessment of student performance leads to changes in our school's curriculum
- Teachers in this school regularly examine school performance
- This school is actively involved in school reform

The data points in Figure 3.1 represent each school's scores on this measure in 1998 and in 2001; the dashed diagonal line defines a threshold of "no change" between teachers' baseline ratings of their school and their ratings in the last year of Phase One.

Figure 3.1 Teacher Survey Ratings of Leadership Schools' Inquiry Practices, in 1998 and 2001[1]

[1] Data are from the 1998 and 2001 Teacher Survey in 18 Leadership Schools. "Inquiry Practices" is a 5-point scale combining teacher responses to nine survey items concerning the school's use of data to evaluate and change practice. Alpha codes represent evaluation case study schools (longitudinal data are not available for schools A and J).

These data corroborate the overall trends shown for 1999 and 2001 ROP ratings and field-based ratings for evaluation case study schools (see Chapter 5) – the majority of Leadership Schools made progress on inquiry practices. For most of the surveyed Leadership Schools, teachers rated their school higher in 2001 than in 1998 (schools that are above the diagonal line in Figure 3.1). Notably, schools weakest on inquiry at the start of their reform work (in the left zone of the figure) all showed advance, while half of the six schools initially stronger on inquiry appear to have declined. While this pattern may partly reflect statistical regression to the mean, it is consistent with the ROP results and points to challenges schools face in achieving sustainable inquiry practices – an issue addressed in Chapter 5.

Striking in the survey data, and in BASRC ROP ratings for all Leadership Schools, is the wide range of readiness for inquiry-based reform that existed among schools funded through BASRC Phase One. This evidence makes clear that, even though BASRC screened schools for membership and funding through a rigorous application process, the initiative did not "cream" schools already strong in inquiry practices. In fact, BASRC's screening process ensured that its Leadership Schools were *committed* to developing inquiry practices, not that they were already accomplished in this kind of reform work. BASRC achieved its goal of

funding schools that represented the geographic and demographic diversity of the Bay Area (see Appendix B) and, at the same time, captured wide diversity in schools' prior reform experience and professional culture. Implications for differences in Leadership Schools' experiences in this reform initiative are analyzed in Chapter 4 in terms of their participation in BASRC activities and in Chapter 5 in terms of particular challenges they faced in implementing inquiry practices.

    The fact that many Phase One Leadership Schools did not reach an advanced level of inquiry over the course of Phase One has important implications for an evaluation of BASRC's theory of school change. The theory argues that a school's use of data-based inquiry to reform its educational practices results in improved student outcomes. In other words, student outcomes attributable to BASRC's theory of school reform depend upon schools' successful implementation of inquiry practices. A fair test of this theory, then, takes into account the relative level of implementation achieved by Leadership Schools during Phase One.

School Inquiry Improves Student Outcomes on SAT-9

To test the effect of a school's implementation of inquiry-based reform on student outcomes, we estimated the path model shown in Figure 3.2. Survey measures of schools' Inquiry Practices derive from both the eighteen-school teacher survey and the Reform Coordinator survey representing 52 schools. Controlling for students' overall performance on SAT-9 in 1998, a school's implementation of inquiry practices has a positive effect on students' SAT-9 performance in 2001. Statistically significant regression effects are found for both sets of survey respondents and school samples. The consistent results for different respondents' ratings of school inquiry and for different samples of Leadership Schools provide strong evidence that school inquiry practices pay off in improved teaching and learning.

Figure 3.2 Leadership Schools' Maturity on Inquiry Practices Predicts Student Gains on SAT-9
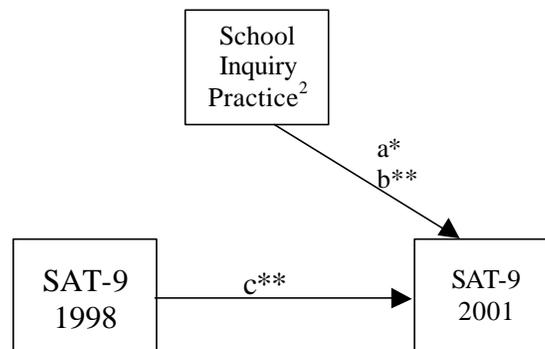
[1] This model was estimated using measures of school inquiry practices from two surveys: a) the 2001 Teacher Survey in eighteen Leadership Schools and b) the 2001 Reform Coordinator Survey representing 52 Leadership Schools.

[2] The "Inquiry Practice" scale combines teacher ratings on nine 5-point scales of their school's use of data to evaluate and change practice.

[a] Path coefficient is .15 with Teacher Survey data.

[b] Path coefficient is .16 for Reform Coordinator Survey data;.

[c] Path coefficients are .92 and .91 respectively for the two models.

According to BASRC's theory of school change, the inquiry effect on students' SAT-9 performance results from improvements in school and classroom practices that are made when teachers examine data on student outcomes and seek knowledge to address particular learning needs of their students. Chapter 5 provides evidence that inquiry promotes the kinds of changes in professional culture and educational practice that BASRC's theory expects, such as enhanced collaboration and shared responsibility for improving the quality and equity of student learning opportunities.

BASRC had an Impact on Students' SAT-9 Performance

Regardless of their relative implementation of inquiry practices, BASRC's funded Leadership Schools posted gains on SAT-9 that significantly exceeded those of a control group of Bay Area schools. The control group was defined in terms of strict matching criteria. First, schools were screened on their reform orientation, as indicated by their successful application for BASRC membership in 1997 or 1998. Then the funded and non-funded BASRC schools were matched individually according to their scores on the School Characteristics Index, the California Department of Education's composite measure of student demographics, poverty, and parent education, and school variables such as teacher credentials and staff turnover. (See Appendix D for further detail on the construction and characteristics of the control group.). A statistical test for a BASRC effect on SAT-9 gains compares 1998-2001 trends for all matched pairs of schools

The pair-wise comparisons of Leadership Schools and their matched sample counterparts yield a statistically significant overall advantage for BASRC schools. The trend lines for the two sets of schools in Figure 3.3 show that, in the aggregate, BASRC Leadership Schools made greater gains than the comparison group over all four years that SAT-9 was administered.

Figure 3.3 BASRC Leadership Schools Show Greater Gains on SAT-9 than Matched Sample Membership Schools[1]
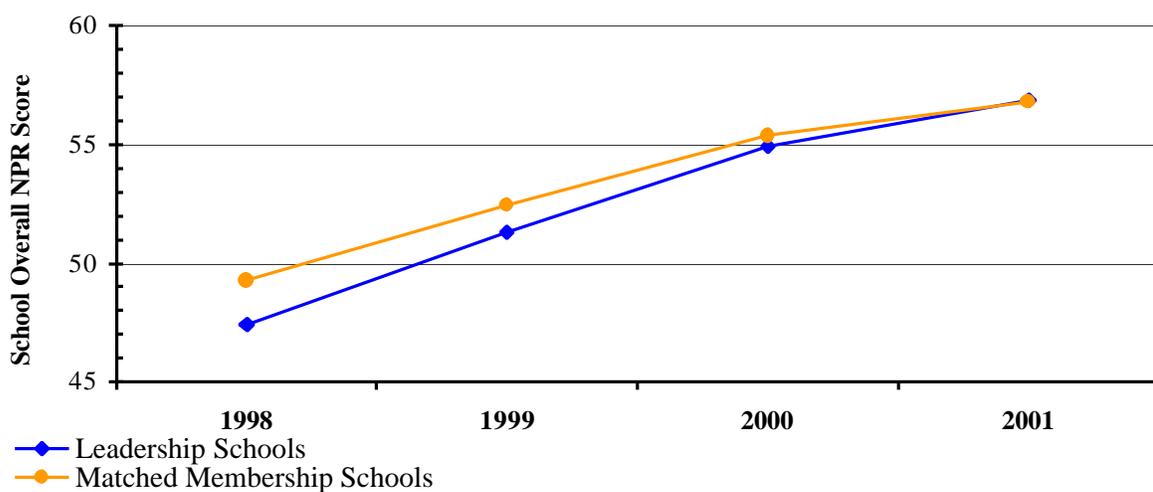
1 Differences are statistically significant based on paired comparisons of SAT-9 trends for each BASRC Leadership School and a Membership School matched on the 1999 School Characteristics Index. The school overall NPR score is calculated from scores in 3 subjects: Reading, Mathematics, and Language.

These data attest to BASRC's impact on student outcomes over the course of Phase One. At the same time, the Leadership Schools have not made extraordinary gains on SAT-9 when compared to schools in the Bay Area more generally (see Figures 3.4-3.8). The discrepant results from control-group comparisons versus comparisons with broadly similar schools in the region suggest that BASRC schools faced greater challenges to improvement on the state's assessment than most Bay Area schools.

Further analyses of Leadership Schools' SAT-9 outcomes report results for Matched Sample schools, other Bay Area schools, and all California schools. These analyses address BASRC's dual equity goals – to close achievement gaps between schools with different student demographics in the region and to close achievement gaps between student groups within schools. BASRC seeks not just to raise its schools' overall academic achievement, but to reduce inequalities in student achievement associated with differences in their socioeconomic status, race, and ethnicity.

BASRC Leadership Schools Made Progress on Closing Between-School Achievement Gaps in the Region

To assess BASRC's success in closing achievement gaps in the region, we focus on SAT-9 gains of Leadership Schools serving the largest proportions of poor and minority students relative to other Bay Area schools serving the same student populations. Are BASRC Leadership Schools doing better than comparison schools in improving the academic achievement of traditionally low-performing students? Also of interest is progress among Leadership Schools serving more advantaged students, relative to their regional counterparts, since BASRC aims to promote reform and improved student outcomes across diverse Bay Area schools.

For these analyses, Leadership Schools are grouped into thirds according to a) percent students eligible for reduced-price meals b) percent English Learner students, and c) percent African American students. The same cut points are used to generate norms for schools in the matched sample, Bay Area, and state. Student achievement gains are reported as the difference between a school's mean SAT-9 NPR score in 2001 and in 1998.

Results are generally positive, if not strong in terms of absolute differences. Figures 3.4 to 3.6 show consistent results for each comparison: Leadership Schools serving largest proportions of poor students, English Learners, and African American students outperformed the matched sample schools. Further, these schools' gains on SAT-9 exceeded those made by non-BASRC Bay Area schools serving low proportions of these student groups. These patterns of Leadership Schools' relative progress in promoting student achievement are evidence of BASRC's success in narrowing the achievement gap between schools in the region.

Figure 3.4 Gain on SAT-9 Scores from 1998 to 2001 by School Poverty: BASRC Leadership Schools versus Comparison Groups

Percent Students Receiving Free/Reduced Meals

☐ BASRC Leadership Schools (Ns=28,27,25)
☐ Matched Sample BASRC Membership Schools (Ns=31,22,30)
☐ Non-BASRC Bay Area Schools (Ns=375,254,308)
☐ All California Schools (Ns=1484,1431,3766)
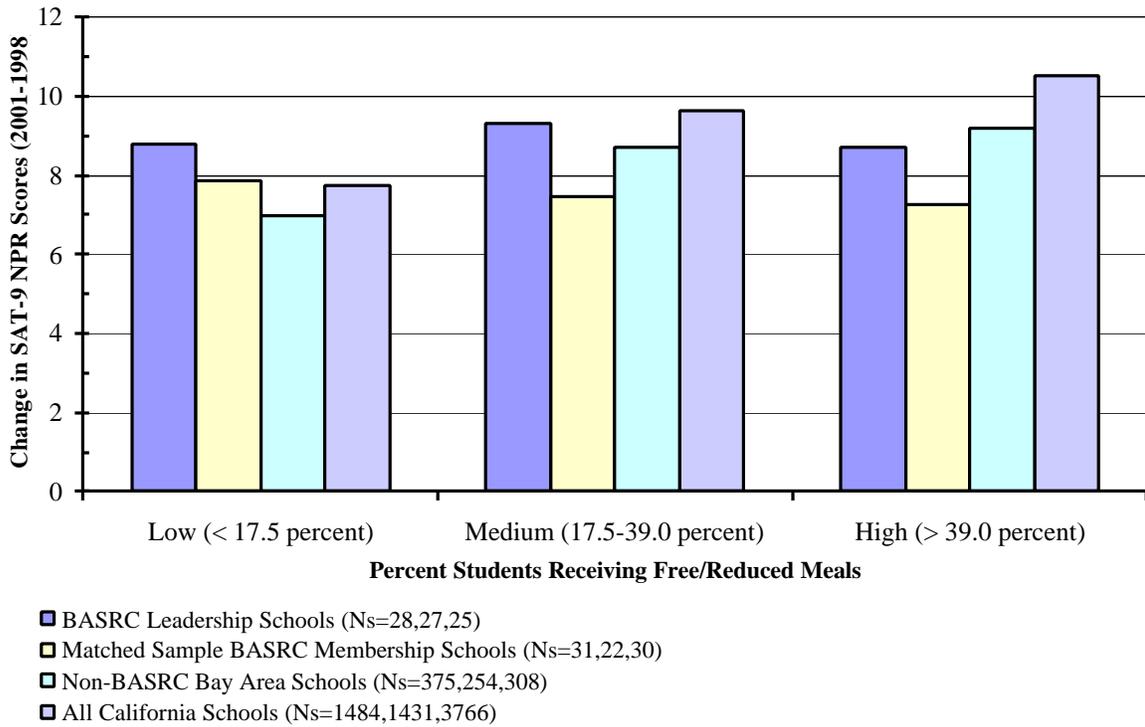
Figure 3.5 Gain on SAT-9 Scores from 1998 to 2001 by Percent English Learners: BASRC Leadership Schools versus Comparison Groups

Percent English Learner Students

☐ BASRC Leadership Schools (Ns=27,29,24)
☐ Matched Sample BASRC Membership Schools (Ns=23,36,23)
☐ Non-BASRC Bay Area Schools (Ns=358,286,278)
☐ All California Schools (Ns=2099,1920,2438)
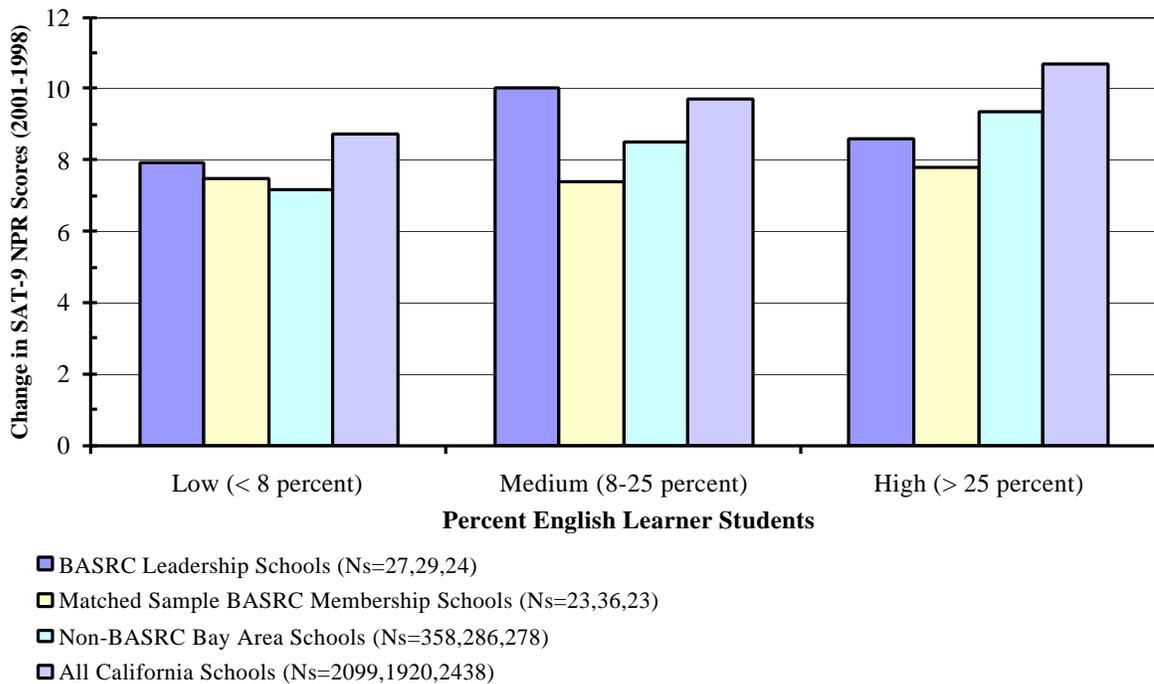
Figure 3.6 Gain on SAT-9 Scores from 1998 to 2001 by Percent African American Students: BASRC Leadership Schools versus Comparison Groups

BASRC Leadership Schools (Ns=26,29,26)
Matched Sample BASRC Membership Schools (Ns=28,25,30)
Non-BASRC Bay Area Schools (Ns=365,311,261)
All California Schools (Ns=2886,1843,1532)
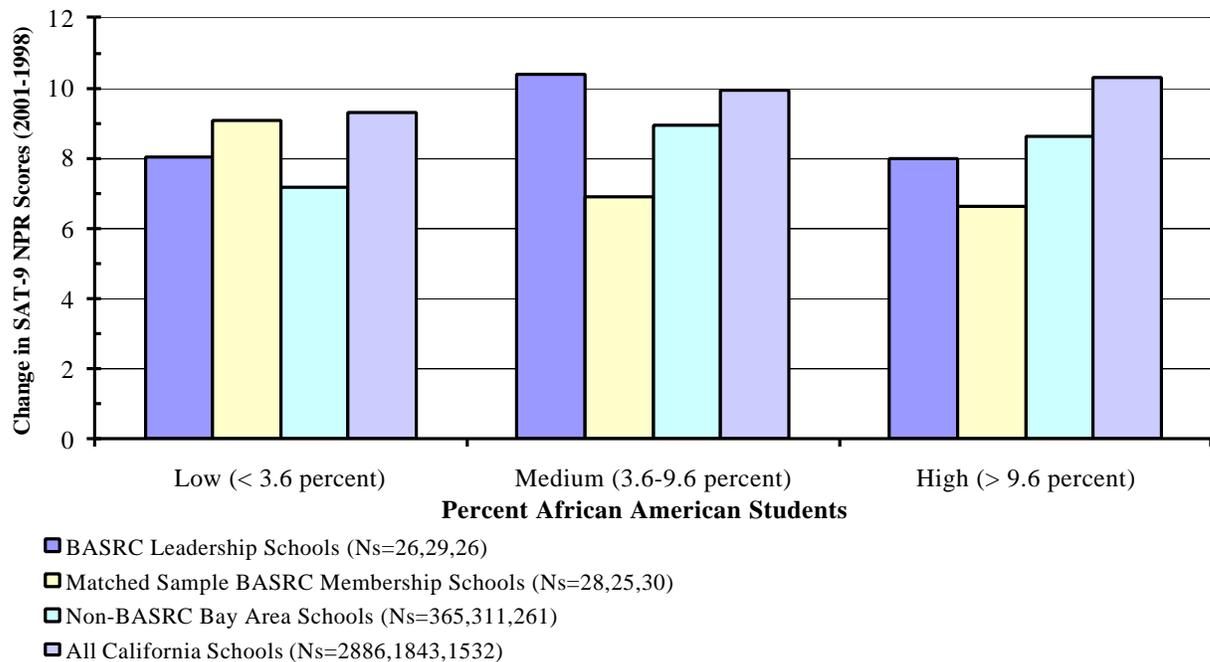
BASRC Leadership Schools Lag on Closing Within-School Achievement Gaps

Leadership Schools have made less progress in closing within-school gaps than comparison groups at the same grade level. Leadership Schools fall short of the progress made by both matched sample schools and other Bay Area schools in closing achievement gaps between disadvantaged and advantaged students and between Hispanic and non-Hispanic students within their schools (Figures 3.7 and 3.8, respectively). This result is puzzling given BASRC's consistent emphasis on this goal and in light of evidence just reported of Leadership Schools' strong overall achievement trends. Also, the gap-closing trend data for 1999-2001 run counter to the more promising evidence from the 1999-2000 data (CRC, October 2000). We thus consider a range of possible interpretations of the negative results shown for BASRC schools in 2001.

As background, California's API database includes only three years of schools' SAT-9 data disaggregated for student groups (earlier results were reported for SAT-9 NPR data over four years). Analyses for all 87 Leadership Schools' progress in closing within-school achievement gaps are not possible given the state's decision rules regarding the reporting of API scores disaggregated by student demographics. Disaggregated data are provided only for schools with a significant number of any given student group – "socio-economically disadvantaged" (students eligible for free meals or students with two parents who did not graduate from high school), Hispanic, or African American – and its counterpart (non-disadvantaged or Hispanic or African American). Only a few BASRC Leadership Schools have sufficient numbers of both African American students and non-African American

students to qualify for disaggregated API data; therefore, within-school analysis of gaps are not possible. Disaggregated API data for Hispanic students are available for only 43 Leadership Schools across all grade levels; 17 BASRC schools are ineligible because they have a majority of Hispanic students and insufficient numbers of non-Hispanic students. Data for socio-economically disadvantaged students are available for only 53 Leadership Schools.

The data on gap-closing for socio-economically disadvantaged students and Hispanic students reported in Figures 3.7 and 3.8 show Leadership Schools to be lagging in relation to both matched-sample schools and other Bay Area schools. The exception is for high schools, where Leadership Schools are similar to matched-sample schools and outperform other Bay Area high schools. BASRC elementary schools and middle schools show lower rates of closing achievement gaps between 1999 and 2001 – with higher proportions of schools not closing gaps in either 2000 or in 2001 and lower proportions of schools closing gaps for two consecutive years.

Figure 3.7 Closing the Within-School Achievement Gap between Socioeconomically Disadvantaged and Non-Disadvantaged Students

Elementary Schools
BASRC Leadership Schools (N=30)
Matched Sample Schools (N=27)
Other Bay Area Schools (N=381)
All California Schools (N=3283)

Middle Schools
BASRC Leadership Schools (N=10)
Matched Sample Schools (N=9)
Other Bay Area Schools (N=100)
All California Schools (N=793)

High Schools
BASRC Leadership Schools (N=13)
Matched Sample Schools (N=14)
Other Bay Area Schools (N=42)
All California Schools (N=571)

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

Percent Schools where Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Students Narrowed the Achievement Gap

☐ Gap did not narrow in 1999-2000 and 2000-2001
☐ Gap narrowed only in 1999-2000 or 2000-2001
☐ Gap narrowed both in 1999-2000 and 2000-2001

Figure 3.8 Closing the Within-School Achievement Gap between Hispanic and White/Asian Students: 1999-2000 and 2000-2001

Elementary Schools
BASRC Leadership Schools (N=20)
Matched Sample Schools (N=18)
Other Bay Area Schools (N=250)
All California Schools (N=2213)

Middle Schools
BASRC Leadership Schools (N=7)
Matched Sample Schools (N=7)
Other Bay Area Schools (N=81)
All California Schools (N=668)

High Schools
BASRC Leadership Schools (N=16)
Matched Sample Schools (N=14)
Other Bay Area Schools (N=54)
All California Schools (N=561)

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

Percent Schools Where Hispanic Students Closed Gap

☐ Gap did not narrow in 1999-2000 and 2000-2001
☐ Gap narrowed only in 1999-2000 or 2000-2001
☐ Gap narrowed both in 1999-2000 and 2000-2001

Discontinuities between these data and API data for 1999-2001, as well as data on trends in overall SAT-9 scores for 1998-2001, raised several questions for further analysis:

- Were disadvantaged students in Leadership Schools participating in SAT-9 testing at higher rates than other comparable Bay Area schools?
- Do the data mask improvements among disadvantaged students because advantaged students are making greater gains in Leadership Schools?
- Are patterns of closing the achievement gap stronger for schools more advanced on inquiry practices? Do overall trends reflect differences in Leadership Schools' progress on reform?

We did not address the last question in our earlier assessment of implementation effects on student outcomes because API data for assessing within-school gaps are available for so few Leadership Schools. However, we use the small number of school cases relevant to within-school gap analysis to help interpret the overall results.

First, data on percentages of students tested school-wide and within Hispanic and Socio-economically Disadvantaged groups in 1999, 2000, and 2001 generally show the same

patterns for Leadership Schools as for matched sample schools, other Bay Area schools, and California. There are no statistically significant differences between these groups on change in test-taking rates over time or in their test-taking rates in 2001.

Second, further analyses of within-school trends on the API for more and less advantaged student groups do not show significant differences in patterns for Leadership Schools and the matched sample control group. An exception is shown in Figure 3.9. Most BASRC schools that did not close within-school achievement gaps for socio-economically disadvantaged students showed average gains for disadvantaged students in one or both years; the proportion is significantly greater than for matched sample schools (88% versus 50%).

Figure 3.9 A Closer Look at Within-School Trends in the Achievement Gap between Socioeconomically Disadvantaged and Non-Disadvantaged Students: Comparing BASRC Leadership Schools to Matched Sample Schools

BASRC Leadership Schools
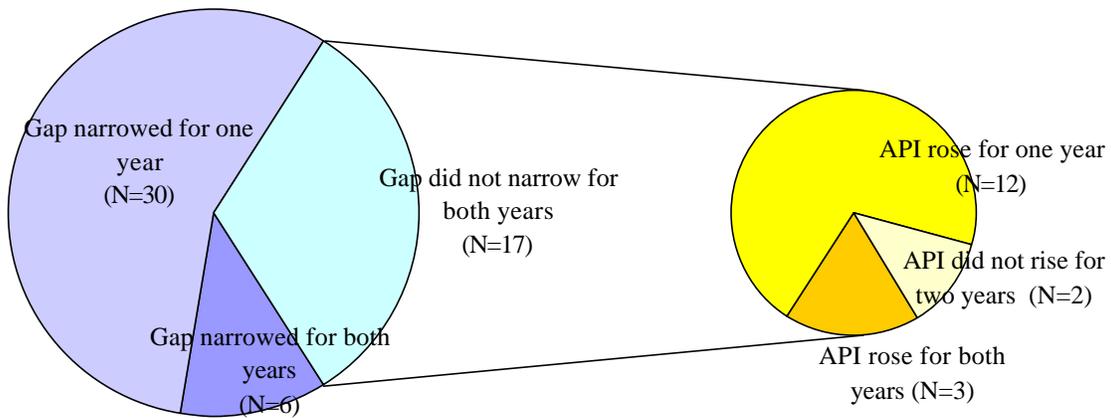
Matched Sample Schools
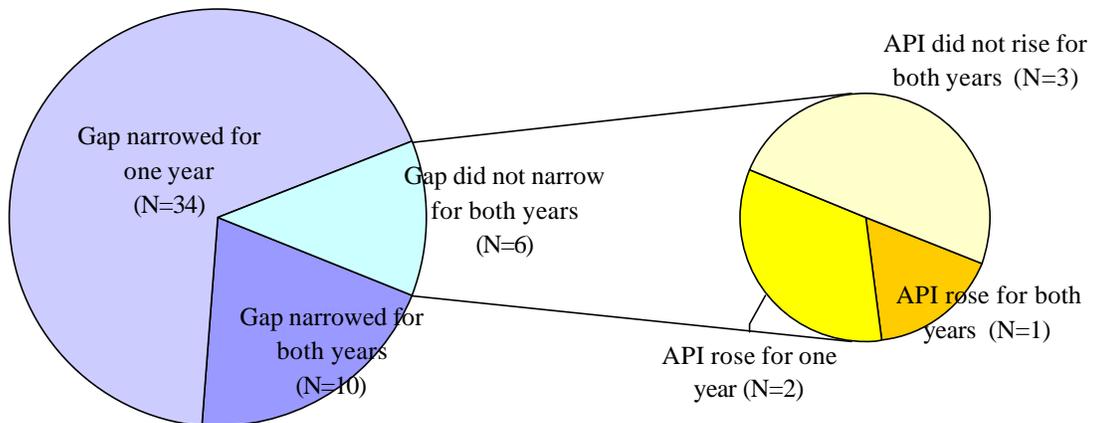
Finally, evidence regarding effects of schools' level of implementation of inquiry practices on closing the achievement gap is mixed. A statistically significant effect is shown for closing the achievement gap for Hispanic students: Leadership Schools that were relatively advanced in Inquiry Practices in 2001 were less likely to have made no advance on closing the achievement gap for Hispanic students (see Figure 3.10). However, no inquiry effect is shown for closing the achievement gap for socio-economically disadvantaged students.

Figure 3.10 Closing Within-School Achievement Gaps by Strength of School Inquiry Practices [1]

Did Disadvantaged Students Narrow the Achievement Gap?

Did Hispanic Students Narrow the Achievement Gap?

Percent Schools Narrowing the Achievement Gap

School Inquiry Practices

High (N=15)
Low (N=19)
High (N=14)
Low (N=15)

☐ No in either 2000 or 2001
☐ Yes in either 2000 or 2001
☐ Yes in both 2000 and 2001
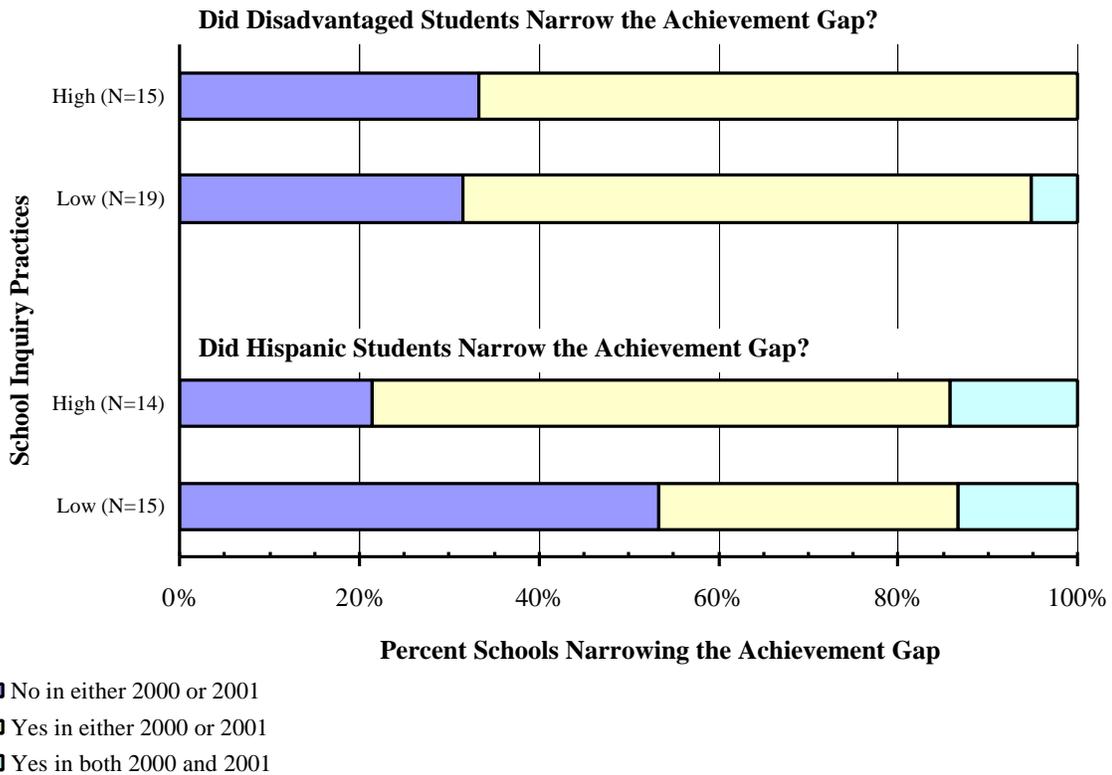
[1] Data on schools' Inquiry Practices are from the Reform Coordinator Survey (N=52); only schools with API data for the relevant groups are included.

BASRC Leadership Schools' Progress on SAT-9: Overview

Over the course of BASRC's Phase One, Leadership Schools made significantly greater progress on improving their students' performance on the SAT-9 basic skill tests than schools in the evaluation's control group. Moreover, they consistently did better than comparison schools serving large proportions of disadvantaged students.

However, BASRC's Leadership Schools fell short of their goal to close within-school achievement gaps. Available API data for 1999-2001 trends in SAT-9 achievement for student groups within schools show that Leadership Schools actually made less progress than their regional counterparts. An exception is BASRC high schools' progress in narrowing the

achievement gaps – between socio-economically disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students and between Hispanic students and other students – relative to both matched sample and broader regional comparison groups.

This chapter documents BASRC schools' progress on inquiry-based reform and generally positive BASRC effects on student outcomes measured by California's assessment system. It also highlights the continuing challenge to BASRC schools of closing within-school achievement gaps. We emphasize that student performance on the SAT-9 provides a limited assessment of the range of student outcomes sought by BASRC Leadership Schools; but, unfortunately, local measures of student outcomes vary widely across Bay Area schools and districts and cannot be aggregated to provide meaningful comparisons.

4

Assessing BASRC Participation Effects on School Reform Outcomes

B ASRC's Phase One design for supporting and leveraging Leadership Schools' progress on inquiry-based reform combined several kinds of activities and resources – funds to support teacher collaboration and on-site technical assistance, on-site and off-site professional development and technical support by BASRC staff, required reports to the community and the Collaborative on student outcomes and school improvement efforts, and opportunities for learning from other schools through Collaborative work and relationships. As described in Chapter 2, BASRC's design activities evolved over the course of Phase One; some initial activities were phased out while new activities were introduced based on BASRC's learning and capacities and based on changes in the state policy environment.

Leadership Schools' participation in BASRC activities varied widely. Some activities were optional, affording schools flexible entry points into Collaborative-wide resources, whereas other required activities took place off-site and involved only a small number of teachers. Schools differed in both the number and kinds of BASRC activities they participated in and in the proportion of their teachers involved in each activity. Over the course of Phase One, Leadership Schools' BASRC work ranged from participation in most activities and extensive teacher involvement to participation in a limited range of BASRC activities involving small numbers of teachers.

Not only did schools' participation in BASRC activities vary, but activities also varied in how valuable schools found them to be in furthering their schools' reform efforts. Although BASRC's activities differed in their strategic purposes – to support or pressure schools' reform work or to build regional collaboration on reform – all were designed to further schools' understanding and use of data-based inquiry. As school representatives participated in these activities, they found them to be more or less useful in this regard.

This chapter documents BASRC Leadership Schools' differential involvement in the work of the Collaborative and their experiences with particular activities to address three questions:

- How much and how did Leadership Schools' BASRC participation vary over the course of Phase One?
- How did participants in particular Phase One activities rate them in terms of their value for their school's reform progress?
- Did schools' participation in highly valued BASRC activities make a difference for their progress in implementing inquiry practices?

Evaluation data for addressing these issues come from the 2001 Reform Coordinator Survey, the 1998 and 2001 teacher surveys, the 2001 BASRC ROP survey, interviews and focus groups over four years with individuals in case study schools who participated in particular BASRC activities, and observations of all BASRC's Phase One activities.

Leadership Schools' Participation in BASRC Activities Varied Widely

Leadership Schools differed in terms of which BASRC activities they were involved in and in the level of teacher participation. As discussed later in the chapter, this variation reflects to a significant degree on schools' differential readiness to take advantage of the resources and pressures that BASRC created to promote inquiry-based reform in its funded Leadership Schools.

Table 4.1 shows Reform Coordinators' survey reports on their school's participation in each BASRC activity and teachers' survey reports on their individual participation in the activity within each participating school. Teacher participation rates for activities that BASRC phased out underestimate the level of teacher involvement in an activity, since some of the teachers who participated in those activities may have left the school (see Chapter 5 for data on teacher turnover in BASRC Leadership Schools). These data indicate the extent to which BASRC schools' faculty in 2001 had been involved in each Phase One activity.

Table 4.1 BASRC Activities Engage Different Proportions of Schools and Teachers with Schools

Required BASRC Activities	Percent of BASRC Schools Involved	Percent of the school's teaching staff involved	
		Average	Highest
School Accountability Event	91	38	71
Critical Friends visit at my school	77	37	71
Annual Collaborative assembly	88	24	47
Development of our school's leadership proposal	100	24	43
Summer Leadership Institute	72	20	33
Visit to another school for a Critical Friends visit	71	20	43
Developing ROP documents	88	15	39
Attending the ROP as a school representative	91	11	24
Attending the ROP as a reader	83	7	16
Optional BASRC Activities			
		Average	**Highest**
BASRC workdays	100	45	71
Workshop on accountability hosted by BASRC/WAC	74	25	71
Professional development with our support provider	87	20	33
Site visit to receive funding	NA	18	47
Coaching from a BASRC contact	80	16	38
Portfolio reading for BASRC	69	11	30
Participating in an ROP site visit at my school	41	11	37
Site visit for funding at another school	NA	8	26
Affinity Group	10	7	20

BASRC activities are grouped in Table 4.1 according to their required versus optional status and, within each type, in order of their average rate of teacher involvement. These data show that several optional BASRC activities had very high rates of school participation and high average rates of teacher participation within the schools. In particular, all schools took advantage of BASRC workdays and involved large portions of their teachers. Most had professional development with a support provider (87 percent) involving an average of 20 percent of their teachers, most had coaching from a BASRC contact (80 percent) involving an average of 16 percent of the teachers, most participated in BASRC/WAC workshops on accountability (74 percent) involving 25 percent of teachers on average, and most were involved in BASRC portfolio readings involving 11 percent of teachers on average. The high levels of Leadership Schools' participation in optional BASRC work provides evidence of both their commitment to the Collaborative and their quest for opportunities to strengthen their schools' inquiry-based reform.

BASRC Activities Varied in their Value to Schools' Reform Progress

Given BASRC's success in engaging schools in a wide range of activities designed to promote inquiry-based reform, the initiative offers rich opportunities to understand how schools respond to kinds of activities in which BASRC invested. The values and shortcomings that schools found in each activity's ability to support their reform progress point to principles for organizing effective supports and leverages for inquiry-based reform.

Notably, differences in the value ratings schools gave to particular BASRC activities are not related significantly to differences in participation rates. Some high-participation activities received high ratings, such as BASRC coaching and on-site professional development; others received relatively low ratings, such as portfolio readings and workshops on accountability.

Schools' ratings of BASRC's activities on their value for reform progress are shown in Figure 4.1. The value rating for each activity is the average for eighteen Leadership Schools' ratings – each school's score is the mean rating for teachers who participated in the activity. Activities are ordered in the graph from the most to least valued in terms of school reform progress. Rated most valuable are **professional development with our support provider** and the **BASRC Summer Institute**; rated least valuable is **participation in an ROP site visit for funding at another school**. The full range of ratings is not great, however. All BASRC activities received generally positive ratings from teacher participants across the Leadership Schools. Even the lowest-rated activities were regarded by teachers as "somewhat helpful" for advancing inquiry-based reform (score of 3 on the scale shown in Figure 4.1), and none of BASRC's Phase One activities received a generally negative rating by teacher participants.

Figure 4.1 Average Value Ratings of BASRC Activities (based on eighteen Leadership Schools' mean ratings)
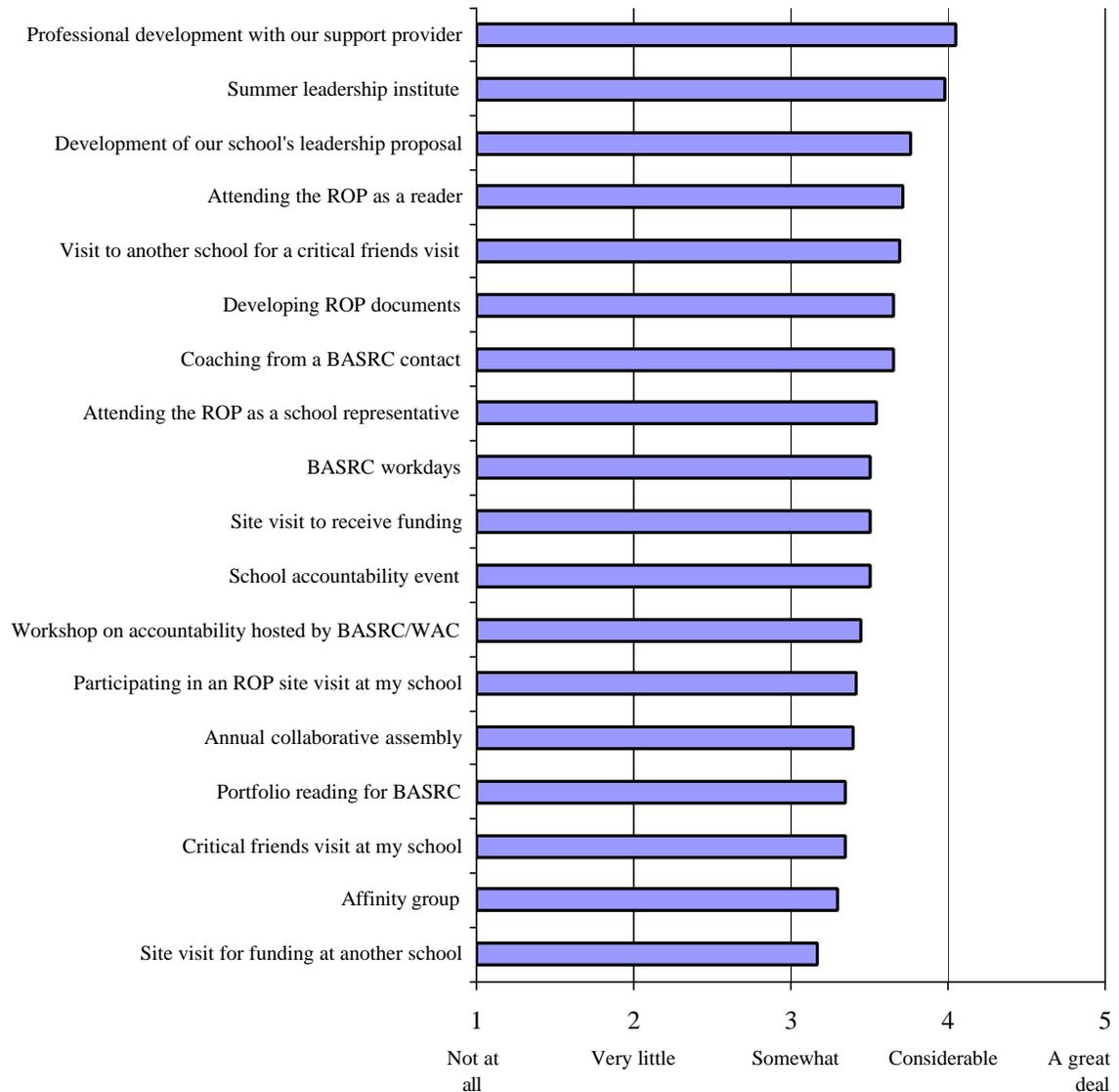
How helpful was this to the school's reform effort?

Further analyses of these data focus on schools' experiences in activities rated more and less valuable within the different kinds of activities that BASRC organized. The distinction of higher and lower value ratings shown in Table 4.2 divides the activities at the mid-point of the ratings distribution shown in Figure 4.1. Kinds of activities are distinguished by their primary role in BASRC's design to support schools' reform work, pressure schools to reform, and build regional collaboration. Activities of each kind are listed in Table 4.2 in order of their value ratings, from highest to lowest.

Table 4.2 How Kinds of BASRC Activities Were Rated by Teachers[1]

Value Rating[2]	Kind of BASRC Activity		
	Support for School Reform	Press Use for Accountability	Occasion for Regional Collaboration
High (mean = 3.7)	▪ Professional development with our support provider (Year 1-5) ▪ Summer Leadership Institute (Year 1-3) ▪ Coaching from a BASRC contact (Year 3-5) ▪ BASRC workdays (Year 3-5)[3]	▪ Development of our school's leadership proposal (Year 1-2) ▪ Developing ROP documents (Year 3-5)	▪ Attending the ROP as a reader (Year 3-4) ▪ Visit to another school for a Critical Friends visit (Year 2-4)
⌐ cut point Low (mean = 3.3)	▪ BASRC/WAC Workshop on Accountability (Year 3)	▪ School Accountability Event (Year 1-4) ▪ Participating in an ROP site visit at my school (Year 3-4)	▪ Attending the ROP as a school representative (Year 3-4) ▪ Affinity Group (Year 1-2) ▪ Critical Friends visit at my school (Year 2-4) ▪ Annual Collaborative Assembly (Year 1-5) ▪ Portfolio reading for BASRC (Year 1-2)

[1] BASRC Activities are grouped according to their primary purpose of supporting schools' reform work, pressuring school accountability, and building collaboration among Leadership Schools.
[2] High and low value ratings group activities that are above and below the midpoint of the distribution shown in Figure 4.1.
[3] BASRC Workdays overall mean was lower than same low rated activities, but rated high (mean = 3.9) by elementary school teachers.

The high versus low value distinctions for BASRC activities based on teacher ratings for eighteen schools are replicated by ratings from the Reform Coordinator survey for 52 schools. The one discrepancy is for the School Accountability Event, which Reform Coordinators rate higher in value than do teachers (3.9 versus 3.4 respectively).

The high versus low value ratings also are replicated by data for schools at different grade levels. Teachers from elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools rated BASRC activities similarly, with the exception of BASRC workdays. This activity received high ratings from elementary schools and quite low ratings from both middle and high schools (3.9 and 3.0 respectively). The overall strong corroboration of data from the teacher and Reform Coordinator surveys and from teachers at different school grade levels warrants a systematic look at features distinguishing the BASRC activities rated more and less valuable for schools' reform progress.

Across types of activities, those rated most highly were focused on the school's reform work, grounded in sustained relationships with educator peers, or gave teachers tangible examples of school change in other reforming schools. More of BASRC's on-site support activities had these features and received highest ratings, but several activities that were designed primarily to pressure reform and build cross-school collaboration and accountability also met these conditions. The off-site work that received highest value ratings gave teachers opportunities to learn from other schools' reform successes and challenges and develop relationships with peers in other reforming schools

The character of activities that push teachers' thinking about how to improve their work and support schools' steady progress on reform is revealed further by how teachers described the values they found in each kind of activity BASRC designed for Phase One.

BASRC activities designed to support schools' reform work received highest ratings

Schools' ratings of Phase One activities lend support to BASRC's initial assumption that teachers need continuous on-site and off-site support if they are to rethink their practice and learn new ways of working together and in their classroom. Highest ratings went to activities that BASRC designed to support school reform work and, in particular, to those that are most intense and continuous – **Professional development with our support provider, Coaching from a BASRC contact**, and the **Summer Leadership Institute**. In talking about these activities, teachers praised the one-on-one assistance they received and the customized knowledge resources that BASRC brought to their particular reform work. The ways in which each of these BASRC support activities was carried out during Phase One are sketched here.

> **Professional development with our support provider –** Support providers aimed to equip teachers, administrators, and students with tools and knowledge for inquiry practices tailored to their focused effort and unique needs. Schools were offered a wide range of services including: preparing and helping to analyze data, facilitating school site committee meetings, modeling teaching strategies, sharing educational research and philosophies, advancing school dialogue with students and parents, and guiding school leaders as they reflect on multiple levels of whole-school reform. Most schools collaborated with more than one support provider over multiple years and typically worked with them on-site two times or more per month.

> **Coaching from a BASRC contact** - To the limited extent of BASRC's capacity, schools that did not meet their progress standard at the annual Review of Progress received coaching from a BASRC contact. Of the nine Leadership Schools that did not meet standard in 1999 and the 24 that did not meet standard in 2000, roughly half elected to work with a BASRC coach. BASRC coaches provided on-site assistance approximately four times in one academic school year. Serving a similar role as support providers, schools worked with BASRC coaches to refine their work plans. In particular, schools gained greater clarity with facets of the Cycle of Inquiry such as redefining the school's focused effort and linking their A and B questions.

When talking about the outside assistance provided by their support providers and BASRC contacts, teachers reported that they brought an objective and credible "outside voice" that can push their thinking about how to move their school forward. Teachers said that support providers and contacts helped them to reflect on what they were doing while they were doing it. A Reform Coordinator described the role her school's support provider plays:

> Just sitting down and talking with someone who is not directly involved in this, just having that help that can be on a weekly basis, has been tremendously helpful because it's really kept me focused. [He will say,] 'Now, don't do that because you're going off on this tangent' or 'Is this really where we need to go? If it is, then that's fine; but if not, let's pull back.'

Teachers also valued funding from BASRC that allowed their school to continue working with the support provider they collaborated with prior to becoming a Leadership School. Based on data from the 2001 BASRC ROP Survey, we estimated that 30 percent of the Leadership Schools used BASRC funds to sustain an existing support provider relationship. This meant that these schools were able to build upon a strong prior relationship and successful collaboration with a support provider. Other schools faced the challenge of selecting a support provider with limited information. One Reform Coordinator commented:

> You could read the advertisements, look at their research, but you really wouldn't know [if the support provider relationship would be productive] until you worked with them and saw the results. It would be useful to know the whole range of support providers out there. But in complex situations, I just don't think you can really know what a vendor will be able to supply you with, or what the results will be, without actually doing it.

Once schools found a support provider that met their particular needs, the process of establishing trust and a Collaborative relationship took additional time. Schools already underway on whole-school reform with a support provider were at considerable advantage in moving forward during BASRC Phase One.

Summer Leadership Institute – During its first three years, BASRC hosted a six-day retreat for each new cohort of Leadership Schools. Teams of five to ten teachers and administrators from each school learned tools, processes, and research to leverage whole school change and to gain a deeper understanding of the BASRC vision. A majority of the agenda centered on assisting Leadership School teams to form problem statements that would drive the Cycle of Inquiry, to learn facilitation tools like the "fishbowl" and the "five whys," and planning time to refine their school work plan developed through their leadership proposal for funding. Leadership School teams were grouped by BASRC into three or four schools as "Critical Friends" to share and critique each other's progress and future plans.

The **Summer Leadership Institute**, unlike typical off-site professional development workshops, gave teachers the chance to work with their colleagues, to learn facilitation skills

that are relevant to their school site, and to model these strategies with other reforming schools. One teacher commented on the rigor of the Summer Institute:

> I usually go to a conference and stay in a nice hotel and it's usually pretty easy. It may or may not be interesting or relevant, but it's usually pretty easy-going. I wasn't really expecting to go there [Summer Institute] and be really working on something that was directly related to our school in such an intensive way.

Teachers found the Summer Institute so meaningful that many Leadership Schools held summer institutes of their own. During school-based institutes, teacher leaders shared with their colleagues the skills and knowledge they learned at the BASRC institute. These institutes also provided opportunities for departments and grade levels to collaborate more closely.

Other BASRC support activities received mixed or lower ratings. As noted, **BASRC workdays** received very high value ratings from elementary school teachers but low ratings from middle and high school teachers. **BASRC/WAC Workshops on Accountability** were rated generally lower in value to schools' reform progress.

> **BASRC Workdays** – Beginning in 1998, teachers participated in a series of one-day workshops hosted by BASRC to address challenges of inquiry-based reform, ranging from technical matters of data collection and analysis to profound substantive issues such as creating educational equity for all students. This work was geared toward supporting teachers to integrate the development of their annual Review of Progress documentation into the day-to-day work of their schools, to build their capacity for using evidence to evaluate their work and to make their ROP document coherent with a school's ongoing reform work. Roughly five workdays were held each year.

> **BASRC/WAC Workshop on Accountability -** This three-day, optional workshop was held during the 1998-99 academic year in partnership with the Western Assessment Collaborative. At this event, teachers received in-depth assistance on standards and assessment connected to their BASRC work plan. They were pushed to consider how to align external state and district standards to their focused effort, design assessments to inform their work, and strategize how to build relationships with their local community.

In these activities teachers often struggled to find connections among these off-site, skills-building activities, and their school's reform work. That this was especially the case for secondary schools attending **Workdays** is due to both within- and between-school diversity in their reform work. For one, whole-school reform and documentation are complicated by department-based reform around subject standards. Further, the wide diversity of BASRC secondary schools' focused efforts made it harder for them to learn from one another and harder for BASRC staff to find concrete examples linked to schools' work. Secondary school participants thus experienced the knowledge shared as more abstract and disconnected from their reform work.

In contrast to their experiences in BASRC Summer Institutes, schools found little opportunity to build relationships and learn from other schools in these off-site activities. One Reform Coordinator commented:

> I don't have a sense that we were conversing with other schools. [We] were pretty much on our own at the table by ourselves, so we really didn't interact with anyone at the first workday other than our BASRC contact. And at the second one, it was more [our BASRC contact] and then the teacher from . . . I don't even remember the school.

Most significantly, schools relatively advanced on inquiry practices were in a better position to take advantage of the technical skills and support with documentation at workdays than were schools still struggling to build Collaborative relationships with colleagues necessary for whole-school reform. Indeed there is a strong relationship between a school's maturity in inquiry-based reform and their teachers' value ratings for **BASRC Workshops** (.63 correlation). The relationship is somewhat curvilinear, with mid-range schools rating workdays highest. The least advanced schools, which had yet to integrate inquiry practices into the school culture, sometimes perceived at these events that they were being told how to complete the ROP for BASRC's purposes, even when BASRC stressed that developing documentation for the Review of Progress is integral to their evidence-based reform work. Teachers and principals in such schools worried that the costs of leaving their school site to attend these events exceeded the benefits.

In sum, the most valued BASRC support activities organized opportunities for teachers at a school site to work together and to get feedback and knowledge resources from a support provider, BASRC staff, or the reform work of another school. These activities commonly reinforced a school's focused effort and internal accountability, rather than external accountability to BASRC or other Leadership Schools, and built closer Collaborative relationships among teachers.

BASRC activities designed to pressure school reform work received widely varying ratings

Of the activities BASRC designed to pressure schools to be accountable for their reform work, teachers gave the highest ratings to **Development of our school's leadership proposal** and the ongoing **Developing Review of Progress documents**. Teachers said they valued these activities because they forced their school to bring coherence to previously uncoordinated efforts.

Development of our school's leadership proposal – To be considered for funding, schools developed a proposal that constructed evidence of how their whole school vision converged with the BASRC vision. Schools collected documents that traced their reform history and articulated future plans – documents such as master schedules, lesson plans, and student work. A reader team from other applying schools scored the proposal to recommend that the school be granted leadership status for funding.

Developing Review of Progress (ROP) documents – After 1998, BASRC required its Leadership Schools to develop an annual document reporting their reform progress over the year. The key focus was on providing evidence of progress on a focused effort

through the Cycle of Inquiry model. As with the proposal review process, schools' ROPs were reviewed and evaluated through a peer review process designed to build shared standards for inquiry, evidence, and progress on student outcomes.

When teachers talked about **Developing our school's leadership proposal** and **Developing ROP documents**, they said that these activities fostered the school's capacity to provide concrete evidence of their work and helped them to reach common agreements among faculty about the reform vision and outcome standards. In preparing these documents, schools developed a system for measuring their work that moved teachers away from relying on intuition. Beginning with the leadership proposal and continuing with the ROP, teachers felt that they were learning to construct evidence of their school's progress. With each year of work, teachers and administrators reported that writing their ROP encouraged them further to use data to reflect and refine their focused effort. One Reform Coordinator described how the ROP helped her faculty to change one of their assessments:

> When we sat down to do the ROP we said, 'This data is not going to tell
> us anything about what we say we're looking for.' So it pushed us
> towards the performance assessment. It gave us a chance to reflect back
> on what we've done so far. I think it was a very valuable process for us
> because we wouldn't have done it otherwise.

Teachers commented that, because the development of the proposal and the ROP required staff collaboration, these activities pushed their school to reach common agreements about expectations for each teacher and administrator. Commenting on how writing the ROP document became an integral part of her school's process of setting expectations, a Reform Coordinator said:

> [The ROP] is very useful because it could be a great sort of framework
> for organizing your work along the one-year continuum around your
> annual whole school Cycle of Inquiry. When you define it that way,
> everything becomes ROP work. Everybody is involved in the ROP
> work. Every teacher is engaged in this at the classroom level. If it's
> about the site leadership team making sure that committees are aligned to
> our focused effort, that's part of our ROP work.

However, schools' ability to take advantage of BASRC's accountability activities depended to a significant degree on their level of maturity in inquiry-based reform. Teachers in schools relatively low in inquiry skills more often saw the ROP work as compliance with BASRC requirements, rather than occasion to deepen their work on using evidence to evaluate their practice. The correlation between teachers' value ratings of developing the ROP documents and a composite measure of their schools' reform culture is .51

Least valued activities in this category were **Accountability Events** and **ROP site visit at my school**. Teachers generally considered these activities to be more superficial in capturing their reform work and offering opportunity for credible feedback.

Accountability Events - Schools were required to hold at least one Accountability Event - a dialogue with parents - in BASRC's first years. Schools typically held two or three Accountability Events a year during months when the information could inform their

work (October, February, May). The content of the events initially informed parents about multiple measures used by teachers such as running records or school-wide outcome measures. With growing accountability pressure based on SAT-9 scores, schools increasingly concentrated on informing parents about the SAT-9 while multiple measures at the school site declined in prominence.

Teachers reported that they valued the Accountability Events for reasons other than what BASRC intended. Accountability Events fell short of being two-way dialogues, but at these events teachers said they gained validation for their reform work. One high school teacher commented about the Accountability Event at his site:

> I think it was a big success in terms of making contact with the community. Talking about things that we're doing as a school, not just the test scores and a lot of the political issues. But, as a school that is reform-minded, why we have benchmarks, etc. There were some parents who were furious, who had a lot of strong criticisms. There were parents who were strongly supportive of what we were doing.

Initially, teachers said they were uncomfortable analyzing and interpreting data generated by their inquiry and were hesitant to report findings to the community. As they gained proficiency in data analysis, teachers reported greater comfort sharing data with parents, even data disaggregated by race and ethnicity that showed gaps in student achievement. Despite this increased comfort, teachers were uncertain whether parents comprehended the information, let alone felt the urgency to improve learning opportunities for all students. One teacher, citing the valuable feedback his school received from parents, believed that the suggestions were not based on the data presented, but on their children's feedback instead. He stated, "The amount of data [presented at the Accountability Event] was overwhelming. And it was hard for me to get anything out of it. And I don't know what the parents got out of it. They gave really good feedback, but not necessarily based on the data they had just seen."

Teachers said that this feedback, while helpful, did not connect with their reform work. In addition to school frustrations with accountability dialogues, demands on schools to meet state accountability pressure swamped BASRC's initial vision of community-based accountability. In the third and fourth year of BASRC, these events occurred only once a year. By the fifth year, this activity was no longer required. To align more strongly to state pressures, BASRC instead decided to put greater priority on accountability to the Collaborative through the Review of Progress (ROP) process.

> **ROP site visit at my school** – For each of the 33 schools that did not meet standard during the ROP review, a panel of teachers, administrators, and support providers from the Collaborative as well as BASRC staff visited the site for one day. The panel interviewed teachers, district personnel, and sometimes students from the school to better understand the school's work in ways that might not have been easily illuminated in the ROP document. Based on the improvements made in the months after the site visit, BASRC then determined whether the Leadership School would continue to receive funding.

Ambiguities about the purpose of ROP site visits undermined the value teachers found in them. Teachers were unsure whether the purpose of the visit was to provide them with coaching assistance or to determine if their funding should be discontinued. Schools believed that BASRC's multiple roles as a funder and a Collaborative, coupled with the lack of clarity about the school's funding status, shifted the school's stance from accountability to compliance. This confusion created a dilemma for teachers who wanted BASRC coaching but were uncertain if exposing their weaknesses would put their funding at risk.

Because a prior relationship did not exist among the schools being reviewed, the reader team, and the site visit panel, school people said that the ROP document and the follow-up site visit provided neither enough evidence to validate a below standard measure nor to inform their work in a meaningful way. The perception that the ROP site visit was a BASRC compliance mechanism was compounded by the fact that schools not meeting "standard" questioned the validity of the entire peer review process. A Reform Coordinator whose school received a site visit stated,

> I understand the value of having some kind of accountability for change,
> but I'm not so sure that having people come around for a site visit is the
> essence or having people read a document is the essence. How about
> taking your Critical Friends that you're meeting with throughout the year
> and building in the summative ROP with people you've spent a year
> with? Everything is done sort of piecemeal.

Questions about the validity of ROP ratings arose in the Collaborative, especially among school participants in "clusters." These fifteen schools participated in groups of two to five schools with shared funding, support providers, and other resources throughout their involvement with BASRC. Because of their close joint work, some schools were shocked to receive different ROP ratings from their collaborating cluster schools.

Schools that received coaching from a BASRC contact overcame their anxiety about the purposes of the ROP site visit. Once the risk of losing funding abated, schools believed that the ROP site visit – and the peer review process – was helpful in pushing their reform work forward.

In sum, schools differentially valued BASRC Phase One activities that were designed to push schools toward greater accountability for student outcomes. In general, they valued those activities that promoted coherence in their faculty's reform vision and commitment, such as the leadership proposal that schools developed prior to BASRC funding. They also valued accountability pressure that pushed the school to consolidate knowledge of their efforts and progress. However, schools' readiness to benefit from accountability demands varied according to their culture and the extent to which they used data to evaluate and improve their practice. BASRC's accountability activities made sense and were valuable to schools that had made a cultural shift toward data-based accountability.

BASRC activities to promote regional collaboration received lowest ratings

Among the activities that BASRC established to foster a regional network of educator peers, teachers told us that they valued activities that provided tangible ways of looking at the process of school change, whether by visiting a school site or examining a school's leadership proposal or ROP document. Teacher leaders said that seeing ideas in action made

it possible to bring them to their school and avoid reinventing the process that other schools went through to realize what works. The potential for regional spread was greatest when the collaborating schools had a similar focused effort. Among BASRC Phase One activities in this category, teachers gave highest ratings to **the Review of Progress as a reader** and the **Critical Friends visit at another school**.

> **Review of Progress as a reader** – For the Review of Progress in 1999 and 2000, one person from each Leadership School participated in a peer-review reader team of two or three people. Over a three-month period, readers attended two training sessions to learn how to evaluate schools' progress using the BASRC ROP rubric. Then readers spent three days in April examining and scoring one or two ROP documents per day. After scoring each document, the reader team interviewed representatives from the school with questions that arose during the review process. Finally, the reader team determined whether the Leadership School was on track according to Collaborative standards for progress.

> **Critical Friends visit at another school –** Critical Friends teams were first formed at the Summer Institute. These consisted of three to four Leadership Schools that alternated site visits to observe classrooms and give feedback on each school's focused effort. A typical Critical Friends visit began with a meeting where visitors were introduced to the school and acquainted with the questions on which the host school wanted visitors to focus. Visiting teachers observed classrooms for the day guided by the host school's questions. Afterwards, the visitors and the host school used tuning protocols to discuss their findings.

Teachers said they valued these activities because, rather than a show-and-tell, they required participants to investigate *how* other teachers were engaging their school reform work. By asking questions, looking for evidence, and revealing assumptions, teachers said they were able to incorporate these ideas to their own school site. For example, at a site visit between schools with a similar focused effort and the same support provider, visiting teachers spent the day collecting host teachers' lesson plans and materials. One of the teachers exclaimed, "It may be because I haven't done this before, but [what your school is doing] is a good idea for ME!" Similarly, an ROP reader said of her experience, "I learned a lot. I see what other schools are doing and then I think, 'Oh, we could do that!'"

Through Critical Friends relationships, schools learned of productive reform strategies and made adaptations to their own reform work, such as incorporating student voice, refining student portfolio rubrics, and learning reading strategies geared towards English Learners.

The BASRC regional activities that schools valued least were those that afforded only limited feedback on their work and superficial relationships with Collaborative peers. In BASRC's first years, teachers were generally positive about their involvement in regional Collaborative activities. This was the case not so much because of the value of any one particular activity, but because teachers were able to learn from Collaborative peers they had come to know over a period of time. As BASRC shifted its emphasis toward the ROP as the vehicle for schools' Collaborative relationships, and as Critical Friend relationships established through BASRC changed, schools found less value in their relationships with BASRC peers.

Critical Friends visit at my school – In addition to visiting their Critical Friends, school teams were required to host Critical Friends visits to their school for the initial years of BASRC. A majority of schools changed their Critical Friends in the second or third year of BASRC. As Critical Friends groups changed, schools visited each other's sites less frequently. After the third year, Critical Friends visits were no longer required by BASRC.

Attending the ROP as a school representative – As part of the ROP process, teachers, administrators, students, and sometimes parents in groups of four to fifteen people fielded reader team questions about their reform work. Based on the school representatives' responses and analysis of the school's ROP document, a school was assessed to be meeting or not meeting standard.

Consensus among BASRC teachers is that the value of Critical Friends' feedback depends upon relationships sustained over multiple years. One teacher talked about how her school's Critical Friends relationship became more meaningful over time, "At first we were nice, and it wasn't helpful. Then we decided to get tough. After five years [as Critical Friends], we are *tough* on each other."

Teachers commented that when they participated in BASRC regional events with schools they knew only superficially, the feedback they received was unfocused or uncritical. Teachers sometimes said that the participants did not have an opportunity to understand their work in depth. For example, teachers in some schools thought that the feedback they received at the ROP as a school representative was not helpful since it did not prioritize what the school ought to address next, but focused on weaknesses. For schools that had the time and maturity of reform culture, the staff sifted through their ROP feedback to determine what was most important for their school to examine next. Most schools did not do this. One teacher commented on the quality of the ROP reader feedback, "What we did the other day was discuss the feedback and say, 'What of this feedback really hits the mark? What of this feedback is background noise?' We said, 'This is a good comment, but there's more here that we probably really can focus on.'"

Teachers regarded the relationships that they developed at the Summer Institute as significant to finding commonalties with other schools across different grade levels (elementary, middle, high), focused efforts, and socio-economic and racial / ethnic populations. Critical Friends formed at that time, but they proved difficult to sustain. Geographical distances between schools, lack of time to meet, teacher turnover, and the dearth of available substitute teachers were some of the factors teachers cited as barriers to deepening their original Critical Friends relationships.

New Critical Friends relationships that BASRC tried to establish fared even worse. While their new Critical Friends often were more similar in terms of demographics and reform work, these groups were reluctant to visit each other's school sites since they had not previously had opportunities to build trust through collaboration. Expressing the sentiments of many, one teacher commented about how her school's new Critical Friends effectively refused to host a site visit, "The new Critical Friends are more similar in terms of focus and community, but I miss the six days [we] had at the Summer Institute to bond and to understand schools and to really get to know people."

Affinity Groups – For the first two years of BASRC, teachers, administrators, and support providers had the option to convene monthly to pursue their own inquiry questions and gain proficiency in the Cycle of Inquiry. The groups focused on a range of topics like diversity and literacy. Meetings were held in each of the six Bay Area counties.

Teachers generally felt that the action research questions they formulated in Affinity Groups were disconnected from their school's focused effort. For example, one teacher administered a survey to students to assess their proficiency in English and their native language as evidence of the need for an immersion program. She reported her principal's disinterest in her evidence: "I didn't know what to do with the results. The school does not have support for a bilingual program." Because BASRC Affinity Groups were not connected to whole-school reform work, increasing number of teachers elected to not attend this optional activity. After two years, the Affinity Groups were discontinued as a formal feature of BASRC's Phase One work.

In sum, BASRC Leadership Schools valued opportunities for learning from their regional school colleagues that met several conditions. Most valued Collaborative activities were closely linked with the school's reform work, provided concrete illustrations of what other schools had experienced, and enabled sustained relationships and critical feedback. The challenges that BASRC faced in engendering such relations across the region's highly diverse Leadership Schools are taken up in Chapter 6.

Schools with Greater Participation in BASRC Activities were More Advanced on Inquiry Practices

The evaluation also addressed the question of whether Leadership Schools' participation in BASRC activities mattered for their reform progress. We used teacher survey data to investigate the relationship between BASRC schools' level of participation in activities, particularly those most valued for reform support, and their progress on inquiry practices. The key empirical question for this analysis was: Did Leadership Schools with higher rates of participation in BASRC activities make greater progress in implementing inquiry practices? To address this question it was also necessary to determine whether Leadership Schools' participation differed by their readiness, or initial levels of inquiry, and to try to separate these differences from effects on school reform progress of the BASRC activities.

To address these issues, we used 1998 and 2001 teacher survey data for the eighteen schools surveyed in both years. A school's scores on the Inquiry Practices scale for the two years are used to measure reform readiness (1998 score) and progress (change from 1998 to 2001). To measure a school's level of participation in BASRC activities, we computed the school's average rate of teacher involvement in a) all BASRC activities and b) high-rated activities (as classified in Table 4.2). For graphic purposes, the participation data are presented as Low versus High on these two measures; dividing the 18 schools at the midpoint, which for both measures is at the 20 percent teacher participation level (see Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2 Changes in School Inquiry Practices by Level of School Participation in BASRC Activities [1]

Average Teacher Participation Rate for Leadership Schools (N=18)

☐ 1998 School Score on Inquiry Practices
☐ 2001 School Score on Inquiry Practices

_____
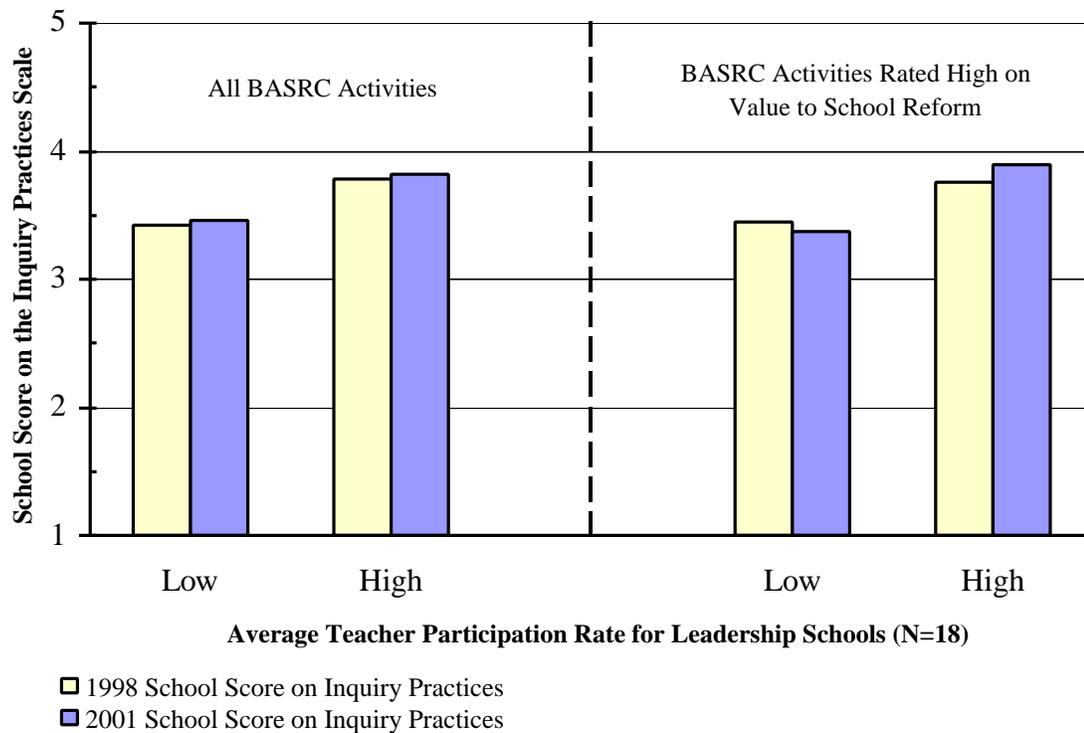
[1] Schools with average participation rates below 20 percent are classified as "low" (N=9).

The bar graphs in Figure 4.2 show levels of Inquiry Practice in 1998 and 2001 for schools that were Low and High in BASRC participation over Phase One. To the extent that participation matters for schools' reform progress, we should see a greater increase in Inquiry Practice scores for schools with high rates of participation.

Most striking in these data is the clear relationship shown between Leadership Schools' reform readiness at the start of Phase One and their level of participation in BASRC activities over four years, as reflected by the 1998 bars in Figure 4.2. Schools high in participation were farther along in inquiry-based reform than when they entered BASRC in 1997/98. Apparently, strongest reforming BASRC Schools were better positioned to engage their faculties in Collaborative activities. This pattern is the same whether all activities or only those rated highest in value are considered.

Participation effects on reform progress are shown only for the most valued BASRC activities. With a slight decline in Inquiry Practice scores among schools with low participation rates and a small gain for schools with high participation in these activities, differences in inquiry implementation for the high and low participation groups is statistically significant. Further statistical analyses of these data are precluded by the small school sample size. Since school participation data use teacher reports of their involvement in each activity, the analysis cannot be replicated with principal or Reform Coordinator survey data involving larger school samples.

Leadership Schools' Participation in BASRC Activities: Overview

This chapter documents Leadership Schools' high levels of participation in the range of activities BASRC organized to promote their progress on inquiry-based reform and the generally high ratings that participating teachers gave to all activities. At the same time, schools varied widely in extent of faculty participation in BASRC work over the course of Phase One. And BASRC activities varied on the value ratings that teachers gave. In general, BASRC support activities received ratings higher than those designed to pressure school accountability or to build relationships across schools in the Collaborative. Most valued by reforming schools were on-site, customized supports, accountability activities that brought the school together, and ongoing relationships with BASRC Leadership School colleagues that were sustained and offered concrete examples of reform efforts.

Inequalities in Leadership Schools' capacity to take advantage of BASRC work emerged in several ways. Schools relatively more ready for inquiry-based reform, as evidenced by their higher 1998 scores on the inquiry practices survey measure, gave significantly higher value ratings to most of the activities focused on school accountability: BASRC workdays, school accountability events, and all activities associated with the Review of Progress (ROP). As Chapter 5 elaborates, schools that were novices to inquiry tended to regard BASRC's accountability activities as compliance demands on the school, rather than as building shared faculty commitments and reflections on reform progress. Further, schools with a head start on inquiry participated at higher rates in all BASRC activities, including those that have most value for schools' reform progress. These findings suggest that Leadership Schools' BASRC participation and their reform progress were in a reciprocal relationship over the course of Phase One and that BASRC's design theory worked better for the more advanced schools. Our analyses of the school change process in Chapter 5 makes apparent how the culture of schools and inquiry practice at any stage of inquiry-based reform present particular developmental challenges and needs for support.

5

Assessing BASRC's Theory of School Change

BASRC's theory of school change envisions data-driven inquiry as the engine for transforming the culture of schools to improve student outcomes. The theory assumes that by implementing inquiry practices – using data on student outcomes to focus and evaluate school improvement efforts – teachers increasingly share accountability for student learning and equity and learn to use and develop knowledge to improve their practice. Previous chapters document that BASRC-designed projects and activities for Leadership Schools have helped schools to advance on inquiry practices and that this progress, in turn, has resulted in greater student gains on the SAT-9 test of basic skills. Here we look closely at Leadership Schools' experiences over the course of Phase One to document what inquiry looks like in practice across developmental stages and to elaborate BASRC's theory of school change.

BASRC's assumptions about how inquiry practices affect the culture of schools are summarized in Figure 5.1 (see Chapter 2 for more detail). The Cycle of Inquiry serves as a vehicle for schools to develop shared reform commitments and efforts that then engender teacher collaboration and learning around joint reform work and spread leadership across the school. BASRC's theory assumes a reciprocal relationship between schools' implementation of the Cycle of Inquiry and development of both teacher learning community and shared leadership structures.

In theory, as teachers work together to identify and address problems within the school, they grow stronger as a community of learners. As their commitment to one another and to school improvement intensifies, teachers engage the Cycle of Inquiry to tackle increasingly complex and sensitive issues about the quality and equity of student outcomes in the school. As inquiry practices deepen and teacher community strengthens, the school becomes increasingly adept at improving teaching and learning for all students.

Further, the theory goes that as school faculties develop collective responsibility for improvements around a focused effort, reform leadership broadens in the school. The Cycle of Inquiry requires a whole-school focused effort and thus leverages broad ownership of the school's reform work; at the same time, a distributed leadership structure facilitates and supports inquiry-based reform across the school.

The interdependence of school culture and inquiry-based reform practices is a strong theme in BASRC's school change theory and in Phase One evaluation findings. This dynamic frames a dilemma for inquiry-based reform that we address in the final chapter of this report – namely, whether culture-changing initiatives like BASRC should invest in building capacity or in building *upon* capacity for reformed school culture.

Figure 5.1 BASRC's Theory of School Culture Change

Inquiry Around a Focused Effort is the Engine of Reform

Changes in School Culture

School Outcomes

Cycle of Inquiry

Learning Community

Shared Leadership

- Increased quality and equity of student learning opportunities
- Enhanced student learning
- Narrowing of achievement gaps

School context conditions
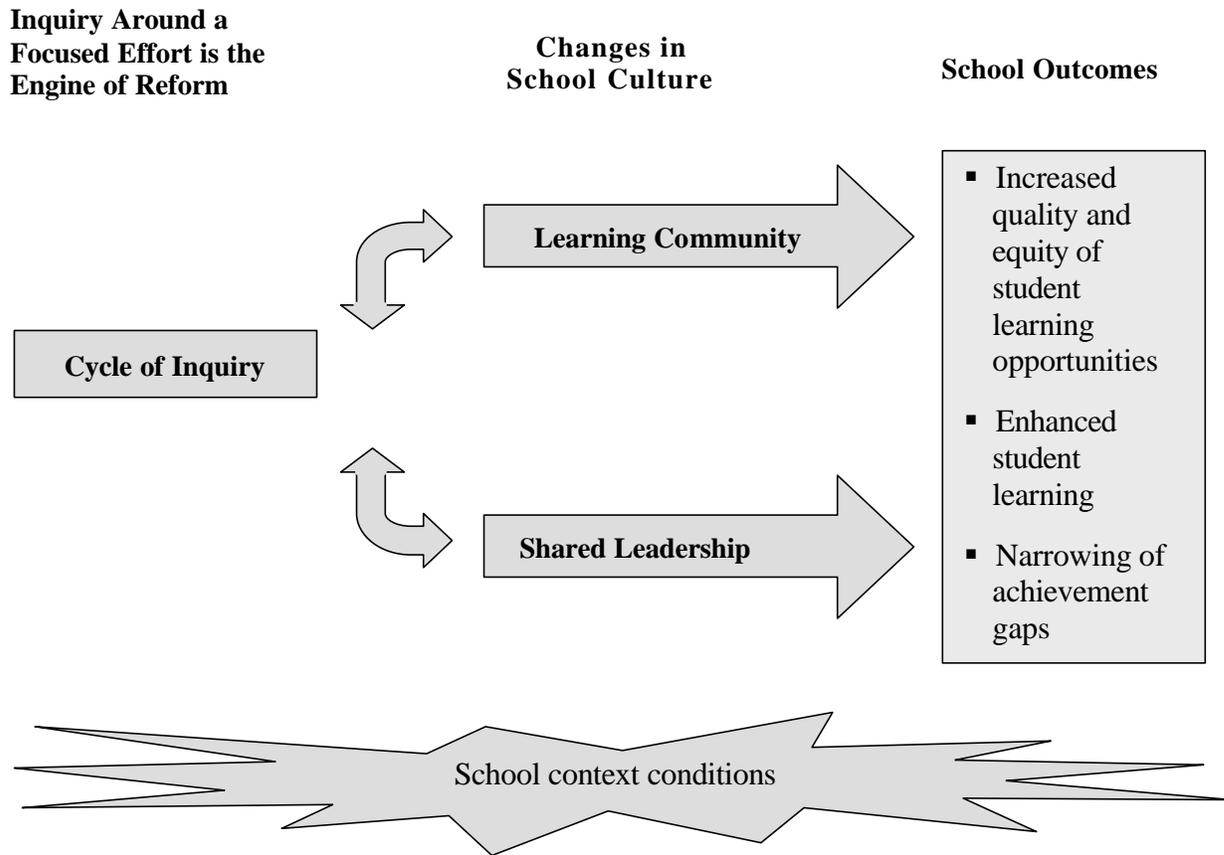
   Analyzing Leadership Schools' experiences implementing inquiry-based reform, we use evidence of evaluation case study schools' initial readiness as baseline data for charting their progress in terms of developmental stages of inquiry-based school reform. We then assess the assumption that BASRC inquiry practices engender teacher learning community and broadened leadership in the school. For this analysis we use survey data to assess the expected relationships between inquiry practices and these school culture conditions as well as in-depth case studies of BASRC Leadership School teacher communities and a special study of leadership to assess the processes and developmental stages linking inquiry to school culture. Finally we address how context conditions affect schools' progress on inquiry-based reform and the challenges schools face sustaining this reform work beyond BASRC Phase One. These analyses draw upon surveys of teachers, principals, Reform Coordinators, and district administrators, as well as school case studies.

This chapter addresses the following questions:

- How did schools differ in readiness for inquiry-based reform at the beginning of Phase One?
- What do the developmental stages of inquiry-based reform look like in practice?
- How do inquiry practices relate to conditions of professional community and school leadership?
- What context conditions – at school, district, and state levels – inhibit or support schools' progress on inquiry practices?
- What are BASRC Schools' prospects for sustaining inquiry-based reform?

How did BASRC Leadership Schools Differ in Reform Readiness at the Beginning of Phase One?

BASRC's model of inquiry-based reform expects collective and sustained effort in pursuit of goals that challenge the entire school community. As such, schools' ability to implement the Cycle of Inquiry to improve their practice is linked to several enabling conditions. Among BASRC Leadership Schools, those with past experience in whole-school reform initiatives (particularly those that focused on inquiry) had a substantial foundation on which to build. The presence of a cohesive and Collaborative professional community also helped schools to make strong school-wide reform commitments and advances on inquiry practices. Table 5.1 shows that BASRC schools differed widely in their initial readiness for inquiry in terms of their baseline scores on the Inquiry Practices survey scale. Here we highlight some key factors that shaped schools' readiness to make steady, school-wide progress on BASRC's model of inquiry-based reform.

Schools differed in their ability to build upon prior whole-school reform experience

Schools that had participated in California's SB 1274 initiative had experience with inquiry-based reform and undertook BASRC work with considerable conceptual understanding of its reform principles and with some focused work already underway. Schools that had experience with whole school change through their involvement in the Child Development Project (CDP) were ready to deepen their reform work through data-based inquiry. Schools with a history of participation in relevant reform initiatives had the advantage of building on their prior reform progress and knowledge of whole-school reform practices. In particular, they were farther along in establishing norms of collaboration, expectations for improving practices school-wide, and connections to resources in the region to support their work.

Further, BASRC's requirement that schools decide on a focused effort for inquiry and reform was more easily met in schools with prior reform experience. These schools could extend and refine the focus of their earlier reform work. Core Case Study School E, for example, continued its focus on a developmental model of education, established since its founding; its initial BASRC focused effort was "developmentally appropriate practices." Those schools that lacked experience with reform struggled to meet BASRC's requirements for focusing their reform efforts. Over the course of BASRC Phase One, however, a majority of schools gravitated to literacy as the focus of their reform efforts, bringing more common

ground to the reform work of schools with diverse histories. This trend seems to reflect a developing consensus within and beyond BASRC, in the context of state assessment and accountability pressure, that literacy work represents the most promising avenue for improving student academic achievement and narrowing the achievement gap.

Table 5.1   Evaluation Case Study Schools: Demographics and Reform Readiness

Case Study	Grade Level	Percent Reduced Meals	Percent English Learners	School Size	Score on 1998 TLC Scale[1]	Whole-school reform History
School A	K-8	81	80	710	Middle	
School B	K-6	60	34	400	High	Comer School
School C	K-6	14	5	630	High	Child Development Project
School D	K-6	4	7	720	Middle	Child Development Project
School E	K-8	25	13	400	High	Developmentally Appropriate Practices
School F	6-8	71	61	1010	Low	
School G [2]	6-8	42	13	840	Low	SB 1274, Coalition of Essential Schools
School H [2]	9-12	12	5	1780	Low	SB 1274, Coalition of Essential Schools
School I	9-12	3		1020	Middle	Autodesk
School J	9-12	41	26	1970	Middle	

[1] Teacher Learning Community (TLC) scores are teacher survey ratings of the school on a 4-item scale measuring colleague support for innovation, mutual trust, and shared responsibility for teaching success.

[2] These case study schools involved in SB 1274 experienced significant teacher turnover shortly after becoming a funded BASRC School, and this is reflected in low scores on the Teacher Learning Community survey scale.

Schools' professional communities differed in readiness for Collaborative inquiry

All Leadership Schools struggled to make meaning of BASRC's vision of inquiry-based reform. Teachers – many fearful of, or inexperienced with, data – needed to develop new experiences and habits with a community of their peers. None had experience with the specifics of the Cycle of Inquiry, but some were able to make progress at a faster rate than others. The key condition for forward movement on inquiry practices is the existence of a professional teacher community with norms of collaboration. Schools that lacked this readiness faced the challenge of first building sufficient collegial trust and commitment to define and move forward on a focused effort.

Schools that span the range of initial readiness for inquiry illustrate how differently they experienced their initial involvement in BASRC and the challenges of implementing inquiry

practices. Here are examples of the spectrum of reform readiness represented in our case study sample:

Elementary School C had several years of experience working with the Child Development Project to create a shared vision and common goals for the school. The faculty believed that school improvement would take a whole-school effort and were committed to move their reform work forward. Teachers regarded BASRC as an important extension of their reform work. In their first year with BASRC, teachers were beginning to generate their own data for inquiry into classroom practice. An observer describes how the school staff responded to one teacher's efforts circulating a survey she developed: "Her principal has been supportive of the project, and the teachers are helping her administer and collect surveys. Many teachers are curious about the findings and are looking at the responses to the surveys already returned. Most of the teachers are supportive of her research. They want to be a part of analyzing the information she obtains."

At *High School I*, teachers were enthusiastic about participating in BASRC and beginning work on inquiry-based reform. Through prior experience with reform, the teacher community had developed collegial relationships, but they did not share an agenda to improve teaching and learning. At an initial planning meeting, the faculty recorded its strengths and challenges for undertaking this reform work:

- We are good at listing issues and yet we do not take action
- We are not making decisions in a systematic way
- We need to set the foundation for a skillful discussion
- It is something that needs to be ongoing
- We have a lot of great teaching and learning and yet, no mechanism to examine it

Teachers were confident that they could improve their school with BASRC strategies, and they knew that to move forward they would need to change their culture to focus more directly on teacher learning and instruction.

Middle School G had a passionate faculty devoted to working with urban youth and committed to reform, but they were divided about what path the school ought to take. As one teacher explained: "There are a lot of visionaries [here] – educational visionaries. I think that at times we don't all agree, but there's a dialogue that goes on here that's much more intense than any other educational setting I've ever been in." Most teachers recognized that through their work with BASRC, they would be expected to channel that intensity into one shared focus, and they were uneasy about how that would happen. As one teacher said in a faculty meeting: "We're expected to collaborate and I think that sometimes it gets almost too much for me. I'm a big believer in collaboration, but I'm not a big believer in collaborating with people who don't want to collaborate… I feel like, sometimes we're forced to sit in rooms and collaborate when it's really not a positive working environment." When she finished speaking, several other teachers voiced agreement with her statement.

Each of these schools started BASRC with a particular reform history and professional culture that shaped its readiness and challenges for undertaking inquiry-based reform. In general, schools with strong teacher communities were much better poised to begin the process of inquiry.

Schools differed in experience working with data

Teachers in all schools struggled with questions like: What counts as data? What pieces of data will best help me understand and serve my students? How do I make sense of conflicting sources of evidence? Where can I find the data I need? How do I interpret testing results? While schools varied in how quickly they were able to begin using data in a meaningful way, once they reached that point, the change process began to accelerate. School-level development of inquiry typically followed an S-shaped learning curve characterized by slow growth in the early stages of the process followed by more rapid change once the essential systems were in place and understood by all involved.

One Reform Coordinator's comment explains why the beginning stages of inquiry-based reform take considerable time: "People are actually developing the habit of thinking in a Cycle of Inquiry… so that they almost unconsciously start their instruction by focusing on a gap." This strategy for lesson planning is markedly different from the traditional construction of lessons and relies on the level of teachers' comfort with data. It was only after teachers had overcome basic access and use obstacles that they could begin to regularly connect their findings to classroom practice.

As schools became more sophisticated in their use and understanding of data, they were able to become more informed consumers of knowledge. Teachers began to search for new forms of assessment to complement existing testing programs in the school. Several schools sought new professional development providers, while others created in-house professional development that better suited their specific requirements. By engaging evidence to gain greater clarity about students' needs, schools became more deliberate about the knowledge resources they accessed.

Within-school teacher communities differed in readiness for inquiry-based reform

BASRC's strong emphasis on whole-school reform required that schools create a common inquiry process across sub-communities of teachers within the school – typically, grade-level teams in elementary schools and subject departments in secondary schools. Yet, within-school communities can differ considerably in their levels of professional trust, collaboration, reform experience, and knowledge resources. Schools trying to engage teachers in whole-school reform work thus needed to address any existing differences in reform readiness *within* the school to forge a common ground for whole school inquiry. Challenges posed by teacher communities' differences in reform readiness and involvement became most salient as schools' inquiry focused on instruction, since inquiry into student learning and teaching practice necessarily involved the content standards and outcomes that are specific to subjects and courses or grade levels.

Evaluation survey data suggest that internal differences in teacher communities' readiness were not appreciable for BASRC elementary schools, but were substantial for high schools. Many of the schools included in our high school survey had significant between-

department differences in strength of community and inquiry. All three high schools in the core evaluation sample included subject departments that were significantly strong or weak in terms of teacher collaboration and engagement. The survey identified particular facets of school culture that differed at school and/or subject department level, as summarized in Table 5.2 (see Appendix C for items included in each survey scale included in this analysis).

Table 5.2 Subject Departments in High Schools often Differ in Professional Culture and Instructional Practices

	Level at which Significant Differences are Found		
	School	Subject[1]	Department[2]
School Culture			
Teacher Learning Community	+		+
Commitment to Students	+		+
Classroom Observations and Collaboration		+	+
Classroom Instruction			
Student Discourse and Reflection		+	+
Reform Assessments Format		+	+
Reform Outcomes		+	+

+ The difference between units at this level is statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level
[1] All significant between-subject differences represent lower scores for math teachers.
[2] Between-department differences represent comparisons of English, Math, Science, and Social Studies teacher data within each high school; tests of significance control for school and subject differences.

The fact that professional practices closest to the classroom – teacher observations of each other's teaching, student role in the classroom, and assessment practices – vary at the subject department level highlights the particular challenges that high schools face as they attempt to affect instruction through whole-school inquiry processes. In most high schools, teacher sub-communities have different capacities for undertaking inquiry-based reform and are likely to differ substantially in the manner and extent to which they implement inquiry practices and reform practices adopted by the school.[11]

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[11] The evaluation did not undertake a systematic study of high school department differences in community and inquiry, mainly because BASRC was strongly focused on the whole school as the unit of reform. By the end of Phase One, however, its theory and design had evolved to include multi-level inquiry at school, department/grade, and classroom levels, but neither the initiative nor the evaluation invested in documenting effects of reform work at each level. The survey data serve, however, to flag the problem that high schools faced in their readiness to implement inquiry school-wide.

What Does Inquiry-Based Reform Look Like in Practice?

Schools constructed an understanding of the Cycle of Inquiry from varying starting points, and they reached differing levels of sophistication in their work at the conclusion of Phase One. To understand the process schools experienced developing an inquiry-driven culture, the evaluation charted the progress of case study schools from start to finish and, in the end, analyzed patterns of inquiry practice that had developed within the schools over time. Comparing patterns across schools, we identified the qualitative differences that distinguish more and less advanced inquiry practice and suggest developmental stages of inquiry-based reform (see Table 5.3).

Table 5.3 Developmental Levels of Inquiry-Based Reform

Novice	▪ Learning the value of data and learning how to use data ▪ Experimenting with the inquiry process and becoming comfortable with procedures
Intermediate	▪ Valuing and using data; trying to seek out the best data; sometimes struggling with how to do so ▪ Inquiry process shifts closer to teaching and learning; may require changing directions to get closer to core concerns of the school; "competency traps" possible if schools become complacent
Advanced	▪ Managing data is no longer a struggle but instead the norm for making decisions ▪ The inquiry process is an accepted, iterative process involving the whole school and connected to the classroom level ▪ Actively pursuing sustainability

The qualitative differences that distinguish BASRC Leadership Schools at the Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced levels of inquiry pertain to several dimensions of inquiry practice fundamental to BASRC's reform model. Central to this: whether the school developed a focused effort, made use of multiple sources of data, created systems for conducting inquiry, and developed ways to sustain their work. Table 5.4 summarizes how the case study schools were rated in terms of these qualitative patterns of inquiry at both the start and end of Phase One.

Table 5.4 Inquiry Trajectories of Evaluation Case Study Schools

Core Case Study School	Grade Level	CRC Rating in 1997/98	CRC Rating in 2001
School A	K-8	No Inquiry	Left BASRC
School B	K-6	No Inquiry	Novice
School C	K-6	Novice	High Intermediate
School D	K-6	Novice	Intermediate
School E	K-8	Novice	Intermediate
School F	6-8	No Inquiry	Novice
School G	6-8	Novice	Low Intermediate
School H	9-12	Novice	Intermediate
School I	9-12	Novice	High Intermediate
School J	9-12	No Inquiry	High Intermediate

Compared to the broader population of BASRC Leadership Schools, and using the ROP ratings shown in Table 3.1 as a gauge, the evaluation's core case study sample appears to over-represent the middle-range of inquiry practice. While none of the schools in Table 5.2 achieved "advanced" status by the conclusion of Phase One, there were some Leadership Schools in the larger BASRC population that did. Two schools included in CRC's special high school study were at a stage of advanced inquiry and have been the focus of two-year case studies; data from these cases are used to describe advanced inquiry practices.

Evaluation data for schools that shared a particular developmental pattern at the end of Phase One document how inquiry practices differ across stages and reveal the challenges schools face moving to more advanced inquiry practices. The following are synthetic portraits of practice at each developmental stage of BASRC's inquiry-based reform model.

Schools in the novice range: making sense of data

Leadership Schools in the novice range struggled to develop problem statements specific enough to articulate the school's concerns. Their hesitancy and desire to "do it right" caused many schools to expend a great deal of energy while believing that they were not accomplishing much. As the reform leader in one elementary school explained, "The questions that we were trying to form… really just were not helpful. We were getting caught on things like, '[BASRC says that] one question is supposed to be about school structures and this one's supposed to be about students.'" Novice-range schools

Struggling to Move from Intuitive Decision-Making to Data-based Inquiry: A Look at Case Study School B

The inquiry cycles at *School B* lacked coherence and did not focus on evidence-based decision-making. A teacher explained, "We're intuitive, but [we] don't rely on data. We need to be systematic, data-based. It's hard to document intuition! We know we need to engage in practices year-round to be systematic." Yet, by not being systematic, staff at this school did not share information with each other. The principal explained, "We were always inquiring, but we're inquiring perhaps not in as systematic a way as we could with every person in the school being a part of the inquiry." Even more important, because inquiry practices were not systematic, inquiry practices that occurred in pockets did not result in change. The principal acknowledged, "Just having the process is not enough… What I see that doesn't happen here is the deep level of analysis that results in change. What's the good of having analysis if it doesn't then drive some decision making?"

In its last year, School B began to collect data systematically, but remained at a loss for how to analyze data systematically. An administrator lamented, "There's too much data. Everything is data. We've got data coming out of our eardrums and then what good is data if it's not analyzed and something plotted and . . . It's like you need a whole other group to come in and help facilitate all of this and make sure it happens. It's way too big a load on a principal." School B demonstrated that an inquiry process is indeed too large of a load for one or two individuals to manage alone. Without a support provider, a Reform Coordinator, or a system of distributed leadership in the school, not only was the concept of coherence missing schoolwide, but also the system management for engaging in inquiry.

had difficulty aligning BASRC expectations to their own needs.

BASRC provided tools and language intended to help teachers understand the inquiry process, yet it confused teachers in less advanced schools as they struggled to understand the terminology and apply it to their reform work. One high school teacher commented: "I think the term 'finding the gap' has become almost a joke at times. Just because we hear it so much…It gets to be another educational jargon moment for me."

To combat teachers' uneasiness with procedures and language, some leaders in novice-range schools made accommodations to the BASRC model in an effort to make the teacher community more comfortable with the inquiry process. One elementary school Reform Coordinator explained, "Everyone was just getting so hung up on the language of it that [inquiry] wasn't happening. Now we're really starting to talk much more about teacher practice and really just trying not to get caught up in the terminology." Other schools tried to teach the Cycle of Inquiry using language familiar to the school community so that terminology did not alienate teachers or distract them from understanding the inquiry process.

Working with data was overwhelming and intimidating
All BASRC Leadership Schools needed to learn about the kinds of data available and their potential for improving practice. At first, using data to make decisions tended to overwhelm most schools. Yet, for novice-range schools, the fear and struggle associated with data was never fully overcome. Teachers remained daunted by the process of collecting and analyzing data and did not trust that their data collection efforts would be useful to inform their practice.

Since schools often did not have the information they wanted about student performance or school climate, they needed to develop systems for gathering data, including developing school-wide assessments and surveys. Once they were collected, the sheer amount of data often overwhelmes schools. One reform leader explained, "I have suitcases of data—literally. That's how I move it from meeting to meeting." School people often did not know how to move from collecting data to using data as evidence to examine teacher practice. One reason that these schools sometimes were paralyzed by data was that teachers were anxious about what the data might show. The data could reveal that a school was sliding backwards rather than moving forwards. It could show that one teacher's class was not progressing as quickly as others. Engaging in such risky work required trust within the teacher community. During a conference session at an annual Collaborative Assembly, BASRC schools shared their fears about data. Participants expressed concern of being judged, concern of data's capacity to reveal weaknesses, concern that data might create more work, fear of retribution if the school failed to reach its goals, and fear of lowering the community's self esteem if measurable growth is not achieved.

Schools in the intermediate range: A level of comfort with inquiry
Leadership Schools in the intermediate range began to understand how to engage in a Cycle of Inquiry and saw how inquiry processes help to strengthen teacher community and broaden leadership. Over time, these schools saw small improvements as a result of their inquiry-based reform. These positive indicators of reform progress served to increase teachers' commitment to their focused effort.

Data became central to reform
Schools at the intermediate range of inquiry developed confidence in their ability to engage in inquiry practices. Teachers understood how data analysis could potentially improve their practice. Reflecting on the potential benefits of using data, one high school teacher in an intermediate-range school said: "Data in and of itself isn't useful. It's what you do with it. Before, we had data. Probably we could have guessed that a lot of those things were the case. But once you formalize it, that implies that you have to do something."

For schools in the intermediate range, teachers began to seek data on their student learning outcomes. Data increasingly became a resource for staff discussions about student achievement and evidence. Yet, schools were surprised to learn how difficult it was to find data that actually could *inform* their practice.

Often, schools in the intermediate range found data useful for identifying problems rather than solutions. One high school teacher explained:

> I think that one of the reasons that teachers are leery about data is not only because it brings into question our practice and also all of our assumptions, but also because it has been reported in a way that doesn't reflect all the possibilities in the data. So for example, 'forty percent of our students are not passing [at our school].' It's sort of like a statement. We don't know exactly what to do with it because people have not been trained.

Absent a sense of how to address problems revealed by data, teachers were frustrated in their use of inquiry to improve practice.

Given state accountability pressure, these intermediate schools also said they were pressured to use SAT-9 standardized test scores to assess student outcomes. Yet, most teachers believed that SAT-9 did not effectively measure student learning or minutely diagnose student needs around their focused efforts, such as problem solving, writing, or reading comprehension. As a result, connections between classroom practice and inquiry were tenuous, since the data schools used to engage their cycles of inquiry did not inform their focused effort work.

As schools became more sophisticated in their cycles of inquiry, some began to use qualitative data to balance SAT-9 test scores. Others recognized the value of moving in this direction. One high school teacher explained, "I would like to see the school move toward qualitative data…[to] provide some in-depth understanding of who our students are." Qualitative data on student experiences in school seemed potentially useful to many, but they did not know how to analyze such data in a rigorous manner. As a result, qualitative data were often considered to be less valid and "anecdotal." One high school teacher worried:

> I think a lot of the data tends to be anecdotal… but I think in a situation like this a lot of it has to be. Teachers know what feels right and what's working in their classrooms and what is making their jobs more fulfilling and what is helping their students move forward… And I don't know how to collect hard data on that."

Even as they became more proficient at generating and using quantitative data, intermediate school faculty still needed to learn how to collect and analyze qualitative data in a rigorous manner.

Inquiry processes are increasingly linked to teaching and learning
Teachers became aware of the need to shift their cycles of inquiry to teaching and learning, but the connections between inquiry and practice required a great deal of effort and rarely became ingrained in the teacher community of intermediate range schools. Even though schools at the intermediate range often became sophisticated at collecting and analyzing data, most did not know how to employ this to influence instruction in an ongoing, iterative manner. Instead, most schools faced roadblocks that prevented them from moving beyond the intermediate range of inquiry. They were unable to develop their inquiry process so that it became a continuous, normative process that drove decision-making and linked strongly to classroom instruction.

  Some schools at this stage tended to rush toward a solution without first understanding the nature of their students' academic gaps, particularly when facing external pressures to improve performance or insufficient time to carefully reflect through their inquiry cycles. Rather than using data to develop strategies Collaboratively, these schools tended to slip back into the more common reform process of choosing a strategy without first defining their problem. Teacher turnover particularly caused learning communities to lose their inquiry focus and return to old habits. For example, a high school administrator commented that with thirty percent teacher turnover one year, some teacher inquiry groups at his school were choosing a strategy before defining a problem. The reform leadership realized that they needed to re-train their staff about the inquiry process to reorient the school towards identifying student needs first before changing and refining their instruction.

Examining Data to Improve Teaching Rather than Maintain the Status Quo: A Look at Case Study School E

Elementary School E joined BASRC with the intention to continue their work building developmentally appropriate teaching practices throughout the school as their "focused effort." At their first review of progress (at which peers from other BASRC schools evaluated their reform work), School E received strong criticism for not examining their student outcome data to identify a school-wide, student-centered problem. Instead, School E teachers were criticized for jumping to the solution first, assuming that developmentally appropriate practices would solve all students' needs school-wide.

  A BASRC staff member pushed the teachers' thinking by suggesting to the school's reform leadership: "What I hear is that if we all have the same program, that will solve the issue. Turn the thinking around. What if every teacher took three students and over the year tracked those students and built an inquiry around that? My bet is that it's a variety of strategies – not a single program implemented uniformly. Beyond consistency, it's understanding individual students…[and] swapping techniques to see what's working." Eventually the teacher community at School E switched their focused effort to reading comprehension. While developmentally appropriate practices may be one source of solutions, School E teachers realized they needed to broaden their scope and consider alternative strategies for improving teaching and learning.

Intermediate-range schools sometimes failed to advance on inquiry practices because initial successes they experienced led to "competency traps" (Levitt & March, 1996). In these cases, schools became complacent with the work they were accomplishing and were not compelled to deepen their inquiry and make stronger connections between inquiry practices and teaching and learning. These schools did not engage the Cycle of Inquiry as a vehicle for changing school norms; rather, these schools believed they could "do" the Cycle of Inquiry for discrete purposes. Intermediate-range schools conceptualized the Cycle of Inquiry as a concrete, short-term utilization of a BASRC tool rather than as an ongoing cycle of questioning and reflection. An elementary school principal's comment captures this pattern:

> I think it was used first of all in writing the Review of Progress, and I think it's used during the joint leadership team meetings. People ask why and propose an answer and come up with a possible solution, and then evaluate that and come back and ask some questions about that and kind of move themselves around a circle of inquiry. So I think it's used in those formats. I think teachers use it. They're knowledgeable in it and use it as they're doing lesson planning. When a lesson is successful, they might ask themselves why was it successful and what's the next step?

The principal at this school regarded the Cycle of Inquiry as useful for particular situations, but not as a way to reculture the school. This principal's perception of inquiry as a tool prevented her from pushing the school to move deeper into their inquiry work.

Some schools also employed the Cycle of Inquiry to support particular existing beliefs and opinions rather than to solve problems. An elementary school teacher explained, "I think we use data to support decisions, but I don't think we ever use data to come up with an idea of what to do." A high school English teacher reported a similar phenomenon. She explained, "Last year we started keeping data about whether or not writing skills could be improved by teaching the use of evidence…The data backs it up, but we knew that anyway, right? So I'm not sure that's particularly useful for what we're doing." These schools' experiences show that data can be used to reinforce beliefs and practices rather than to call them into question.

Most notable at this intermediate stage of inquiry was schools' tendency to focus on the process of inquiry while inconsistently making connections to teaching and learning. Two case study schools (G and I) in particular chose to teach the Cycle of Inquiry before introducing content, with the assumption that inquiry could not lead to solid gains in student learning until teachers had a strong grasp of the philosophy and systems of inquiry. Yet, teachers at these schools said they believed they were engaging in "inquiry for inquiry's sake" rather than producing knowledge that could change their practice. Such a systems-first approach threatened to encourage a process of learning tools without influencing teachers' foundational principles and school culture. According to BASRC's theory and research on inquiry-based reform, a successful inquiry cycle requires attention to both building systems for inquiry and teachers' work in classrooms (Zarrow, 2001).

Improving Teacher Practice and Learning the Inquiry Process at the Same Time: A Look at Case Study School G

The reform leadership at *Middle School G* strongly believed that teachers needed to understand the inquiry process before they could apply it to practice. The reform leadership thought they would have to provide opportunities for teachers to see connections between inquiry and their practice. As a result, they decided to develop a school-wide Cycle of Inquiry and simultaneously help teachers engage in a classroom Cycle of Inquiry, where teachers could select their own focused effort. By encouraging teachers to select their own focused effort, the reform leadership hoped to increase teacher buy-in and interest in the inquiry process. By organizing the time for teachers to regularly share their classroom Cycle of Inquiry findings at department meetings, the reform leadership believed teachers would collectively gain a greater understanding of the inquiry process. The Reform Coordinator at the school explained, "The idea was to focus on practicing inquiry…that's small-scale and focused on your own interest. [We] tried to show people through their own experience that it's useful… We realized that people needed practice that was a little bit more concrete than like what they would do in a monthly department meeting."

However, the reform leadership's design for helping teachers to learn the inquiry process through multiple, unconnected cycles resulted in less coherence and decreasing commitment to inquiry. Rather than developing a deeper understanding of the inquiry process, teachers said they often were more confused. Rather than increasing ownership of the inquiry process, teachers said they were overworked and saw little benefit from their classroom inquiry work.

Schools advanced in inquiry: Creating a whole school culture of inquiry

By the end of Phase One, the Cycle of Inquiry in advanced schools had matured into an accepted, iterative process of data collection, analysis, reflection, and purposeful action. Schools at this advanced range developed a "culture of inquiry" where the whole school developed norms for critical questioning within its learning community. The whole school was both the site of inquiry and the focus for change. By continuously maintaining a critical inquiry stance, schools at the advanced range consistently and efficiently collected and analyzed their data to determine where to streamline their work and where to supplement work already underway to improve academic achievement for all students.

Data and inquiry processes inform classroom practice

Faculty at schools in the advanced range said their school's inquiry processes informed classroom practice. These schools successfully moved beyond a focus on how to "do" inquiry to a focus on the content of their inquiry cycles. Staff at advanced schools said that with this shift toward content, they experienced great success fostering consistent ongoing reflection among the teacher community, which resulted in improvement at their school. One reform leader explained, "There's a very fundamental difference in where we were at the beginning of last year. We were very much like, 'Oh, no! What's our Question A? What's our Question B?' And now we're really starting to talk much more about teacher practice and really just trying not to get caught up in the terminology of Question A and B and what that's supposed to be all about. But that was a really long process." Faculty at advanced-range

schools saw their inquiry processes as fundamental to determining how to help students achieve and the kinds of resources they would need to continue to achieve their goals.

Teachers in schools at the advanced range became more demanding consumers of support as they carefully considered the resources they needed beyond school walls. Quite often, however, the school community was the source for generating new practices and inventing ideas for reform. Learning communities created knowledge within the school site. External resources tended to be utilized primarily for specific technical issues, such as training on a specific technique that fits within the school's broader inquiry practices.

Inquiry cycles at the school, grade/department, and classroom level are coherent
At schools in the advanced range of inquiry, the multiple cycles of inquiry at the classroom, grade/department, and school level had the coherence generally missing in schools at the novice or intermediate range. Rather, teacher communities engaged multiple-level inquiry cycles that were mutually enforcing and explicitly addressed connections and gaps across the school system, classroom practice, and student outcomes. At one school, for example, staff development days focused on examining which students were not meeting grade-level benchmarks in literacy and identifying systems and structures that supported or impeded teachers' ability to conduct classroom-level cycles of inquiry. At the classroom level, teachers targeted a small group of students to identify effective teaching strategies that impacted student performance on the school's literacy performance standards. By connecting this classroom Cycle of Inquiry back to the whole-school Cycle of Inquiry, teachers shared best practices among the entire school community and refined school-wide structures to better support teachers' classroom practice. The ways in which inquiry at advanced range schools functions at multiple levels were investigated in a special study on reforming high schools. The following case study (HSS G) focuses on how teachers are continuously assessed and supported in their inquiry practices at the classroom, department, and school level, and how their deepening inquiry around their literacy-focused effort broadens leadership within and beyond school boundaries and fosters professional community (see vignette on following page).

Although the Cycle of Inquiry is never a linear process, advanced-range schools experienced fewer stops and starts and moved efficiently from question to evidence to analysis in their cycles. Rather than starting over at step one, inquiry begot inquiry at advanced range schools (Stokes, 1999). As a teacher at Case Study School E explained, "Something new always comes up and we think we need more of this now and that's how it continues around and around and around. But hopefully you get better each time and it also informs for my teaching."

Progressing across stages of inquiry: from ritual to deep inquiry that impacts practice

BASRC expects that school-wide inquiry will generate shared vision among faculty and provide teachers with the tools and knowledge to improve their practice. As Leadership Schools' experiences with inquiry reveals, school faculty were "learning to learn" as they developed an inquiry stance. Novice-range schools tended to stagnate and implement routines that satisfied BASRC requirements. These schools followed the six-step Cycle of Inquiry without implicating classroom practice. Sometimes hesitant to break norms of

Interconnected Cycles of Inquiry: How Teachers are Supported and Assessed in their Inquiry Practices at an Advanced Range School

The reform work of HSS G is an example of how schools advanced in inquiry practices can improve student achievement by aligning curriculum and instruction to assessment at multiple school levels. Teachers in all disciplines at HSS G have a common, whole school goal: to improve student literacy skills. Defining a whole school focused effort and learning to use data to inform instruction was not easy. HSS G's literacy coach remembered, "We had a difficult time at first. BASRC for us in the beginning was marine boot camp. It pushed us through a knothole and dragged us back through… but BASRC gave us the focus and the method to go about the reform. It was the driving force that made us take a good, hard look at our numbers, our data."

The English department initially led HSS G's inquiry. While the whole staff received training in authentic assessment at the initial stages of their BASRC involvement, English teachers took the lead and created several rubrics for their reading diagnostic assessment and writing proficiency test that each student takes three times a year. Data from these tests were shared with the whole staff. HSS G teachers realized that many students' literacy skills were poor, and this was reinforced by teachers' classroom observations. Recognizing that literacy might be the problem for poor student achievement, the entire faculty compared reading skills data with student performance in math, science, and social science. They found a high correlation: students with low reading skills also had low subject grades.

The HSS G community reached a pivotal point in their reform work when, during a staff meeting, teachers took a sample test mirroring the format and content of the SAT-9. Many could not complete the test in the allotted time. Teachers realized that only fluent readers were successful, regardless of their content knowledge. The principal remembered, "That haunted them [teachers] – the need for good reading skills, no matter what subject you are addressing." A teacher explained how this exercise pushed her to focus on literacy despite the fact that she was not an English teacher, "Because I don't teach required, core classes, I hadn't given much thought to actually teaching literacy. It is now,

however, clear that literacy needs to be addressed in all subject areas including my own."

One driving factor for HSS G's inquiry work is an annual month-long summer institute. Unlike typical professional development that focuses on individual teachers, HSS G teachers are encouraged to work as teacher teams on a project that meets the school's literacy goals. As examples: a group of social studies teachers decided to develop a "target graduation" program that assists seniors at risk of not graduating; a science teacher team designed a new rubric assessing student research papers. At the summer institute, teachers come together around meaningful, shared work. Approximately one third of the institute is devoted to proposed projects. Workshops also are offered on literacy strategies like reciprocal reading, authentic assessment, Socratic seminar, and differentiating curriculum. HSS G are now savvier consumers of professional development. The principal explained, "I throw away maybe eight out of ten brochures that come across my desk that do not deal with our strategic goals." While external speakers present at the summer institute, HSS G has broadened leadership from within their staff and HSS G teachers are increasingly presenting many of the summer institute workshops. Other HSS G teachers reported learning more from their colleagues than from outside experts, and how presentations from their peers created stronger professional community. One teacher explained, "I think that [having HSS G teachers present] is really validating for teachers because we pay lots of money for people to come in and talk to us, and then we have lots of good people who are doing things that are really swell and can share them with us. I think...it makes more of a teaching community." The work of this institute continues throughout the year as teachers implement their projects. To hold teachers accountable, administrators meet with summer institute teams throughout the year to assess and support their progress.

The overall effect of HSS G's professional development program is impressive. In 1993, 56 percent of teachers reported using performance-based instruction in their classroom. By 2000, this

increased to 97 percent. In 1998, 38 percent of teachers reported using rubrics in their classrooms. In 2000, this increased to 88 percent. According to these indicators, HSS G's professional development structure has armed teachers with tools to improve their students' literacy skills. Administrators also understand that professional development needs to be ongoing and sometimes focused on providing extra support for departments that are hesitant to get involved in inquiry work. For example, administrators were concerned when teachers in one department wanted to opt out of scoring writing assessments with the whole staff. After a few discussions, administrators saw that these department teachers were not confident in their ability to use writing rubrics. One teacher had commented, for example, "If I score a writing sample a 3 and the English teacher gives it a 5, how will that make me look?" The literacy coordinator arranged for extra meetings with this department's teachers to help support their use of the rubrics before they finally agreed to participate in the whole school scoring sessions.

These opportunities to collaborate during the summer and throughout the year drive teachers' classroom inquiry. Their openness to classroom observations and coaching, and their inquiry work to improve student achievement, are tied to annual teacher evaluations. Before the school year begins, each teacher receives longitudinal data for each of her new students. This includes scores on SAT-9 reading, subject area grades, and HSS G's reading and writing proficiency tests. The associate principal works with each teacher during the year to analyze the data. Teachers identify students with low literacy skills, low overall scores, or recent drops in scores. Teachers are expected to call on the school's full-time literacy coach to observe and reflect with them on how their implementation of literacy strategies helps to support their target students. Throughout the year, teachers meet with the associate principal to discuss what they are doing in and out of the classroom to help target students and what they intend to do next.

The greatest challenge confronting HSS G is how to sustain its reform work. Like many schools in traditional districts, HSS G

historically focused its energy at the school site. Avoiding the politics at the district level seemed an advantage. But two years ago, HSS G administrators realized that a supportive district might be the key to sustainability. In particular, understanding the important work done at the summer institute, one administrator said, "When those programs die, they will die because they aren't perpetuated by the district." The district, with HSS G's coaching, decided to focus its work around building a culture of inquiry district-wide. HSS G's associate principal began working for the district as the coordinator of this work by teaching the district the Cycle of Inquiry. As a result, HSS G staff notice that district personnel are becoming more adept at focusing their own reform efforts and using and analyzing data to reflect on their work. The district now requires all schools to have a full time, site-based literacy coach, and instituted HSS G's reading assessment district-wide. For HSS G, these shifts in district culture are steps toward sustainability of their school's inquiry and make the "extra work" of leading the district well worth the effort. Because the district now supports inquiry, site-based literacy coaches, and other tools, HSS G is less dependent on external funding and staff stability for sustaining its reform work.

HSS G has made extraordinary progress in its reform work – on inquiry, professional development, and broadened leadership. A strong, school-wide community, focused on literacy and student achievement now thrives where only isolated pockets of reform existed before. By actively working with its district office and building on teacher leadership and skills, HSS G aims to not only to strengthen and deepen their reform work, but to sustain it as well.

teacher isolation and hierarchical leadership, novice-range schools treated completion of a cycle as a compliance exercise.

Yet, in schools that progressed to the intermediate range or beyond, teachers grew to collectively value the principles of inquiry. They learned to exploit the cycle's potential, as one teacher described:

> Just from the point of comparison, in past experiences when teachers got together and talked . . . they talked about problems. They were very reactive, addressing problems after they've happened in the school. And [now with] these groups, they're proactive. We're trying to make things happen as opposed to addressing something after it's happened.

Such consciousness about practice and willingness to reflect Collaboratively with peers demonstrate a marked shift for faculty at intermediate- and advanced-range schools. In general, BASRC's Leadership Schools were challenged to make the transition from inquiry as procedure to inquiry as stance. Initial indications are that when schools transcend a procedural approach to the Cycle of Inquiry, they begin a transformation toward systematic inquiry-based reform.

School Inquiry Practices Build Upon and Promote BASRC's Vision of School Culture

BASRC's theory of school change assumes that inquiry practices catalyze the development of desirable conditions of school culture. Anticipated school outcomes of inquiry practices include:

- A more Collaborative teacher community that supports ongoing teacher development through knowledge-sharing and joint work;
- Broadened teacher leadership as faculties come to solve problems collectively and share responsibility for student outcomes;
- More effective and equitable learning environments for students as a result of school and classroom changes.

The interdependence of schools' inquiry practices, professional culture, leadership conditions, and commitment to all students is captured by teacher survey data for case study schools (see Figure 5.2). Teachers' reports on their school's inquiry practices in 2001 are strongly related to their ratings of collegial relationships and norms on survey scales measuring Teacher Learning Community, Collective Problem Solving, and Commitment to Students (see Appendix C for scale definitions). As shown by the bar graphs in Figure 5.2, those case study Leadership Schools that were relatively advanced in their inquiry practices by the end of Phase One also were the strongest professional communities. This relationship reflects initial differences in these schools' readiness for inquiry-based reform and outcomes of the reciprocal relationship between inquiry practices and changes in professional culture over the four years of BASRC reform work.

Figure 5.2 BASRC Evaluation Case Study School Differences on School Reform Culture in 2001

■ Inquiry Practices
■ Teacher Learning Community
□ Collective Problem Solving
□ Commitment to all Students
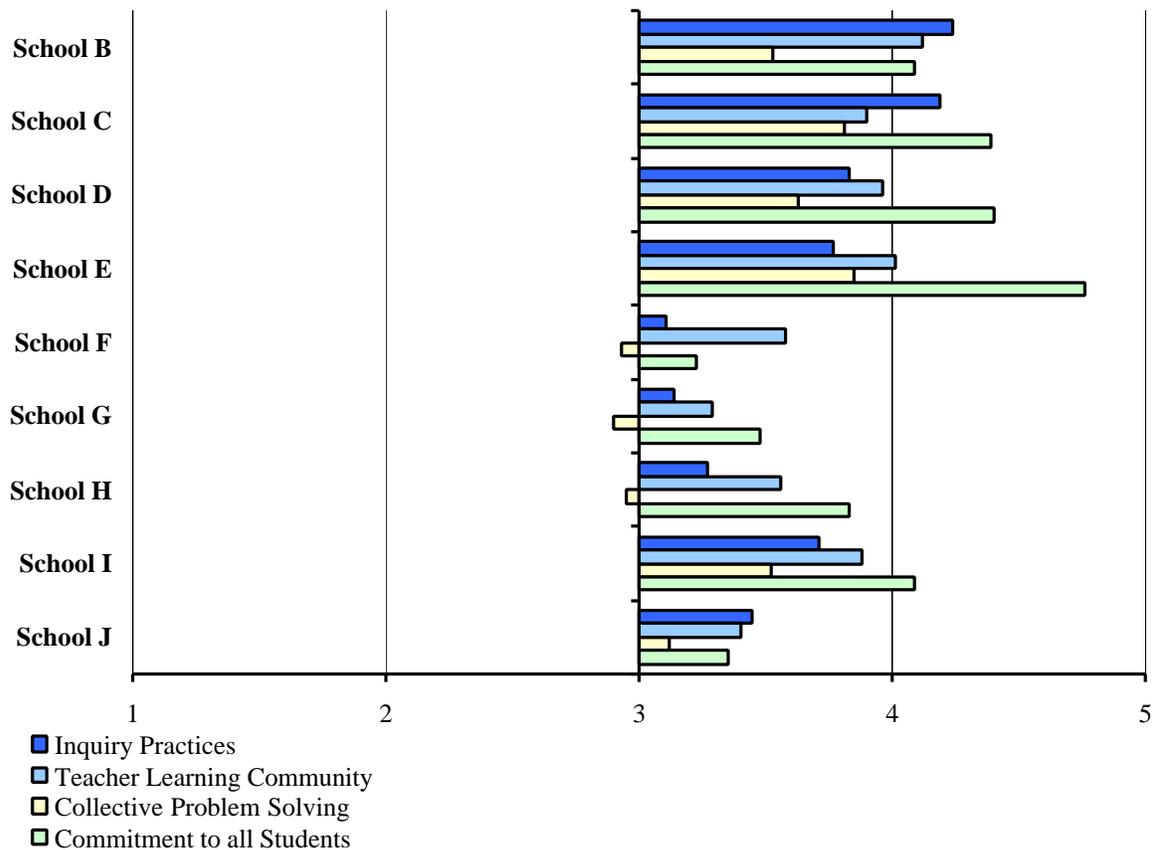
Inquiry practices promote learning in teacher professional communities

Considerable evidence from Leadership Schools' experiences and the literature on teacher communities supports BASRC's assumption that teachers working together to improve their practice constitutes a powerful form of professional development. Not only do teachers share their own practical knowledge of effective instruction, they also become better consumers of research-based knowledge and create new knowledge through their shared improvement efforts.   As our analysis of developmental stages of inquiry-based reform makes clear, teacher communities began their BASRC work with differing capacities to work together effectively through inquiry practices. Here we focus on how inquiry practices improve teachers' capacity to learn together and advance their professional development.

As context, we look statistically at the relationship between schools' maturity in inquiry practices and norms of teacher community that support innovation and mutual support for improving practice. Figure 5.3 shows how, across the broader survey sample of Leadership Schools, 2001 scores on the Teacher Learning Community scale relate to their scores on the Inquiry Practices scale. These data show the high level of interdependence between inquiry and school professional culture across these eighteen schools. The figure also shows that the case study schools span a wide range of variation among BASRC schools on outcomes sought by the initiative.

Figure 5.3 Teacher Learning Community and School Inquiry Practices are Interdependent
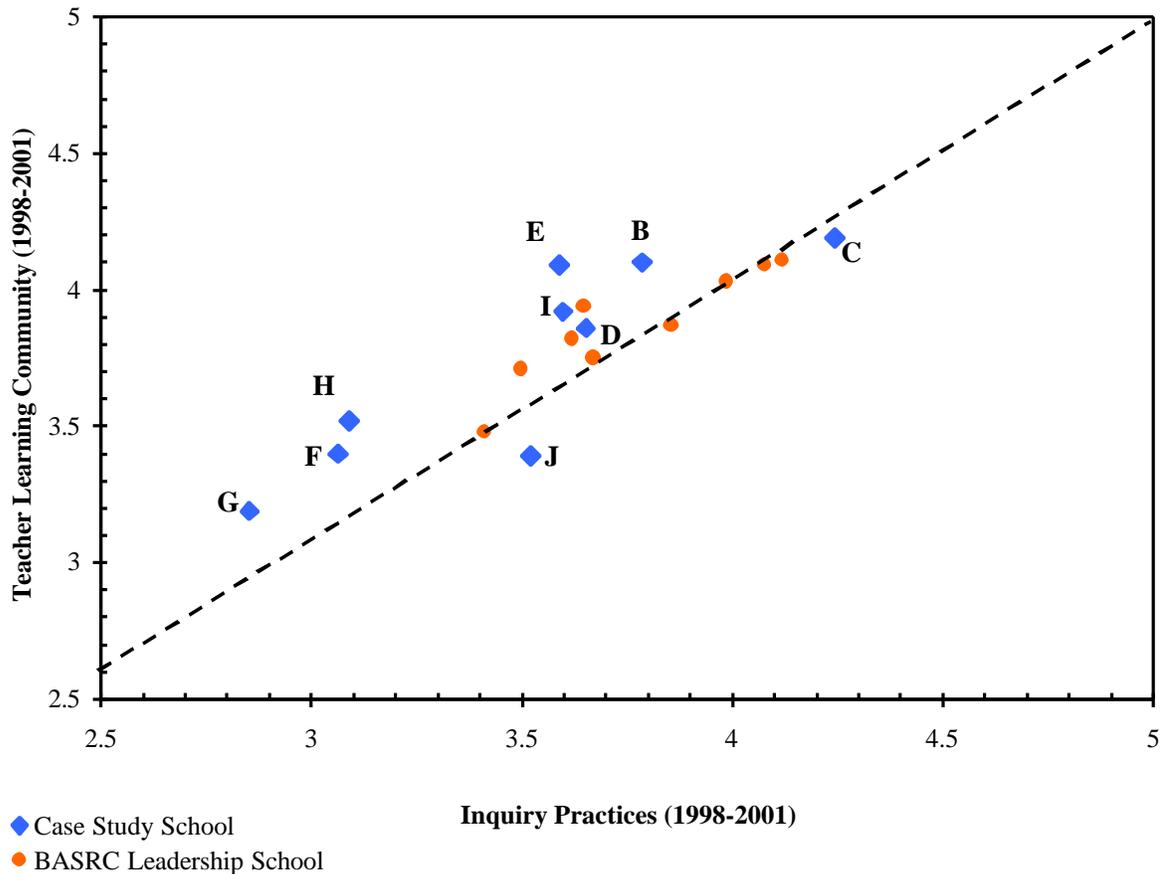
¹ Data are from the 1998 and 2001 Teacher Survey in eighteen Leadership Schools. The correlation between the scales is .88.

The ways in which inquiry works to engender new collegial relations and learning opportunities for teachers were investigated through an in-depth study of inquiry practices in Case Study School J and in an elementary school that focused its reform work on equity. These intensive case studies of reforming BASRC Leadership Schools deepen our analysis of the outcomes of BASRC's school change theory. These studies focus on low-wealth schools in the middle range of strength of inquiry and professional community; they offer perspective on the experiences of typical Leadership Schools and show how teacher community develops through joint reform work and how teachers learn together through data-based inquiry, highlighting the professional development implications of inquiry-based reform (see vignettes on the next page).

School leadership broadens as schools develop inquiry skills and habits

BASRC envisions that inquiry-based reform will engender widely shared leadership systems and practices, which in turn, provide the structures for sustaining inquiry-based reform. The Cycle of Inquiry invites broad faculty participation in problem identification, school-based research, development, testing and implementation of solutions, and ongoing assessment.

A Deeper Look at Teacher Learning Community and Inquiry at a High School: Case Study School J

School J is a large urban high school in the process of adapting curriculum to state standards. Teachers meet in department groups during periodic workdays, and the science department has been using this time to integrate the state standards into science fair projects, lab reports, assessment questions, and grading procedures. The Cycle of Inquiry has served to focus their work on content standards.

The Science department modified the Cycle of Inquiry to meet their needs and to generate ownership of the process. Their six-step "Design Cycle" is discussed extensively at every meeting. It begins with adoption of a standard, design of an assessment activity, evaluation of that assessment through teachers working through the activity themselves, design of learning activities targeted toward success on the assessment, conducting that instruction in one or more classes and giving the assessment, and finally reflecting on the results and making modifications in the formulation of the standard, the assessment, and/or the learning activities.

A common challenge for the science teachers was balancing breadth and depth with respect to curriculum coverage. They struggled to engage students in deeper understanding of concepts while responding to the demands for coverage of a larger range of topics found in the standards. The school's Reform Coordinator helped to bring the department to common agreement around this tension. When one of the teachers remarked that administration should provide them with direction on how to set priorities for selecting standards, the Reform Coordinator convinced the group to take responsibility for setting their own priorities. In their next meeting, teachers collaborated to develop two standards-based units and, through this process, they gained practical experience cooperatively achieving a balance between breadth and depth.

This Science department, like the Kindergarten team, was engaged in a process of generating knowledge to improve teaching throughout the community. The process of inquiry drives their work. Through participation in the community's inquiry cycle, teachers learn to develop a shared perspective and mutually defined goals. The focus here is on learning as participation. Changes in the way individuals participate in the community's practices strengthen the community's capacity to support teacher learning. Teacher learning is ongoing, fundamentally tied to student learning, and owned by the group.

These cases reflect how inquiring schools work toward professional development and instructional reform that is embedded in the context of school reform and is rooted in teacher teams' work. Whole school faculties are called upon to change their approach to learning and to classroom teaching. These cases illustrate the common themes that emerge when groups within a school take on inquiry practices. By engaging in inquiry, using data and making evidence-based decisions as a group, teachers are transforming the content and practices of their work and strengthening their communities. In the process of developing new learning practices, generating new knowledge, and creating shared standards of practice; long-held, implicit assumptions about the meaning of collegiality, authority, and peer accountability are challenged and revised.

A Deeper Look at Teacher Learning Community and Inquiry at an Elementary School

At Elementary School TLC A, a half day is set aside monthly for teachers to meet in grade-level teams and conduct cycles of inquiry. The content of the Kindergarten team's February 2001 meeting reflects the development of their inquiry practices and their commitment to one another and to their students over time. Their focus is on English Learner students. The Kindergarten teachers designed an inquiry plan the previous November when another grade level team in the school shared findings on equity issues that led Kindergarten teachers to believe that language production among English Learner students, particularly those of Cantonese and Vietnamese descent, was an area they needed to focus on. One teacher observed that these students, who often entered school speaking little English, "seemed to have the same vocabulary five years later" and "needed to be targeted for language development."

Teachers immediately began the agenda they set at the conclusion of last month's meeting. Their principal was also present and the Kindergarten team brought him up to speed describing their strategy: "We're each observing two English Learner students every month in the classroom and in the yard, talking about what we're seeing… and looking for commonalties and how we can better serve them."

The teachers took a systematic approach to data collection by keeping a chart of students' progress that they update at these monthly meetings. Each teacher discussed her target students while another recorded. Though only in their fourth month, the teachers already found ways to implement changes in their practice based on what they were learning by comparing observations. As one teacher learned from her observations of one student, "I became so much more aware of her social needs. I really need to draw her out and find a way to group her with people who are really nice, maybe other Cantonese kids. This will direct my curriculum for a couple of months – doing stuff on friendship, being nice when you see someone alone."

To enhance their work with students, teachers collaborated to develop games and lessons that, based on their observations, were conducive to language production. They compared schedules and determined ways to redistribute students periodically for more intensive work in

homogeneous language groups. Later in the year, based on what they concluded from their analysis of target students, they determined criteria for assigning students to first grade classes based on language and ethnicity.

The work of the Kindergarten team is organized around generating new, practical knowledge. Their charts of students' academic and social progress are a relevant source of data for their young students. The charts allow teachers to make informed changes in practice and respond to their students' specific needs. New knowledge, constructed through joint activity, is the basis upon which teachers transform their practice.

The Kindergarten team has reinvented the meaning of professional development within their community. Their case reveals that learning in an inquiring community needs to be understood both as progress made by individual teachers and as progress made by the community of teachers through their professional interactions. New knowledge of practice is constructed on a communal level but put to use in individual classrooms.

As teachers build a community that challenges traditional norms of independence and autonomy, trust is a key condition. The high level of trust that the Kindergarten community shares allows teachers to challenge one another. Teacher survey data reinforce the importance of trust within the teacher community for improving practice through inquiry: while all BASRC schools used summer institutes, retreats, and study groups, advanced range schools were significantly more likely to incorporate peer coaching into their work.

Through the process of inquiry, the community broke down social barriers that increased its capabilities for collaborating to formulate and achieve goals and to develop appropriate practices. Individual teachers benefited from this joint work and moved beyond acquiring knowledge alone to jointly constructing knowledge. Through collaboration, teachers individually and collectively took a consistent, critical stance toward their work. Through the process of inquiry, teachers developed mutual accountability and a shared professional identity.

Principal survey data for 64 Leadership Schools provide an overview of the relationship between a school's advance on inquiry practices and extent to which the faculty share responsibility for student success and school improvement. As shown in Figure 5.4, the statistical relationship between these school conditions is quite strong (.59 correlation, .35 explained variance in Shared Responsibility). We also found a statistically significant effect of Inquiry Practice (scores averaged for the four-year time span) on Shared Responsibility in 2001, with controls for school scores on this measure in 1998 (p = .10).

Figure 5.4 Shared Responsibility and School Inquiry Practices are Interdependent [1, 2]

◆ Case Study School

● BASRC Leadership School

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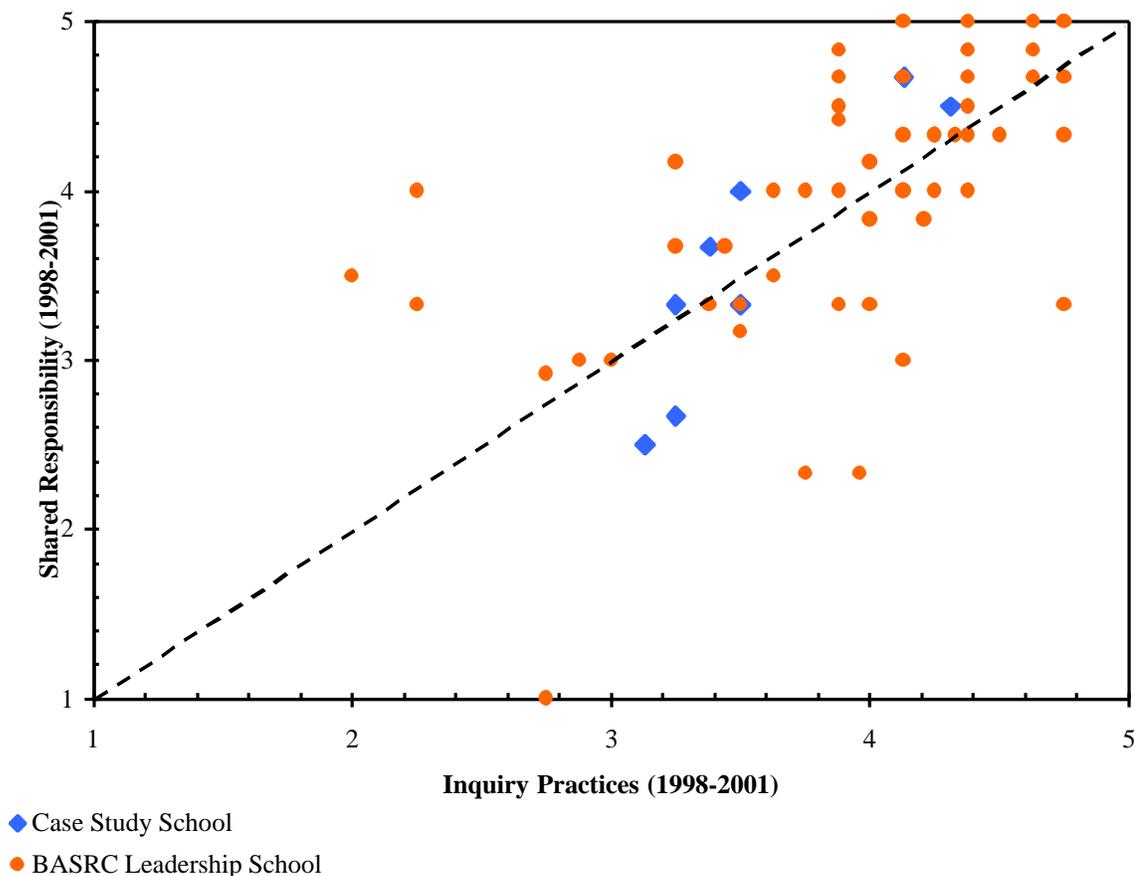
[1] Data are from the 1998 and 2001 Principal Survey in 64 Leadership Schools. The correlation between the scales is .59.

[2] Case Study Schools are not identified here, since the scores are individual principal ratings of his/her school.

Although the survey scale used for these analyses does not directly measure shared leadership roles in a school, it does capture BASRC's vision of building shared responsibility for evaluating and improving student outcomes into the work of professional educators. Schools' ratings on these scales indicate that teachers define challenges for improvement as a collective matter and suggest that leadership in schools advanced in inquiry relies on more than a charismatic principal.

Qualitative data from the special leadership study both interpret the strong relationship between inquiry and leadership conditions documented by survey data and provide evidence that the nature of effective leadership differs at stages of inquiry-based reform.

A role-bound principal role is important at the initial stages of reform
While collective responsibility and problem solving develop as inquiry practices deepen, we found that across the sample of sixteen BASRC schools included in the special leadership study, a strong, change-oriented principal was key to initiating reform. Formal leadership, vested in the role of the principal initially put reform on the school's agenda so it could not be ignored. Formal leadership at the initial stage provided a catalyst for the work, and served notice that the reform effort would not quickly pass. For example, one principal from the sample noted, "There's no substitute for the principal of a school showing that this is what matters… I think in the absence of that, people just kind of tend to brush it off as one more thing on their too-full plate." Principals also cited their authority to hire and fire staff to protect the vision for inquiry-based reform. This was necessary so that an "anti-reform" group did not become a barrier. A principal said of his initial steps for building the capacity for inquiry at his school:

> We have had some teachers join our staff who didn't share our vision
> after the fact. And I'm telling you the staffing is what makes or breaks
> anything. So we had some rigmarole around personnel and I have
> dismissed [teachers], or people would say coerced…talked into leaving.
> Other people were asked to leave.

Teachers and principals also cited the principal's role as buffer between district and school – protecting the work initiated at the school site – particularly in cases where the work conflicts with other priorities.

A Leadership Team centered on inquiry provides important structure for building the capacity for shared leadership
Key to teachers and administrators developing shared leadership is the organization of broad-based structures that are linked to an inquiring school reform culture. Virtually all BASRC Schools had leadership teams that included administrators, teachers, and in some cases at the secondary level, students. We observed an evolution of leadership teams' work among the sample of sixteen. Early on in reform efforts, teams typically discussed issues unrelated to teaching and learning, like the distribution of textbooks or they functioned as sounding boards for the principal. For example, as more teachers took on leadership roles at her school, a principal from the sample noted the changing role of her school's BASRC leadership team, "The leadership team has changed now to be instead of a problem-solving team, it's more of a team that sorts issues and….helps expedite what's the best way to deal with an issue." Among schools within the sample of sixteen, one leadership team eventually became a group primarily concerned with framing problems, and delegating problem solving to other groups within the school. In another school, department heads led the way in curriculum, working to change their own practices as a group and articulating school-wide goals with the rest of their staff.

Principal leadership in inquiring schools requires "letting go" of some traditional responsibilities

For teachers to move beyond typical advisory roles, this change required that the principal relinquish some degree of hierarchical control. For advanced inquiry Leadership Schools that developed shared leadership capacity, principals became one important member of a "community of leaders" as Barth (1990) suggests. Principals successful in broadening leadership were not those who exercised authority by telling others what to do. Rather, these principals were coaches – engaged in asking questions, exploring data, and reflecting with faculty and the broader community in questions that can move the school forward. Principals had to be willing to let go of leadership functions traditionally associated with the role; principal leadership can and should evolve over time. The nature of a principal's leadership can be understood as one that is situational, context-dependent. Among those advanced-range schools, the school community did not, in all likelihood, tolerate authoritarian, hierarchical principal leadership. One principal, who joined a reforming high school already advanced in its work, put it this way:

> The planning team here is a strong leadership group compared to what I was used to in other schools. I mean, I'm used to having strong leaders, but usually it's not a cadre, it's not a large group. It may be isolated individuals working within their own area, but I think this is school-wide. [That affects the principal's leadership role in that] you have to give up ego and power and any illusion that you can say anything about anything. And that's okay.

Yet these changed leadership roles do not lead to the conclusion that the principal is doomed to extinction at any point in the near future, nor do they lessen the importance of strong principal leadership. On the contrary, many of the traditional functions are still part of what the principal must accomplish, even in a system where leadership is shared more broadly. Within the sample of sixteen Leadership schools, principals continued to play prominent and essential roles as catalysts for change, protectors of vision, and leaders of inquiry.

Broadened leadership has led to structural changes in the principal's role in some Leadership Schools

A number of new leadership structures developed or were reinforced through BASRC work. Examples included organizational schemes featuring: a rotating lead teacher instead of a principal, two co-principals, and principal/Reform Coordinator partnerships. Such an arrangement built capacity within the faculty, and worked to sustain reform. A teacher who formerly served in the role of lead teacher spoke about the perceived merits of this leadership structure at the school:

> Usually (the lead) teachers come up through the leadership organization in the school. People have already recognized that person as a leader and as a person who knows the direction of the school, has some wisdom, and we have confidence in. And, beyond that, is a leader in the school. Almost always that person has been part of the leadership team for three years or more, and so has taken part in professional development, and we've already

> called on their expertise. So I think they go in first as being valued from the staff as a leader.

Sharing service in a formal role enabled multiple teachers on the faculty to develop a system view of the school, including the interface of the school's change efforts with the district, and sustaining the school's valued, shared, ongoing work of reform.

Students' experiences of their school environment mirror the professional culture

BASRC expected that students also would experience changed school community as a result of inquiry-driven reform. We surveyed 5th, 8th, and 11th graders in our nine case study schools in 2001 to assess how they experienced their school and classroom environments and what they thought about their ability to learn what was taught in their classes. Figure 5.8 shows how students rated each case study school on:

- Respectful relations between teachers and students;
- Students' active role as learner in the classroom; and
- Academic self-efficacy.

These graphs summarize strong statistical relationships between educators' experiences working with colleagues and students' experiences working with teachers in the school.

Figure 5.5 Students' Experiences of their School Mirror Teachers' Ratings of the School's Professional Culture[1]
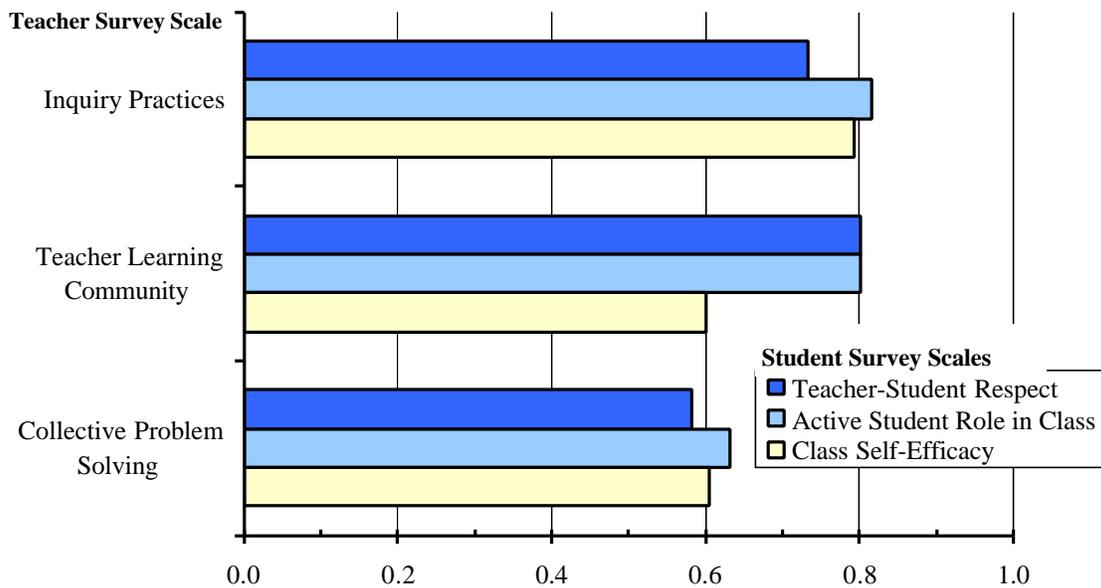
Correlation Between Student and Teacher Survey Scores

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1 Data are from the 2001 Teacher Survey and Student Survey in the nine core case study schools. Students included in the survey were 5th graders in elementary schools, 8th graders in middle schools, and 11th graders in high schools. Survey items included in each measure are shown in Appendix C.

Correlations of teachers' and students' ratings of their schools across the nine schools surveyed range from .72 for students' academic efficacy to .92 for students' active classroom role. In schools with relatively strong inquiry practices and Collaborative professional cultures, students are much more likely to report respectful relationships with adults, engaging classrooms, and confidence in their abilities as students.

This convergence of independent ratings of their school's culture by teachers and students provides compelling evidence that BASRC's vision of professional practices pays off in terms of some important student outcomes. The following vignette of inquiry-based reform in School H illustrates the ways in which school inquiry practices operate to improve students' learning opportunities. Results of the school's focused effort to support its struggling students are stunning. The enhanced equity in School H's students' school experiences and academic outcomes demonstrates the power of inquiry-based reform to counter seemingly intransigent, well-documented forces toward inequality in comprehensive high schools. Longitudinal data for students who entered the school as 9th graders in 1998 document the school's success in meeting the needs of its most academically-challenged students.

Contexts Impact School Progress on Inquiry-Based Reform

Context conditions at the school, district, and state policy levels influence the extent and course of schools' progress on inquiry-based reform. Through its case studies, surveys, and analysis of trends in the context of Bay Area schools, the evaluation developed evidence concerning the most prominent kinds of context conditions – student demographics, school turnover of professional and administrative staff, district administrative culture and support of inquiry-based school reform, and state policy conditions.

Turnover of school principals and staff undermine progress on inquiry

Churn in the professional staff of a school and turnover of principals was considerable across BASRC Leadership Schools, as is typical in urban school systems. Over the five years of BASRC's Phase One, annual rates of teacher turnover averaged 17 percent (based on data for 57 schools responding to the 2001 ROP survey). The annual rate of principal turnover across BASRC schools averaged just under 20 percent.

These statistics mask considerable variation among schools in transience of staff and principals over the course of BASRC Phase One. Table 5.5 shows the distribution of schools by turnover impact. Note that over 25 percent of BASRC Leadership Schools had two or three different principals over the period from 1996-2001.

To estimate effects of teacher and principal turnover on schools' progress on inquiry, we merged turnover data from the ROP survey with longitudinal principal survey data on inquiry practices in the school. For the 38 schools in this analysis, we found statistically significant negative effects of principal and teacher turnover in inquiry progress. The effects of teacher turnover, though not principal turnover, can be accounted for by school poverty level: since teacher turnover is higher in schools with high proportions of poor children, and these schools make somewhat less progress on inquiry practices measured in the survey, it is impossible to statistically separate effects of teacher turnover and school demographics.

Inquiry Practices for Closing the Achievement Gap between Under-Achieving and Not Under-Achieving Students: A Look at Case Study School H

School H has a ten-year history of inquiry-based school reform through Proposition 1274 and the Coalition of Essential Schools. School H has refined how they target support to students to close the achievement gap. School H began their reform by raising classroom standards and clarifying course outcomes. With a vision tied to higher standards for all students' performance, it aligned departmental, course, and assignment standards with its vision. But initial data revealed that a significant number of students dropped out or left School H by their junior year. Teachers hypothesized that school structure hindered teachers' ability to identify and support those students who needed academic and personal support. In 1992, School H created 9th and 10th grade "families." Families comprised of four subject area teachers who shared the same 120 students. Family teachers were given collaboration time to maintain continuity across their classes and to tailor student support.

Yet, the data revealed that students with disciplinary records and low GPAs at the feeder middle school were still exiting School H by their junior year. In response, School H created "Academies," 9th and 10th grade families of 60 students identified as "at-risk." With school policies of placing only experienced teachers in Academies, requiring that parents meet several times a year with Academy teachers, and reduced class size, School H believed Academies offered the personal and academic support to prepare "at-risk" students for mainstream classes by their junior year.

At the same time, faculty debates arose about whether the Academy racially segregated and tracked students. Referring to these sometimes heated discussions, the principal of School H talked about the agreement the faculty finally came to, "[A student] at the third percentile on STAR 9 Reading can't be thrown into a college prep science class in ninth grade and [have us] say, 'Hope you make it.' … I don't think anybody here wants to segregate anybody, but the reality is if we're going to help provide the safety net for students to get back into the college track, we're going to have to support them for a while until they're equipped for that."

Improved conditions of learning for students at School H are evidenced by changes in students' survey reports on school and classroom conditions over a three-year period. In particular, differences in experiences between the highest- and lowest-achieving students in the school have narrowed. Figure 5.6 shows School H's highest- and lowest-achieving students' perceptions of their school and classroom environment in 1999 and 2001(these students are in the top third and bottom third of the GPA distribution in grade 9 in 1999 and grade 11 in 2001). The data show significant improvement in the conditions for School H's lowest-achieving students consistent with goals of its inquiry-based reform strategy.

Figure 5.6 Comparing Low-Achieving and High-Achieving Student Perceptions of School and Class Environment From the 9th Grade to the 11th Grade [1]

- Lower Achieving Students
- Higher Achieving Students
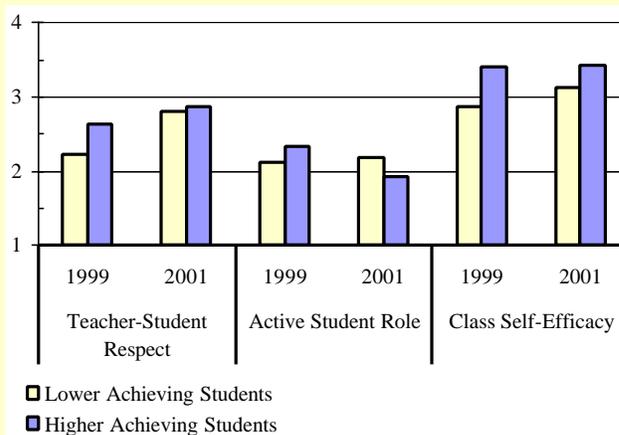
School H continued to refine its work. In 1999, teachers began focusing on reading comprehension. SAT-9, GPA, and disciplinary data revealed that some students fared poorly on SAT-9 Reading and GPA, but were rarely in disciplinary trouble. While these students would not gain entrance into the Academy, teachers believed that they still needed extra support. School H organized a Reading Family for 9th and 10th graders scoring below the 40th percentile on SAT-9 Reading. Reduced achievement gaps on SAT-9 among lowest and highest achieving quartiles show trends in academic outcomes sought by School H's reform work – declining inequality in students' academic experiences.

Figure 5.7 Comparing Low-Achieving and High-Achieving Student Performance on Reading SAT-9 from the 9th Grade to the 11th Grade

- Mean of Bottom Quartile in Grades 9, 10, 11
- Mean of 2nd and 3rd Quartile in Grades 9, 10, 11
- Mean of Highest Quartile in Grades 9, 10, 11
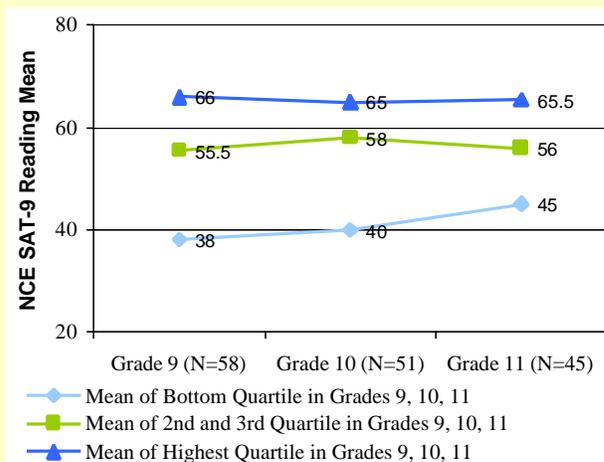
In 2000, School H was awarded the Governor's Performance Award in part for closing the achievement gap for their under-performing students.

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1 Students in the higher-achieving group (N=21) were in the top third of the GPA distribution for the school's 9th grade class in 1998; students in the lower-achieving group (N=22) were in the bottom third of the GPA distribution. These students were surveyed in 1999 and again in 2001.

Principal turnover, however, is uncorrelated with school poverty and shows a significant negative effect on Inquiry Practices in 2001, after controls for baseline scores.

Table 5.5 Rates of Principal and Teacher Turnover in BASRC Leadership Schools 1996-2001

Principal Turnover

Number of New Principals in 5 Years	Schools (N=57)
0	23 (40%)
1	19 (33%)
2	11 (19%)
3 or more	4 (7%)

Teacher Turnover

Average Annual Percent of New Teachers	Schools (N=54)
0 – 10%	7 (13%)
10 – 20%	31 (54%)
20 – 30%	13 (24%)
30 – 40%	3 (6%)

District context matters for school reform progress

In large part because of the parameters set out by the founding Annenberg grant, districts were not a major actor in BASRC's school reform strategy. However it quickly became clear that district context mattered considerably, for better or worse, in how schools were able to make progress implementing BASRC inquiry practices – and that BASRC could not buffer Leadership Schools from district context conditions.

Surveys of teachers and principals and field-based interviews provide consistent evidence that the extent and kind of district support of schools' inquiry practices affect their reform capacity. Evaluation data show, further, that districts differ greatly in their readiness and capacity to support schools' inquiry-based reform work. According to teacher and principal ratings of their district on inquiry-based, whole-school reform in 1998 and 2001, some districts responded to BASRC schools' needs for supports, while others created further barriers to reform. Correlations between change in ratings of district support and change in ratings of school inquiry practices are .41 for the teacher survey data and .34 for principal data.

School ratings of positive and negative district policies on the 2001 ROP survey highlight both the domains of district action that matter most for schools and differences related to BASRC schools' grade level and poverty. By far the most important positive district condition cited by reforming schools was its teacher professional development (37 percent), and high-poverty BASRC schools cited this significantly more frequently than high-wealth BASRC schools (56 percent). At the same time, professional development was at the top of

schools' lists of negative district conditions (11 percent) and cited by 25 percent of the high-poverty schools as a negative district policy issue. From schools' vantage point, their district's professional development policies and practices are most significant for their success, and this effect is especially powerful for high-poverty schools.

The kinds of district professional development support that schools found useful for their reform work included teacher involvement in curriculum development and resources for the school's on-site professional development. In the ROP survey, schools cited as positive district resources: funding for literacy and best practices coaches, alignment of textbooks and assessments linked to their focused effort, and district standards. BASRC Leadership Schools also valued local flexibility, such as the ability to substitute school-developed standards for district ones or skipping district professional development days in favor of on-site work more closely aligned with their reform effort.

BASRC schools' comments about district conditions relevant to their reform work, both in the 2001 ROP Survey and in field-based interviews over the course of Phase One, highlight both what schools value and tensions between school and district control over instructional reform.

Districts' ability to balance coherence and alignment with local flexibility is critical to reform

According to BASRC schools' reports, districts that proactively supported their inquiry work developed and maintained high standards and focused on teaching and learning. These conditions appeared to enhance the culture and reform competencies of Leadership Schools if balanced by school flexibility to implement standards through inquiry.

Yet some districts that granted schools flexibility in scheduling or hiring worried about losing the coherence of the district instructional program if schools gained too much autonomy in terms of curriculum and teaching. One district administrator commented on the difficulty in balancing coherence with local flexibility:

> How do you have a focus if you don't have common elements? We had three different math books in our district. We had year after year of excuses. The term I use is "flexibility" versus "variability." Schools need to have flexibility, but they can't have a huge range of variability in what assessments are used. Otherwise, you're a bunch of city-states.

BASRC school faculty also worried about this tension between school and district instructional control. Faculty from one BASRC Leadership School said in the 2001 ROP survey, "It's a free culture in our district. Everyone is doing whatever he or she wants. There are no standards on what students need to know."

Through their involvement with BASRC, many Leadership Schools pulled "ahead" of their districts in their knowledge about reform strategies. Teachers at one school said, "A big problem we face is that we're always a year ahead of the district." When the district finally "catches up," BASRC schools contend their district either duplicated the schools' efforts or made significant changes such that the district adoption of the program was unlike the school's original program.

Districts' ability and willingness to provide data and analytical assistance were a critical resource for Leadership Schools

BASRC school staffs initially had little experience or expertise with inquiry and many turned to their districts for assistance. Yet most schools struggled to get the data they needed from their district office. Sometimes this was due to a "bottleneck" of data requests at the district level. One Reform Coordinator explained, "All requests (for data) go to [one person] and then we get hardcopies… And that's a big bottleneck since it's just one person doing all the data for the entire district." Further, the data districts provide schools are often provided in "user-unfriendly" formats. A Reform Coordinator at one BASRC School stated, "We receive a tremendous amount of data from the district. We study and analyze it, but it is difficult due to timing and format." District administrators contended that the lack of adequate software to manage and provide student data in a timely manner impinged on their ability to support school-level inquiry. Some district administrators and Reform Coordinators despaired finding the appropriate software and are currently collaborating to create their own database systems through Microsoft Excel and Access.

Several schools were further stymied by changes in district assessments. Teachers in one school explained, "Last year, part of our process was based on an assessment the district was going to need at the end of the year, and then they decided not to give it… All of the work we did last year was thrown out because they stopped doing the process." In the 2001 ROP survey, respondents additionally commented about how some district assessments did not measure what the district set out for it to capture. One respondent described her district's assessment used to measure reading comprehension as "more of a writing assessment than a comprehension assessment." Yet, this school was compelled to continue with the district assessment rather than developing their own, more appropriate, assessment.

High poverty districts provide less direct support for school inquiry than their wealthier counterparts

CRC's survey data highlight important issues of equity and stark differences in capacity among Bay Area school districts. By district administrators' own reports on their practice and policies, schools across the region receive widely different levels of support from their district offices. Further, these differences are strongly related to district wealth, with high-poverty districts providing significantly less support that teachers and schools need for their reform work and leadership.

These data indicate that low-wealth districts simply are not able to engage BASRC's reform agenda in the same ways that higher-wealth districts can. Teachers and administrators in high poverty districts cited their district's stringent regulation of grant funds, lack of timely response to requests for professional development, construction delays, and inability to provide basic necessities like textbooks or desks for impeding their inquiry work. An administrator from one BASRC Leadership School in a high poverty district said, "The technology we ordered months ago sits in the warehouse because no one is scheduled to load it and deliver it (something we are not allowed to do). We pay the district to administer the grant, but they are slow in getting our requests and seem to work against us." The data suggest that district support is vital for school reform progress, a serious source of inequity in Bay Area schools' performance, and an important target for capacity building in the region.

Figure 5.8 Poor Districts Are Weakest in Practices that Support Teacher Professionalism and School Reform

Correlation Between Measures

Instructional Support

Standards Emphasis

Inquiry Support

Leadership Building

Reform Coordination

Organizational Support

Resource Flexibility

Reform Orientation

-0.6 -0.5 -0.4 -0.3 -0.2 -0.1 0.0 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 0.5 0.6

■ Teacher rating of district professionalism (N=19)
□ Principal rating of district support (N=33)
□ District poverty: percent free meals eligible students (N=57)

[1] Correlations are based on data from the 2000 District Administrator Survey merged with 1998 Teacher Survey data, 1998 Principal Survey data, and California record data.

School Board support for school inquiry shapes district support to schools
Further analysis of district context conditions reveals that the strongest predictor of district support of school reform is its Board of Education support for the district's reform agenda, controlling for poverty level. Across the 57 Bay Area districts included in this analysis, neither size nor district-union relations predicted district action when Board of Education support was taken into account. Local politics find their way into district policy through the influence of elected school boards and can impinge on district administrators' authority to support or lead school reform. Controversial issues – such as redistricting and de-tracking – can engage the interest of entire communities, who voice their concerns through school boards. A superintendent commented that the school board needs to have commitment to school reform and "change needs to come from the board." Another superintendent commented on the limits of the district office to influence its board, "As far as who's going to influence our board, it's our own community, schools, teachers, staff. They (the board) need to hear from the school that this has been supportive and works for them." District administrators also consider sustainability of school reform to be linked to school boards and the community. One commented, "What has to happen for sustainability is that the culture of

the board and parents has to change." In short, district-school partnerships need to engage the parent community in supporting and sustaining school reform in the district.

District ineptitude derails reform
The experiences of School A, a poor school in one of the poorest districts in the state, show how consistent ineptitude and trouble at the district level derails reform at the school level. Defunded by BASRC in the fall of 2000, the school dealt with a plethora of district challenges. The district-mandated test was plagued by errors including wrong answers, incorrect phrasing, and misspellings. In the face of a teacher shortage, the district was reluctant to remove teachers at the school who were cited as verbally and physically abusive to students. The district hired two people to serve as "fire-watchers" since School A was not equipped with fire alarms until the second half of the 1999-2000 school year. The district reneged on its promise to use early release days for the school's inquiry work and mandated that the time be used instead for district workshops unrelated to their focused effort. The district frequently pulled their principals off-site to attend meetings about district legal matters, and the school board diverted funds allocated for textbooks and field trips to cover legal costs incurred by the superintendent. Teachers commented that continuing with a focused effort and developing an inquiry-based reform culture under these conditions was extremely difficult, to put it mildly. One teacher said, "BASRC wanted us to do a Cycle of Inquiry in each grade level by September. How could we do that when the district had not even hired [the teachers] to do the work?"

State policies both undermine and support school reform
BASRC's 2001 ROP Survey asked schools to evaluate effects, both positive and negative, of recent California policies. Results are summarized in Table 5.6. Most notable, is that SAT-9 testing leads the list of both positive and negative influences.

Table 5.6 How Schools Rate State Policy Effects on their Reform Efforts[12]

	Percent of Schools Rating this as…		
State Policies	Positive only	Negative only-	Positive and Negative
Class Size Reduction	26%	2%	2%
SAT-9 (STAR & API)	19	26	12
Money / Funding / Grants	19	5	2
State standards (or Standards Movement)	19	5	5
II/USP Program	7	--	2
Promotion/Retention	5	4	2
BTSA, PAR	4	--	--
High School Exit Exam	2	2	2
Calendar Changes (Loss of Staff Dev. days…)	--	35	--

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[12] These data summarize responses to two open-ended survey questions: one asked "Which state policies have had a positive impact on your school's reform work?" and the other asked which policies have had a negative impact. Some respondents listed a particular policy/program as <u>both</u> positive and negative (shown in the third column).

Nearly 19 percent of schools rated SAT-9 (STAR and API) as positive; 26 percent rated it as negative; and another 11 percent rated it as both positive and negative. Also among the state policies rated as having positive effects on school reform progress were class size reductions (26 percent, mostly elementary schools), money/funding/grants (19 percent), and state standards (19 percent). The state's II/USP program was rated positively by a few mid-high poverty high schools.

Shifting and inconsistent California policies aimed to improve instruction undermined BASRC schools' capacity to improve their work
While BASRC Leadership School people said they appreciated California's focus on school accountability, incoherence of state policies on instruction and teacher professional development undermined their progress improving student outcomes. In particular, with the state's reduction of days for professional development (SB 1193), BASRC Leadership School teachers said they lacked the support to meet California's accountability goals and to align accountability goals with other state policies like standards and student retention. A respondent from the 2001 ROP survey said, "Many of the state 'reforms' that are ill-conceived and not supported by research or best practice (e.g., retention and the math standards) have hindered our reform efforts. Even the few reforms with redeeming qualities have become distractive and have siphoned off valuable resources – which are time and money."

Leadership School teachers appreciated the visibility and priority on data created by state accountability, but these requirements undermined the development of local assessments
With greater visibility of an individual school's progress, Leadership School teachers said California's focus on data and accountability helped schools to, "see the results of our hard work," and that the publication of scores "forces the community to examine the work we are doing here." Leadership Schools' ratings of the state SAT-9 also depended on how the district mediated between state and schools. While at some schools, the district discontinued the administration of district assessments once the SAT-9 came to the fore, others continued administering assessments that schools believed were more informative for their work. In addition, some ROP survey respondents claimed that the state's focus on school accountability compelled their districts to reassess their curriculum alignment from K-12, which demonstrates the promise of BASRC's Phase Two strategy and its emphasis on Collaborative structures across grade levels within districts.

But overall, teachers and administrators from BASRC Leadership Schools said that state demands decreased the level of attention they would like to have paid to their focused efforts. The yearly pressure to show results in the short run compelled them to "teach to the test." As one respondent commented, "the emphasis on SAT-9 has made it more difficult to focus on long range programs that really make a difference for student learning." ROP respondents said that the SAT-9 took time away from the administration of local assessments that provide diagnostic data necessary for improvement. Another respondent to the 2001 ROP survey said, "The focus on summative assessments, like this high stakes exam, takes away from the importance of daily formative assessment work. It makes it hard to focus on the redesign of the school because of the pressure to get students through the test."

Some BASRC Leadership Schools made a leap with II/USP
BASRC aimed to support school inquiry by addressing gaps in conditions for change existing in the state system at any one point in time. Rather than discount high stakes testing for its inadequacies, BASRC shaped their work to context and took the stance that the SAT-9, with its focus on data and accountability, was an assessment that BASRC Leadership Schools could not ignore. This prevented BASRC Leadership Schools from divorcing their school inquiry from state demands. But for some Leadership Schools that participated in II/USP, competing pressures as an II/USP School and a BASRC School made it difficult to focus on SAT-9 and a focused effort simultaneously. For example, at Case Study School A, the principal decided to abandon the school's focused effort on "improving critical thinking skills" and adopt reading comprehension instead. Changing focused efforts resulted more from the pressure they felt as an II/USP School than as a result of systematic and continuous examination of student achievement data.

But other BASRC Schools made dramatic leaps through their II/USP participation. The principal at Case Study School B attributed the significant changes to their work to the II/USP external evaluator, who enabled the school capacity to manage state requirements. She said:

> Well, I think the greatest way that II/USP helped us is our external evaluator – who's still with us. Because our other reforms, we didn't have a person, an expert, a resource, a person to make us look at ourselves so we couldn't delude ourselves. Because what the evaluator was saying is that there wasn't a continuum of systemic . . . a continuation of Best Practices, it was just a patchwork quilt.

During its first four years of BASRC, this Leadership School's reform philosophy ran counter to BASRC's view of the inquiry process. Rather than a whole-school focused effort and a school-wide Cycle of Inquiry, School B preferred to bring in as many initiatives as they could and see what might work – what they called their "prune and weed" approach. In their last year of BASRC and their first year as an II/USP school, School B finally selected a focused effort on reading comprehension, aligned classroom- and grade-level cycles of inquiry to their whole-school Cycle of Inquiry, and hired both a literacy coordinator and a Reform Coordinator. The principal noted the striking similarities between BASRC's vision for change and II/USP's: "Four years ago, it felt like there were these separate things we did for different people, all these different external pressures. But now something has changed because I guess all the external people have finally gotten on the same page."

How Can Schools Sustain Inquiry-Based Reform?

Reforming schools faced the challenge of sustaining roles and structures that support inquiry after BASRC Phase One ended. Schools needed to find ways to embed their reform work, and especially their inquiry process, into the culture of the school. An elementary school principal explained, "The key word is 'embedded.' It's how we will do business. It's not a matter of it being done to us. It's who we are and what we do." When inquiry-based reform became the school norm for making decisions and reflecting on practice, teachers found they could not return to their previous forms of practice. They had learned a better way to engage

in their profession. An elementary Reform Coordinator said of one faculty meeting at his school, "We asked, 'How did [the inquiry work] affect you?' Without exception, even cranky people said there were things they would never go back and do. They were permanently changed in certain areas of their person."

Yet, few BASRC Leadership Schools had reached a sustainable level of inquiry practice when their Phase One funding ended. To reach such a point, they would need to continue building on their current work. Table 5.7 documents with ROP survey data the importance that BASRC Leadership Schools assign to three facets of their current BASRC work as conditions for sustaining inquiry-based reform in their school: an individual to coordinate the reform work, teacher release time, and coaching.

Table 5.7 How Leadership Schools Rate Key BASRC Resources for School Reform and their Likelihood of being Sustained in the School

BASRC Roles and Resource for School Reform	Importance Rating	Likelihood of Sustaining		Funding Source Most Often Mentioned[1]
	Very Important	Unlikely	Very Likely	
Reform Coordinator	78%	35%	40%	Grants BASRC carry-over funds
Substitutes for Teacher Release Time	82	16	49	SIP (School Improvement Plan) BASRC carry-over funds
Stipends for Teacher Release Time	78	17	37	SIP Grants
Literacy Coordinator or Teacher Coach	84	12	63	District Funding SIP
Support Provider or Consultant	53	21	27	SIP II/USP funding

[1] The two or three most frequently mentioned funding sources are listed.

Schools need a leader to coordinate and advance reform work

While 78 percent of BASRC Leadership Schools rated the Reform Coordinator role as very important for sustaining their inquiry-based reform work, 35 percent reported that it is unlikely that they can sustain this position. Given that the Reform Coordinator position would likely disappear with the loss of BASRC funds, many Leadership Schools worked hard to broaden the leadership base driving their cycles of inquiry as a way to help sustain the work and share the responsibilities that the Reform Coordinator had assumed. As one high school Reform Coordinator explained, "I think it's incumbent upon me to make sure that some of the things that I do now as a person get institutionalized more. We're not at the point yet where the system owns it without being driven by someone who has time to drive it." Thus, the Reform Coordinator recognized that, despite his school making great gains in their

inquiry process, it still was not engrained in the culture of the school; the cycles of inquiry still needed someone to channel the work and help build a system that could eventually assume responsibility for their cycles of inquiry.

To help distribute the work of reform in the school and therefore ensure sustainability of their work, many Leadership Schools began a tradition of "reform boot camp." For example, School J consistently experienced 25 to 30 percent teacher turnover each year, so each summer newly hired teachers participated in the boot camp to learn about School J's current reform work and the school's expectation of them as new teachers. School J's Reform Coordinator made these expectations clear at the beginning of the boot-camp sessions. At one meeting he stated, "The 'how' of our theory of action is that we do business Collaboratively. We make the assumption that all of us together is stronger than us working apart…It is our hope by the end of the year that you put your thumbprint on the school." By modeling collaboration and explicitly teaching the systems and underlying beliefs behind the school's Cycle of Inquiry, the Reform Coordinator intended new faculty to quickly engage in the school's inquiry process and assume leadership roles.

Teachers need continued opportunities for collaboration and learning

BASRC Leadership Schools emphasized in the ROP survey the importance of preserving release time for teachers to continue their school's reform work. In the Reform Coordinator survey, these leaders also rated teacher release time the most important component of their school's reform work that needed to be sustained after the end of BASRC Phase One. One elementary school Reform Coordinator explained: "Change necessitates opportunities to ask questions, discuss, mull over ideas, opportunities to spark one another's imagination and experiences." Another hoped for "continued, increased if possible, funding for teachers to meet and discuss."

Some Leadership Schools used their BASRC funds to hire substitutes so that small groups of teachers could occasionally use half or full days of regular school time to engage in reflection and long-term planning as part of their cycles of inquiry. Other schools paid teachers stipends to work after school or during school vacations to continue moving their reform work forward.

Absent BASRC funds to support collaboration time, Phase One Leadership Schools will be pressed to find ways to continue their inquiry work. Some schools tried to redesign staff meetings to focus more on the deeper content of inquiry and less on trivial matters. One elementary school principal explained:

> We really have become very careful about how we use our time. We don't sit around as a staff and talk about what are the rules for the playground…or how to improve the parking lot issue. There's just no time for that. If you really want to get down to what matters to children and to improve achievement, then. . . you have to be very careful that you're really prioritizing what you do with your time. So staff meeting time is focused on BASRC communications, data-looking, all those things that are hovering over us all the time.

Yet, schools found that even with some fancy juggling of schedules, the combination of loss of grant funds and state reduction of professional development days made it difficult to continue their deep inquiry work once they ended their participation in BASRC.

When teacher collaboration time was not sufficient, some of the meaningful inquiry work ended. As one high school teacher explained, "In my teaching and learning group this year, they're very, very time-crunched. There's a lot of pressure on these people. And so I find that our group now is more, 'Tell me how to do it.' So we're still splintering this year. And I can understand why that's happening, but it's a different feeling." Rather than engaging in a process of reflection, teachers felt pressured and had insufficient time to engage in a full-scale inquiry process. They shifted back to seeking quick solutions rather than researching and developing processes themselves.

Technical support is needed to improve practice

The vast majority of Leadership Schools – 84 percent – reported in the 2001 ROP Survey that they continued to need coaching on content from more experienced teachers to improve practice. Some Leadership Schools hoped that once BASRC funds ended, their districts would intervene and provide financial and technical expertise. A principal at an elementary case study school explained, "When the BASRC process ends for our school, the focus on literacy and looking at data…won't change. Part of the reason for that is… the commitment of the school district. Some of the other pieces may not look like they did before, but to have the district support and adoption of parts of the reform is a way to sustain it."

Yet, few BASRC Phase One Leadership Schools found support for inquiry-based reform at the district, regional or state levels. Most schools reported that their district remained uninterested in their reform work, at best. As one elementary-school teacher wrote on her teacher survey questionnaire, "More work needs to be done on the district level in terms of long, sustained support. Reform doesn't happen in two to three years."

Leadership Schools' Progress on Inquiry-Based Reform: Overview

BASRC Leadership Schools began their inquiry-based reform work at widely different levels of capacity and readiness. These different starting places mattered for the process of development and the progress schools made over the course of BASRC Phase One, as did district context conditions and shifts in state policies. Almost all Leadership Schools made substantial progress in implementing a Cycle of Inquiry, though few achieved an "advanced" level of inquiry. Significant progress in carrying out a Cycle of Inquiry was associated with positive change in teachers' workplace community and broadened leadership for reform, thus providing support for BASRC's theory of school change.

Does BASRC's regional strategy help build schools' capacity to carry out inquiry-based reform? In the next chapter we take up issues and evidence regarding BASRC's regional strategy for scaling up its school reform vision.

Assessing BASRC's Strategy for Sustaining and Spreading Reform in the Region

O ne of BASRC's defining characteristics is its regional focus. BASRC's aim to leverage regional change has little precedent, and there is much to learn from the Collaborative's experience with this bold and ambitious objective. From its inception, BASRC assumed that region-wide appetite and support for inquiry-based school change would be critical to sustaining and spreading reform in the Bay Area. Rather than concentrating exclusively on school-level change, BASRC aimed to improve schools' relationships with agencies including other schools, districts, and support providers. BASRC assumed that region was a context that mattered because 1) schools share common problems across district, city, and county boundaries, and 2) schools are not likely to begin or sustain work in isolation and need the support of a reform community. BASRC's regional focus is a potentially powerful strategy for addressing equity and altering the consequences of unequal resources among districts.

While BASRC was committed to the premise that region was a context that mattered to this initiative, few models of regional change exist in education or other fields. BASRC's foremost challenge in generating regional participation was that the region had not been previously defined. There was no pre-existing regional community with which to work. The Bay Area is composed of six counties, over 100 school districts, numerous municipalities, and extraordinary cultural and socio-economic diversity. BASRC needed to provide individuals with a compelling reason to collaborate outside their local systems where they had not in the past. Yet from the beginning, regional goals of "breadth," or inclusion of a broader array of educators, competed with BASRC's focus on "depth," or attention and resources toward Leadership School reform objectives. Shifts in BASRC's emphasis away from regional change and collaboration reflect BASRC's decision, after three years, to invest more heavily in supporting Leadership Schools' reform work. In its last year, BASRC broadened its focus again by supporting Leadership Schools' engagement with their district and within-district schools. (See the fiscal trend for "Regional Spread" in Appendix F.) While Phase One does not provide an adequate opportunity to see a regional strategy in action, it does provide important perspective on the feasibility of a regional change strategy.

Assumptions Underlying BASRC's Work for Regional Change

BASRC's strategy for leveraging regional change reflected a contagion model of scaling up inquiry-based reform. BASRC assumed that the Collaborative vision and strategies for school change would spread exponentially within and across districts from a smaller source to a larger nucleus of reforming schools. BASRC invested heavily in Leadership Schools,

who were to serve as tangible examples of the Collaborative vision and catalysts for regional reform. These schools were funded after successfully completing a rigorous peer-reviewed application process to assess evidence of their reform work in progress and their capacity for meaningful change. By convening a regional Collaborative and by establishing standards for school progress on inquiry-based school change, BASRC expected that the Collaborative would increasingly serve as a source of knowledge, support, and mutual accountability for Leadership Schools.

The Collaborative also comprised a broader range of schools and educators that were intended to be the first level for contagion. These included Membership Schools and support providers, who completed a peer-reviewed portfolio process to ensure that they too shared the same vision and goals for school change. As such, the Collaborative was the medium for spreading knowledge and ideas that was designed to spark region-level outcomes beyond the Collaborative. BASRC hoped that through the powerful examples of highly visible Leadership Schools and the strength of the regional Collaborative, its reform vision would spread throughout the region.

BASRC saw its task for enacting regional change as not only empowering schools to learn and spread the BASRC vision, but also fostering the development of a more coherent and effective network of supports for school change. BASRC convened opportunities for support providers, funders – and later, districts – in the region to learn and eventually disseminate BASRC tools. For most of its first five years, BASRC focused primarily on support providers. Anticipating its next five years of work, BASRC began to focus on optimizing the capacity for support within the system, namely districts, in its last year.

Our analysis of BASRC's Phase One regional reform strategy describes educators' experiences with key facets of the Collaborative's regional change theory:

- Leading reform in the region
- Learning and accountability within the regional Collaborative
- Developing regional capacity to support and scale up reform

To address how BASRC affected regional change, we draw upon several kinds of data including: observations of regional-level meetings such as BASRC workdays, the annual Collaborative Assembly, the annual peer Review of Progress, and the Coaches' Network; interviews with administrators and teachers from BASRC case study schools, High School Study Schools, and Membership Schools; interviews with support providers who worked with Leadership Schools or participated in BASRC Collaborative meetings; and survey data from the 2001 ROP survey.

Leading Reform in the Region

BASRC's design for fostering regional change relied on the ability of its 87 Leadership Schools to serve as tangible examples of reform. Representing the diversity of the Bay Area, these 87 schools were expected to model the varying ways in which a school can enact the Collaborative's vision and, ultimately, to spread it across the region. Leadership Schools were expected to lead and motivate other schools by sharing both their successes and challenges rather than communicating only the "good news."

Membership Schools were to be the first step towards regional spread by learning from Leadership Schools without the benefit of financial assistance. Because of Membership Schools' prior reform history and desire to continue this kind of work, BASRC expected Membership Schools to be the next group of schools to engage in, and ultimately spread, the BASRC reform vision.

Leadership Schools lacked models of how to share their work
This vision of reform leadership by Leadership schools largely did not materialize in Phase One, in part because it was a new role. A majority of Leadership Schools involved with BASRC reported that they received greater attention from visiting educators throughout and beyond the region through their BASRC involvement. However, these visits were more likely to involve presentations of accomplishment rather than an exploration of challenging issues and in-depth analyses. Leadership Schools stated that they were unsure how to lead according to the BASRC vision. Expressing the viewpoint of many, one principal said about this undefined role:

> Even after four years here, I'm not quite sure what [being a Leadership School] means. I know there are some things, people come look at us, but I welcome that anyway. I'm sure throughout next year, and the next couple of years, we'll be called on to present some things, some ideas, and that's fine. Other than that, I'm not quite clear on what this leadership thing actually means.

Leadership Schools wanted models of what sharing their school's successes and challenges would look like. A teacher from a Leadership School commented, "[I would like] more of a sense of story about what [BASRC] would like to see happen. So that people can see a map or a sense of the story of where they're going. Because I've never felt that and it's very hard to get behind [leadership] without that." Without models, Leadership School people said they had difficulty understanding and compelling others to buy in to the purpose and benefit of BASRC's vision of leadership.

Some advanced Leadership Schools took on the challenge of sharing their work beyond the Collaborative
Leadership Schools that had successfully built a culture of inquiry at their site saw sharing what they learned with schools in their district as a necessary step towards sustainability. A Reform Coordinator from a school advanced in school inquiry said, "I would say we've gone as far as we can without [the district and the teachers union]. We've pushed the edge and fortunately been successful . . . And I would say we're marginally successful. We have a lot of holes still." To fill these gaps, this school opened its doors to every school in its district to attend their month-long summer institute about literacy, their focused effort. In its fourth year, the school began to teach its district the Cycle of Inquiry and worked with district staff to establish literacy coordinators at each school site.

Reform leadership responsibilities competed with on-site reform demands
Most Leadership Schools said that they needed to establish proficiency in school inquiry at their own site before sharing their work with other schools. As they struggled with their own school reform efforts, they saw sharing their work as a future responsibility rather than a

current obligation. Work that did not directly further on-site progress was a low priority for Leadership Schools, something to be undertaken once their own reform work was well-established throughout the school. A case study Leadership School teacher put it this way, "We can go to other schools and talk our talk, but we should be focusing on what's going on at our school. We don't even know what we're doing with standards, and half of our staff doesn't buy in. We have to focus on that. There's just not enough time to do everything." For reasons of commitment and capacity, then, most Leadership Schools did little to lead reform within or beyond the Collaborative. When they did share their work at the annual Collaborative Assembly, Leadership Schools tended to follow traditional norms of "show-and-tell" rather than to share the successes and challenges of their work with other schools and organizations.

Districts affect Leadership Schools' capacity to lead

The ways in which districts worked with BASRC Leadership Schools affected their capacity to share with other schools. Educators in some Leadership Schools said they received special treatment from their district such as collaboration time, funding, and assistance (particularly data assistance) that set them apart from other schools and created resentment among them. A Reform Coordinator from one case study school commented on how her school's relationship with the district affected their interactions with other schools.

> It's a district mentality that we're all crabs in a bucket, so whenever one tries to succeed, they pull the others down. We're slated as the 'poster-child school,' but not in a positive way. So a lot of schools get embittered because they get less attention, and it seems like they get less funding, and maybe their materials come later.

When districts provided a venue for schools to share and learn from each other, though, Leadership Schools said that schools within their district benefited from their BASRC involvement. For example, one district, in which half of its elementary schools were Membership Schools and the other half were funded Leadership Schools, actively worked for its Membership Schools to find other sources of funding. Once this was achieved, the district convened professional development opportunities among all its elementary schools within the district. A respondent in the 2001 ROP survey said of this district "[The district is] very equitable for us as a united district. We all get the benefit. The rewards are shared regardless of who got the [BASRC] grants or funds." Two other districts also convened learning opportunities among its Leadership Schools and Membership Schools.

Few Membership Schools took advantage of Collaborative opportunities

When Membership Schools participated actively in BASRC, faculty said they greatly benefited from BASRC tools and strategies. Citing his school's years of extensive involvement in BASRC regional activities, the principal at one Membership School described how his faculty initiated a literacy focused effort through their Cycle of Inquiry, optimized their district professional development, and hired a support provider with outside grant funds to further their work. This principal cited his school as evidence of the strength of the contagion model for regional change. He said, "BASRC's Membership School theory about contagion was the right one. Our school is a reflection of that. Reform can happen without the money that BASRC afforded Leadership Schools."

But the majority of Membership Schools did not participate in BASRC mainly because their leadership believed they had insufficient capacity and resources to benefit from BASRC involvement. The state reduction of professional development days limited the time that teachers had to leave their sites. Membership Schools also had difficulty shifting their district resources and other grant funds for off-site time to attend BASRC-convened events. While the desire to become a larger part of the Collaborative existed for some Membership Schools, this interest waned for most in the face of constraints on participation and the absence of incentives and pressuring tied to BASRC funding.

During the third year of the initiative, BASRC hired staff specifically focused on engaging Membership Schools. As a result, BASRC convened two events and provided some funds to help Membership Schools garner greater visibility, the Membership Faire and the Learning Series. A year later, activities designed specifically for Membership Schools were discontinued. BASRC shifted its resources to invest more heavily in supporting the depth of Leadership Schools' reform work. In the last two years of BASRC Phase One, only about ten Membership School participated in BASRC through its R&D initiatives.

Learning and Accountability within the Regional Collaborative

BASRC designed the Collaborative as a source of support and learning for reform; simultaneously, the Collaborative was designed as a body to establish and enforce standards for self-regulation and mutual accountability among its members. By convening Leadership Schools that represented diverse schools in terms of grade level, wealth, and race and ethnicity, the Collaborative provided a venue for demonstrating a school's progress, obtaining feedback, and learning from the experiences and challenges of others. The Review of Progress (ROP) was designed as a collective evaluation process to refresh and build schools' commitments and shared understanding of the Collaborative's vision of school culture change, as well as to hold schools accountable for making reasonable progress on reform. In this respect, BASRC intended to serve as the vehicle for regional learning and accountability among its constituencies as well as a venue for spreading this knowledge beyond Collaborative boundaries. BASRC intended that the Collaborative would function as a resource for learning and mutual accountability across diverse schools in the region.

Collaborative learning was mainly centered on school inquiry processes
Over the course of Phase One, educators from Leadership Schools developed the capacity to share with other Collaborative members their school's inquiry process. In particular, Leadership Schools shared their learning about the Cycle of Inquiry that allowed Collaborative members to explicitly address what were previously tacit components of reform, especially about how a school can link changes in their practice to their identified school-wide problem. At BASRC workdays, ROP reviews, and the Collaborative Assembly, Leadership School representatives often talked with one another about how they linked their A and B questions across grade levels and departments. They asked questions such as, "Students in the 10th grade continue to have trouble with non-fiction texts despite the introduction of more non-fiction texts in English class. What will you try next?" By speaking explicitly about their school-, grade-, and department-level practices, Collaborative members learned from their peers. They developed the know-how and confidence to refine

their – and others' – work on inquiry-based reform rather than continuing with an unsuccessful strategy or discarding a promising strategy completely.

However, Leadership Schools often lacked common ground for working together around substantive issues. BASRC's theory of school change called for Leadership Schools to determine a focused effort based on examination of their school student data, and this design strategy constrained regional collaboration. Most Leadership Schools preferred to work with schools that shared the same focused effort, and a few Collaborative members questioned whether community could be fostered among Leadership Schools with different content foci. A Reform Coordinator from a Leadership School that developed a network with schools within its district said, "Because of the focus on literacy, [our Leadership School] is creating community with the other schools in the district and with the support provider. That makes sense. I just don't see a connection with [the work of] other Leadership Schools." Educators in many Leadership Schools said that in the first years of BASRC, finding a Leadership School with a similar focused effort happened rarely, but they noted that this changed over time as more Leadership Schools shifted their focused effort to literacy. With this convergence in focussed efforts, dialogue among schools became more substantive.

BASRC struggled to accommodate its diverse school membership

Because BASRC comprised 233 schools representing the diversity of the Bay Area, it was well positioned to address inequities among schools and districts in the region, but it faced enormous challenges doing so. BASRC struggled to transform the conditions that handcuff reform efforts of individual schools into strengths when shared across schools. Particularly challenging were the differing skill levels for engaging in school inquiry and the fact that schools' reform capacity is strongly tied to varying social class, language, race, and ethnicity.

BASRC defined closing the achievement gap as, "All students are meeting higher standards. Race, class, language, culture, income, and gender are no longer good predictors of academic success or failure." Leadership Schools' varying contexts confounded the establishment of shared meaning among Collaborative members about equity at the regional level and, as a result, schools' inquiry practices rarely scaled up to address regional equity challenges.

Educators from Leadership Schools with predominantly white populations said they did not have a statistically significant number of minority students to examine achievement gaps. Faculty at one case study school, hesitant to address issues of inequity, said, "We don't have a great many number of our population like that. And so we mostly then look at *every* student." Schools with large proportions of minority students said that BASRC's focus on within-school achievement gaps did not help them tackle their equity issues. Because virtually all of their students were not achieving to school or district standards, these schools said BASRC's within-school focus did not apply to their work. A principal for a Leadership School with a high proportion of minority students said, "We need to keep moving the school in whatever direction we need to make our kids achieve at the same level as other kids in the state and in the country." BASRC later adopted this broader definition of closing the achievement gap across, as well as within, schools, but several Leadership Schools with large minority student populations opted not to apply for Phase Two funding.

State policy actions compromised some BASRC School commitment to the Collaborative

Shifts in California policy constrained the time and resources that Leadership Schools had to engage simultaneously in inquiry at their school sites and to attend BASRC regional meetings. Given the state's high stakes and short-term demands for improving their schools' test scores on the SAT-9, educators in some Leadership Schools worried that the costs of regional collaboration – both the financial expenses for hiring substitute teachers and the time spent off campus and out of the classroom – could not be justified when short-term test gains needed to be made. This sentiment was particularly common among Leadership Schools targeted by the state as "under-performing schools." Such Leadership Schools generally took regional collaboration off their agenda, and virtually all Leadership Schools said they had to balance the costs and benefits of regional collaboration given the state reduction of days for professional development during the last two years of the BASRC initiative. A principal from one Leadership School said, "When we do go over for meetings, the meetings should be really productive… It's been a little bit of a challenge to me to know where I really, really, really should go and where it would just be nice for me to go." With a rise in state demands and a decline in time and resources, Leadership Schools became increasingly selective of the BASRC work they undertook.

Most Leadership Schools were accountable to BASRC and not to one another

BASRC's theory of establishing a Collaborative that would enforce standards for mutual accountability and self-regulation depended on the growth of the Collaborative as a learning community. Yet, as discussed in Chapter 5, schools least advanced in inquiry-based reform regarded the ROP review process and the decisions that undergirded as being determined by the BASRC staff – not the Collaborative of schools. Many Leadership Schools' representatives commented that BASRC's refinement of tools and strategies required quick turnaround from them to incorporate these changes into required ROP documents, and they wanted more time and support to learn how to use BASRC's tools. Some schools ultimately became more concerned about satisfying expectations for BASRC requirements rather than using the tools and strategies to further their reform work and mutual accountability. Leadership Schools more advanced with their school-level inquiry had less trouble responding to changes in BASRC work, although some still chose to satisfy BASRC requirements. A principal from a Leadership School commented about how his school became less compliant in its stance as their capacity for school inquiry increased.

> The very beginning of BASRC, it felt like we were jumping through all kinds of hoops and hurdles to satisfy them rather than it being because we believed that it was good for us to do – for our own purposes and for our own school improvement. Now there's definitely a feeling that our school operates much better, there's higher staff morale, better decisions, much more effective communication because we've learned to use the tools and we've built leadership capacity so that our work is… So that more people are taking responsibility for our work.

Leadership Schools said that once they had developed a deeper culture of inquiry, they were better equipped to take advantage of BASRC's refinements and adopt a stance of mutual accountability to other Collaborative members.

Developing Regional Capacity to Support and Scale Up Reform

BASRC took as its task for enacting regional change not only empowering schools to learn and spread the BASRC vision, but also developing a more coherent and effective network of supports for school change. BASRC believed that identifying and engaging support providers, funders, – and later, districts – in common work had the potential to foster the region's capacity to support school reform. For much of its first five years, BASRC focused mainly on support providers. BASRC convened support providers to develop a whole school change ethic, identify indicators of coaching success, and create coaching strategies that could be shared regionally. In its last year, BASRC began to focus on developing regional capacity for support across a broader range of educators to include not only support providers, but district offices as well. Anticipating its next five years of work, BASRC began working with district administrators to better understand how they, along with support providers, could provide more distributed and more sustainable regional supports for school change across the system.

Learning communities convened by BASRC spread BASRC tools across the region

BASRC invented a number of strategies for building regional capacity to support school reform including the Support Provider Seminar Series, the Coaches Network, the Reform Coordinators' Network, and the Funders' Learning Community. BASRC convened these role-alike communities to teach them about BASRC strategies so that they could eventually spread BASRC tools across their own organizations' networks, and the region. BASRC'S work engaging support providers with its reform tools and principles provided the most striking example of regional spread. As support providers worked with schools that were not involved with BASRC, they were spreading their inquiry-based reform work beyond Collaborative boundaries, particularly with under-performing schools participating in California II/USP. Support providers commented that the Cycle of Inquiry, in particular, had been a powerful tool that helps II/USP schools link their student achievement goals to changes in teacher practice. One support provider now coaching II/USP schools spoke of how her BASRC involvement changed her thinking about school change and the way she works with schools, "I think BASRC influenced my work in that my attention is towards kids. I think that BASRC gave the tools for schools to think differently. [BASRC provided] many tools for supporting data, supporting inquiry, and having a problem statement and a focused effort."

Competition among support providers undermined trust and willingness to share

Competition for BASRC Schools and other clients in the region compromised support providers' sharing of their reform experiences and learning at regional coaches meetings.

Support providers are businesses, and their unique, high quality service is their major selling point. Thus, they were often protective of their expertise. One support provider stated,

> Networks are useful but they won't happen. Right now, if my organization loses one or two schools, we don't have enough for our salaries. So I think all support provider organizations are kind of in this precarious position about bringing in enough money to support their work. And so if I go into a support provider meeting and I say, 'Hey here's what's working well at this school and here's what isn't working well,' you can bet that some support provider will be on the phone to my school saying, 'Hey, I can fill this need.' That's the big reason why nobody's talking.

Support providers also commented that pressure to continue working with BASRC schools did not diminish after initiating relationships with them. A support provider commented, "In the very beginning, there was just grabs for schools, and you had to get in there and just be helpful right away to get that school for your organization so you could fund your job… The last two years, even after I had the schools and other support providers were on the fringe, man, I had to be there defending my job or I would lose it." Even after support providers had developed a long-standing relationship with a school, they still worried about losing their sites and were hesitant to share their experiences with other support providers in the region.

Different reform stances hampered network development

Differences among support providers' reform perspectives also frustrated development of the support provider network. Some support providers brought experience with whole-school reform while others were rooted in subject areas. In the context of BASRC's initial emphasis on whole-school reform, support providers observed that not all voices were heard at support provider meetings. One support provider observed from the network meetings,

> We began talking about this whole notion of whole-school change versus subject matter change or classroom change. [Some support providers at the network meetings] were very critical, even hostile, to people who represented [subject matter support providers who work] mostly with classroom teachers and not on some whole-school change issues. They were critical of that when what they should have been doing is say, 'How can we help [content support providers] see that their work is not going to be meaningful if it doesn't somehow connect to the larger school issues.'

Most support providers hired with BASRC funding focused their work on governance structures, standards, and data analysis around the Cycle of Inquiry. ROP survey data show the ratio of schools working with whole school support providers compared to content focused support providers is 2:1. Support providers whose work was content focused moved out of the periphery of BASRC's community.

BASRC Leadership Schools lacked information on regional supports for their school inquiry efforts

Most Leadership Schools learned about support providers, professional development opportunities, and district resources through word-of-mouth. School people said that without a regional clearinghouse of information on support organizations in the region, services offered, and quality, they relied on less systematic and comprehensive ways to access regional support for their school inquiry work. As one support provider commented, "My work is mostly just by people knowing me or knowing my work at other schools. But how does that all come about? I think schools should really have an option. If I'm not a good fit, that doesn't mean that somebody else isn't." Without a regional venue for more complete information, schools and support providers had a difficult time finding an appropriate partner to collaborate with to push forward on focused inquiry.

BASRC initially began to create a regional clearinghouse of support providers by requiring that support providers gain status as a Member Support Provider after successfully completing a portfolio documenting their work to date and how they, or their organization's, vision aligns with the BASRC vision. A Leadership School that support providers had previously worked with could also suggest their support provider for Member status. However, according to support providers, status as a Member Support Provider did not provide regional visibility. One support provider said of her expectations:

> I felt that having membership status would put a spotlight on us. I felt membership was very important, that it bestowed prestige on whoever was a member of BASRC. I felt it was money, but it was also the people who were involved, the attention the Annenberg grant was getting… I did hope that I would be introduced to schools, and even recommended. But I don't think I've ever been recommended.

Absent a BASRC clearinghouse of information on support provider organizations' work and track record, schools and support providers alike were frustrated by their efforts to find successful collaboration on inquiry-based reform, and many felt disadvantaged.

BASRC is fostering more distributed and sustainable regional supports for school change

In the last year of Phase One, BASRC began to focus more on how organizations within the regular school system could support school inquiry. BASRC convened the District School Learning Community (DSLC), to understand how districts across the region could learn from each other to support schools' inquiry. The result of this district collaboration has formed the basis of BASRC's Phase Two work. This group of districts identified three key facets of how districts in the Bay Area can support school inquiry: 1) capacity for school inquiry including collaboration time, high-quality professional development opportunities, and forums for school-to-school learning, 2) flexibility for school inquiry including increasing discretion on budgeting, staffing, curriculum, and scheduling, and 3) incentives for school inquiry including peer coaching and evaluation structures for teachers and administrators.

BASRC's strategy of shifting toward system supports for inquiry-based reform reflected its learning over Phase One regarding the strategic role districts play in constraining or supporting schools' reform progress. It also was responsive to increased competition among schools for support providers in the region. With California II/USP and private funding to

BayCES from the Gates Foundation, BASRC Schools became less able to rely on regional support providers to make advances on inquiry-based reform. BASRC's design for Phase Two also shifts more resources toward its own role in professional development and on-site support to schools, as described in the next chapter.

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Summary Conclusions and Lessons for the Field

The Bay Area School Reform Collaborative's Phase One concluded with important accomplishments and support for its theory of action. Most BASRC Leadership Schools made progress on inquiry-based reform, and those most advanced in using evidence about student outcomes to evaluate and change their practice showed the greatest SAT-9 gains. Overall, BASRC Leadership Schools made significantly greater improvements in their students' performance on SAT-9 basic skills tests than did schools in the evaluation's control group. Moreover, BASRC schools serving large populations of high-poverty students consistently showed greater gains than did similar schools in the region.

BASRC fell short on some of its Phase One goals. Leadership Schools did not do as well as other Bay Area schools in closing within-school achievement gaps.[13] BASRC's activities generally were rated favorably by Leadership Schools, but some schools lacked the capacity to take advantage of, or profit from, the Collaborative—most particularly, those high-poverty schools pressed on multiple fronts. And, while most Leadership Schools made progress on inquiry-based reform over the course of Phase One, only a minority achieved mature or advanced inquiry practices that involved the whole school and routinely addressed instructional practice.

In the final analysis, though, the lessons the BASRC initiative provides the field about school change, changing schools, and new institutional arrangements to support reform are perhaps more important than the achievement gains documented for BASRC Leadership Schools. BASRC's design for school reform drew upon research-based knowledge and experience with whole school, inquiry-based change processes. However, BASRC's regional strategy for scaling up education reform, and the intermediary organization created to foster it, were without precedent. In response to the Annenberg Challenge's conclusion that San Francisco and San Francisco Unified School District were too small to participate in the Challenge initiative[14], BASRC planners created a unique, regional locus for large-scale school reform.[15] BASRC was created as an intermediary organization to manage and support this regional change effort. It was not only a new addition to the regional landscape, but its mission as an intermediary had little organizational precedent. It was not simply to provide technical assistance organization (the central function of federally-supported regional laboratories, for example), nor was it defined around a particular pedagogical stance (as is the

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[13] High schools provide exception to this general finding. BASRC high schools did make significant progress in narrowing within-school achievement gaps between economically advantaged and disadvantaged students and between Hispanic and other students relative to both a matched sample and broader regional comparison schools.

[14] Other sites funded in the first round of the Annenberg Challenge included New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and Philadelphia.

[15] Michael Fullan (2000) identifies three kinds of large-scale reform: 1) district reform involving all schools; 2) school reform in which hundreds of schools implement particular models of change; and 3) state or national initiatives in which all or most all schools in a state are involved. BASRC represents a fourth kind of large-scale reform, regional reform based in a common vision of whole school change and in a theory of changing schools.

Coalition of Essential Schools), or a subject matter (as is the Bay Area Writing Project); neither was it primarily a regulatory organization (as are regional offices in New York and other states). Rather, BASRC identified multiple roles as an intermediary: reform champion, educator, political advocate, program developer, and management coach.[16] BASRC's operation and experience affords perspective on how this kind of intermediary organization functions to support whole school change and to foster regional reform. Evidence concerning BASRC's theory of changing schools also contributes important new knowledge about the promise, possibilities, and problems of leveraging and spreading inquiry-based school reform on a large scale.

It is a truism that implementation problems are never solved but merely transformed as a policy response to one problem creates new ones. For example, a successful professional development effort may meet teacher learning goals but simultaneously generate new and difficult resource demands for instructional supports, collaboration time, and the like. And so it is with the BASRC reform initiative. BASRC by design and action responded to known problems and promising strategies in education reform—such as the limits of narrow or superficial "special projects" and imported solutions, and the value of teacher inquiry and locally-developed reform examples. Many of these design responses were effective and a few fell short. All of them—successful and not so successful—generated new problems for policy and practice and provide valuable lessons for the field.

This concluding chapter reviews BASRC's Phase One experience and accomplishments in terms of lessons for the field. We examine the effectiveness of BASRC's assumptions and core tools for promoting and spreading inquiry-based, whole school reform and pose questions for further investigation. We look first at BASRC's theory of school change, then at the role of BASRC as an intermediary in changing schools, and finally at its ambition to create a regional reform community.

Lessons about Inquiry-Based Reform

BASRC Leadership Schools affirm the power of inquiry-based strategies for changing school workplace culture and provide strong support for the claim that teachers and administrators need evidence about school-level patterns of performance in order to consider such fundamental issues as curriculum choice, resource allocation, and strategies for change.[17] As BASRC's theory of school change asserts, teacher learning communities are both created by and essential to school inquiry. We saw that school-based teacher communities can be the site and source of inquiry into practice, sharing of knowledge, and collective responsibility for student achievement.[18] Further, Leadership Schools' maturity on inquiry practices predicts student gains on the SAT 9 (see Fig. 3.2).

Inquiry can change school culture
BASRC aimed to change school culture in order to change classroom practice and improve student learning. Survey and field-based evidence shows that as Leadership Schools gained

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[16] See McDonald, McLaughlin & Corcoran 2000.

[17] See, for example, Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 2001; Hargreaves and Fullan 1998; McDonald, Hatch, Kirby, Ames, Haynes and Joyner, 1999; McLaughlin and Talbert, 2001.

[18] This evidence supports and extends research reported by McDonald, et al., 1999; McLaughlin and Talbert, 1993, 2001; Newmann and Wehlage, 1995; Rosenholtz, 1989; Sergiovanni, 2001; Wagner 2000.

competence and confidence with the Cycle of Inquiry their professional culture changed. Where inquiry became an accepted dimension of teachers' professional community, new forms of leadership, accountability for all students, problem-solving skills and expectations about teachers' learning came about. Faculty inquiry into student performance and learning needs fostered coherence among a school's formerly fragmented reform efforts.

When inquiry became part of a school's culture, the audience, scope, and purpose of data collection and analysis changed. Teachers came to see evidence and inquiry as theirs, undertaken to inform their practice—rather than a once-a-year BASRC compliance activity. As inquiry practices became more deeply engrained in school culture, teacher communities generated more probing questions and deeper analysis of student outcomes and teaching practices. And in schools advanced on inquiry, this analysis took place at multiple levels—classroom, grade, department and school – engaging instructional issues for the whole school (rather than in pockets of the faculty).

Schools that incorporated inquiry into their culture revealed, further, the *political* value of teacher participation in inquiry. As the school community owned its data, evidence of student learning became the basis for open discussion and collective responsibility and diminished the "politics of data" that typically constrain discussion about classroom teaching and learning. In these schools, inquiry fostered teachers' focus on shared student outcome goals, appetite for information and knowledge resources, and pursuit of assistance in making instructional improvements. Inquiry likewise built school-level capability to reach out and exploit resources to support teachers' learning and change.

Challenges to implementing and sustaining inquiry-based reform

Leadership Schools teach about the challenges of changing school culture through inquiry practices. It is cliché to note that "change takes time." But change of the sort envisioned by BASRC's theory of school change implicates complex institutional issues, and poses difficult technical and social obstacles for a school community. [19] Though BASRC recognized the importance of time for change in its multi-year grant strategy, for many Leadership Schools, their three or four years' participation in the BASRC initiative was insufficient for teachers to master the technical skills required by a Cycle of Inquiry, or to adopt the norms and expectations essential to effective collection and use of data as evidence to improve practice. While most BASRC schools made progress from "Novice" to "Intermediate" level of inquiry practice, few reached an "Advanced" level (see Table 5.4). In general, those schools where inquiry was most developed at the end of Phase One were schools that came into the BASRC

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[19] Michael Fullan (2001) estimates that simple "project" implementation takes around three years, and that institutional change of the sort BASRC imagines in Leadership Schools takes from five to ten years of hard work. In their evaluation of Henry Levin's Accelerated Schools reform's impact on student test scores, MDRC researchers found that statistically significant gains did not appear until the fifth year among *high-implementation* sites (Bloom, Ham, Melton & O'Brien, 2001). Their data suggest that it takes this long for such a whole-school reform approach to find its way into stable improvements in curriculum and teaching; indeed a temporary decline in student achievement was observed in the third year when schools began to make changes in instruction that were not well worked out (p. 58). Such nonlinear trends in student outcomes were also apparent among BASRC Leadership Schools; however, since schools were funded in successive cohorts between 1996-1998 and because they differed in prior experience with inquiry-based reform, the evaluation could not link an overall trend in student outcomes across Phase One schools to their reform longevity. BASRC schools with no prior relevant reform experience had only 3-4 years of experience with inquiry-based reform at the end of Phase One, while some schools had 6 or more years of experience with this approach to whole school reform.

initiative with significant inquiry experience from their prior reform work. In fact they had significantly more time to develop the practices, norms and expertise assumed by BASRC's theory of school change. Schools without that history appeared to need both more time to establish inquiry norms and practices in the school community and more technical assistance in doing so. Phase One experience underscores the power of inquiry but also raises questions about the kind and level of technical support needed in novice schools to develop effective inquiry practices within three to five years.

School contexts mattered. The character of teacher community and school leadership affected inquiry practices: Weak teacher community and indifferent site leadership undermined inquiry efforts through disinterest and lack of support for the openness and reflection BASRC's conception of evidence-based decision-making presumed. Turnover in principals, teachers, and reform coordinators displaced inquiry expertise and reform leadership in many schools over the course of Phase One. It remains to be seen how inquiry practices will continue over time in schools where proactive principals have been replaced by individuals less invested in evidence-based decision-making or where key faculty leaders have retired or moved on. Such challenges to reform work varied by schools' demographic contexts. Poor urban schools confronted particularly high levels of teacher, administrator, and reform coordinator turnover in addition to all of the daily stresses that supplanted attention to inquiry.

System contexts also affected inquiry practices for better or worse. District support for inquiry was a key factor in schools' ability to make progress in generating and using data. Districts varied widely in their capacity or willingness to provide that support which included not only assistance with data collection and analysis, but also backing for school-level decision making about the professional development and instructional choices associated with an inquiry cycle. Shifts in state policy derailed inquiry in a number of low-performing schools as high stakes accountability and focus on the SAT9 moved other indicators off the table, especially the local assessments and diagnostic data that teachers trusted more as measures of student learning. While state policy shifts created an incentive for school reform, they also led some schools to search for quick fixes and to reject inquiry as too slow. Leadership Schools' inquiry experiences underscore the limits of focusing on school-level reform without strategic attention to the broader system context.

Inquiry-based reform requires dedicated resources. Teachers said that their schools' reform coordinators were key to building and sustaining the change process. Absent funding for a site-based reform facilitator, teachers doubted that their school's reform work could continue. These teacher judgments point to the need for ongoing resources to continue and deepen inquiry. While BASRC hoped that system resources to continue and deepen inquiry would be forthcoming from other sources once schools' Phase One funding ended, the schools increasingly rely on is has generally not been the case. While some districts have begun to fund inquiry-related positions such as literacy coaches or reform coordinators, others see such support as impossible to provide when district budgets already are cut to the bone.

Key to teachers' inquiry-based learning was access to appropriate knowledge resources—most often in the form of Support Providers connected with their focused effort. However, as teachers became more sophisticated consumers of technical assistance, demand for Support Providers relevant to schools' reform efforts soon exceeded supply. Phase One

experience suggests that despite significant investments by the State of California, Support Providers are a seriously undercapitalized reform resource.

Phase One shows that it is possible to change school culture in significant ways but that the new norms and practices may be fragile. It also points out that the problems of implementing and sustaining inquiry-based reform are not just technical ones, but also are social and cultural. Further, the shifts in school and district infrastructure needed to support and sustain these conditions of inquiry happened in only a few instances. Yet infrastructure is essential to sustaining inquiry practices in the face of the corrosive effects of personnel churn at both levels and uncoordinated or conflictual state policies. Leadership Schools' experiences highlight the importance of a reform initiative's simultaneous focus on school reform and larger system transformation.[20] Some BASRC districts were active supporters, partners and advocates for their schools' reform efforts, but most Leadership Schools suffered from their district's lack of engagement in BASRC Phase One. While BASRC struggled to find ways to engage districts once Phase One was underway, these efforts were constrained by limited resources with which to involve districts as well as by a lack of knowledge in the field about how to bring about the needed changes in district norms, practices, and capability to support school change.

Theory of Changing Schools and Scaling up Reform: Lessons about BASRC as an intermediary organization

BASRC's design as an intermediary organization was informed by cumulative experience with school reform and efforts to extend and expand promising practices to new sites. The decision to create a new organization, rather than locate the Collaborative in an existing institution such as a county office or regional laboratory, was based in the view that the flexibility and responsiveness would be enhanced by an intermediary that was "extra-system," and so unburdened by the regulatory structures and practices associated with government agencies. New leadership from outside the system was thought essential to moving schools beyond the conserving tendencies of status quo that frustrate reform initiatives. BASRC planners also saw the need for new roles and institutions to support school and regional reform—to fill the "gaps" in existing institutional relationships and supports.

BASRC's theory of changing schools was based also in lessons learned about more and less effective school change strategies. BASRC aimed to promote whole school reform through a combination of pressure and support, consistent with experience that most individuals need pressure to change routines and norms—but that pressure will be effective only when accompanied by necessary supports.[21] BASRC also responded to known problems of superficial school or teacher "buy-in" to a reform initiative through its strategy of peer-reviewed proposals for whole school change—standards-based applications that required significant work and conversation by school faculty, not just a signature sheet. Further, the inquiry process itself was envisioned as a strategy for fostering teachers' commitment to changing classroom practices and improved student learning.

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[20] Other analysts of urban school reform also stress the importance of a "bifocal" perspective on both school and district. See, for example, Berends, et al. (2002); Elmore & Burney (1999); Fullan, (2001); Hill et al. (2000)
[21] Fullan (2001) elaborates the pressure/support strategy for change.

BASRC's theory of regional change, or its assumptions about how to scale up reform across schools in the region, had roots in existing knowledge about the diffusion of promising practices. BASRC understood that good ideas are not "self-winding," as progressive era reformers assumed, but that some kind of deliberate "engine" or champion is required. Its strategy for scaling up reform centered on Leadership Schools, who were expected to provide situated examples of inquiry-based school reform and direction to other schools in the region. BASRC recognized the importance of up-close, local examples and anticipated that a successful cohort of Leadership Schools could and would move the region toward education reform on a large scale. To this end, BASRC selected a cohort of Leadership Schools that reflected the economic, racial and ethnic diversity of the region and that were committed to inquiry-based reform; their work would provide examples of reforming schools that were not "boutique" or atypical sites.

BASRC's theory of regional change incorporated other lessons from past reform efforts. Its various networks, conferences, and workshops built on evidence about the value of "crossover structures," strategies that involve individuals from different settings, engage people beyond their own boundaries, and thereby create the capacity and will—the critical mass—necessary for large scale reform.[22] BASRC also acted on the view that regional reform would require schools' identification with a common vision and change process and a strong, visible advocate for that vision. As an intermediary, BASRC attempted to forge that common vision and the regional will to advance it.

Intermediary organizations as reform agents

The outcome of BASRC's theory of changing schools and strategy for regional change turns to a significant extent on the way BASRC designed and carried out its intermediary role. Leadership Schools showed how a combination of pressure and support could bring about change; rigorous standards for school reform practice and peer evaluation of Leadership School progress can galvanize schools' engagement with reform. However, by design and capacity BASRC's Phase One operation also surfaces strategic issues about the character and function of an intermediary such as BASRC.

Potential of an extra-system intermediary. Phase One points out the potential and limits of an extra-system intermediary as public education reform agent. While BASRC's ability to work outside and between existing systems was a strategic asset, its independence also limited its ability to leverage government and other systems. BASRC had only persuasion and grant requirements as tools to push change, notoriously weak implements in a time of high stakes accountability and fiscal shortfall. Phase One confirms that there are important new roles for non-government entities as many reformers suggest[23], but also reveals that these new roles present difficult problems of their own—especially in negotiating authority.

Diverse members under the collaborative umbrella. BASRC's ability to respond to schools with significantly dissimilar needs and capacity was challenged throughout Phase One. For example, Leadership Schools experienced BASRC's pressure and support in

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[22] Fullan (2000) identifies crossover structures as a requirement for large-scale reform efforts.

[23] For example, Paul Hill (2000), Lauren Resnick and Tom Glennan (2002), and Michael Fullan (2001) advance the critical role of non-system actors in education reform.

different ways. Schools with limited reform experience and capacity were especially stretched to complete various BASRC reporting and accountability requirements, which often felt like compliance rather that collegial accountability. And for these schools, BASRC's support often was thought to fall short of needs, most especially as they struggled with their Cycle of Inquiry. High-poverty urban schools in particular felt they needed both different and additional support from BASRC as potentially debilitating factors such as staff turnover, district disinterest, and general lack of resources eroded their reform efforts. At the other end of the spectrum, Leadership Schools experienced with inquiry or other aspects of reform sometimes found BASRC's assistance efforts too elementary.

BASRC's own limited capacity constrained its ability to provide differentiated supports tailored to particular schools' needs. In this regard, the scope and ambition of BASRC's reform strategy exceeded the organization's ability to balance pressures and supports effectively. Phase One experience raises the question of how, over time, intermediary organizations like BASRC can sustain the kinds of support schools need to continue building capacity in the context of a large-scale reform initiative. A great strength of BASRC's Phase One design lay in the cultural and economic diversity of participating schools because of the rich opportunities they could provide the region as exemplars. Most all schools in the region could find a Leadership School to identify with. But "closing the achievement gap" across this population of schools with a wide range of starting points, capabilities, contexts and needs, may require differentiated supports of the sort largely unavailable to Phase One Leadership Schools. How might a regional intermediary cultivate differentiated and sustainable regional supports for change?

Developing an organization and leading a change effort at the same time. Phase One also teaches about the promise and problems associated with creating a new organization at the same time as implementing a large-scale reform initiative. BASRC benefited from the absence of institutional baggage, as planners intended. But it faced problems inevitable when simultaneously building and flying the airplane, to employ the overused analogy. While BASRC prided itself on being a learning organization, ironically its efforts to respond to lessons learned often were viewed negatively by Leadership Schools because they brought unanticipated or untimely changes in expectations and requirements. Leadership Schools became impatient with what they called "another BASRC mind change," creating a dilemma for BASRC about how to balance its own efforts to act on new information with schools' need for predictability and timely communication about their responsibilities.

Reform on a regional scale
BASRC intended to foster reform on a regional scale through Leadership Schools' examples and active efforts to foster inquiry-based change in other schools, crossover structures to build a regional reform community, and opportunities to share experiences.

A Leadership School strategy. BASRC's Leadership School strategy to scale-up reform did not evolve as envisioned. While many Leadership Schools opened their doors

to visitors and shared their experiences at Collaborative meetings, most neither understood what it meant to "lead" in this instance nor had sufficient time, resources or capacity to take a proactive role in leading other schools' reform efforts. Nor were "followers" evident in large numbers. Some sharing among schools within the same district occurred, but diffusion of this sort was the exception and required an active district role. This experience calls into question the assumption that a reforming school has capacity to provide leadership while meeting demands of its own reform work and day-to-day pressures.[24]

School change is not linear. Schools work hard to maintain continuous reform progress –whether they are just getting started, wrestling with moving to a whole school effort, or working on challenges of sustaining accomplishments and at the same time going deeper. However, the inevitable churn in school personnel and the need to bring new teachers and administrators into the reform process means that "beginning" work will never be done and require resources quite different from more experienced schools or teachers. How might a regional intermediary help schools at different phases of the complex change process to sustain their work, while also bringing new schools into the reform?

Building a regional learning community. Crossover structures that BARSC constructed to foster a regional learning community—role-specific networks, Collaborative Assembly gatherings, and critical friends for example— evidenced an appetite for such a regional resource and promise as strategy to create a regional vision, but they had limited success in practice for a variety of reasons. The scope of the regional Collaborative—87 Leadership Schools, 140 Membership Schools—called for capable communication strategies and structures that were insufficiently developed during Phase One. For example, there were limited opportunities for Collaborative participants to learn about the work of Leadership Schools, and BASRC's efforts to foster regional networks never really took off. How could a regional intermediary capture and capitalize on the overlapping civic and professional communities within and through which it works?

The region as locus for reform. The Bay Area region is a construct, not a political or regulatory entity. This lack of recognized jurisdiction constrained BASRC's ability to pursue reform on a regional basis. The region is not a system and there were no formal authority or accountability structures to which BASRC could attach its strategies. Further, Phase One raised questions about the Bay Area as unit of action. The sheer size of the Bay Area region and the significant time entailed to travel across the region to BASRC events or site visits to other Leadership Schools constrained participation in regional activities. Is a region the size of the Bay Area too large to be a fruitful locus of school reform?

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[24] Schools that have played leadership functions similar to that envisioned by BASRC were dedicated to that purpose, for example professional development schools (see Levine, 1992), or "incubator" schools serving an explicit research and development function.

Working within multiple systems. BASRC Phase One spotlighted the tensions and headaches an intermediary organization confronts by virtue of its "in-betweeness." BASRC had to navigate among shifts in the state policy context and new accountability pressures on schools and districts, while maintaining fidelity to its own reform vision and theory of change; in some school settings the demands of high-stakes accountability swamped BASRC's vision. BASRC made the strategic decision to leverage its work by embracing state policy vehicles, in particular the SAT-9. While these choices allowed BASRC to maintain its focus on inquiry and avoid being marginalized by state policy shifts, this stance also alienated schools opposed to these new state testing policies. BASRC provides an example of how an intermediary organization can simultaneously pursue a consistent mission and provide responsive assistance in a changing, multi-level policy context. But Phase One experience also presents the question of how (or whether) an intermediary can simultaneously work on the ground with schools and districts, and also influence the broader system policies and priorities that provide context for that work.

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BASRC's Phase One contributions can be measured in many ways: In the stronger school communities engaged in inquiry-based reform, in the overall gains in student achievement seen across Leadership Schools, in the new conversations and assumptions about school reform emerging in the Bay Area. In the long run, though, most significant for the school reform community may be the new learning and knowledge BASRC produced. The Hewlett-Annenberg Challenge provided opportunity to test out promising ideas on large-scale— ideas about inquiry and its power to change school culture, strategies for leveraging change on a regional basis, and the role a new intermediary organization can play in nurturing regional capability for educational reform. The Collaborative's careful work, thoughtful attention to evidence, and commitment to learning from experience moves the conversation forward in substantial ways and provides crucial grounding for education reform's next generation.

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Appendix A
Evaluation Design and Methods

Appendix A
Evaluation Design and Methods

The BASRC Phase One evaluation aims to assess the initiative's effects on public education in the region and to capture its lessons for the education reform community. Three broad questions guide our documentation and summative evaluation:

- What did BASRC accomplish for students in the region, in terms of the quality and equity of educational outcomes?
- To what extent did BASRC engage Bay Area schools and districts in inquiry-based school reform—and with what consequences for school culture and education practice?
- What are the benefits of a regional strategy for school reform, and how did BASRC as an intermediary organization support relationships, structures, and reforms that are likely to continue beyond the first phase of Hewlett-Annenberg funding?

The CRC uses a "theory of action" approach to evaluating BASRC's work from 1997-2001 (see Chapter 2). This approach assumes that a primary contribution of any change initiative lies in its lessons for the field about particular assumptions and facets of its design that did and did not work as intended. Using multiple methods, the CRC, over a five-year period documented BASRC Leadership Schools' experiences with inquiry-based reform and BASRC's experiences trying to leverage and scale up this model of whole-school reform across the Bay Area. While addressing the bottom-line question of how BASRC and inquiry-based school reform pays off for students, we also studied processes of school change to develop new knowledge about school reform practice and to evaluate key assumptions that guided BASRC's design and work with schools. The CRC broadened the evaluation of BASRC to include questions about how schools develop inquiry practices and what supports and tools from an intermediary organization make a difference in their progress.

Evaluation design overview

The CRC's evaluation design combines breadth and depth of analysis to address each of the core evaluation questions and theories of action that link them. In evaluating school culture outcomes and student outcomes of BASRC Phase One, the CRC integrates quantitative and qualitative research methods. Surveys of broad school samples yield measures for estimating effects of schools' inquiry practices on standardized student outcomes. Longitudinal case studies of Leadership Schools document conditions and processes entailed in inquiry-based school reform and offer a deeper look into professional culture outcomes and student achievement and classroom experiences. In evaluating benefits of BASRC's regional strategy for scaling up inquiry-based reform, the CRC uses a range of data from Bay Area district and BASRC Leadership School surveys, state record data on school and district

demographics, observations of BASRC events, and longitudinal data on case study schools' relationships with other schools within and beyond the Collaborative.

Multiple samples and research methods

The samples and data collection methods used for the BASRC Phase One evaluation are summarized in Table A.1. Across the samples and over time, the following kinds of data on school culture and student outcomes were developed and analyzed:

- State record data for schools and districts in BASRC, the Bay Area, and California that include standardized test (SAT-9) data available for 1998-2001 and API data for 1999-2001 on student demographics, indicators of school capacity and performance, and disaggregated student test data[25];
- BASRC accountability data for all Leadership Schools that include local measures of student outcomes, expenditures of BASRC funds, self-studies (annual Reviews of Progress), and rubric-based peer ratings of the Review of Progress (ROP);
- Survey data for Bay Area district administrators, principals and Reform Coordinators in all BASRC schools, and teachers and students in a sample of BASRC Leadership Schools that include measures of school inquiry practices, professional culture, and student experiences of school and classes;
- Additional longitudinal data for ten case-study BASRC Leadership Schools that include observations of on-site reform work, observations of off-site BASRC work, teacher interviews and focus groups, student focus groups, and student transcript data;
- Special studies in selected samples of BASRC Schools that focused on high school reform challenges, leadership of inquiry-based school, and the role of inquiry in building teacher community and knowledge of practice.

Further, to document the evolution of BASRC's theory of action and design, the CRC kept an ongoing record of BASRC's communications with schools, the development of tools to pressure and support school change (see Chapter 4), Collaborative events, and schools' experiences with each facet of their BASRC work. An annual "theory of action" interview with BASRC Executive Director Merrill Vargo kept track of significant changes in BASRC Phase One strategy and documented strategic thinking regarding the initiative's design and the ongoing work of the intermediary organization.

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[25] California assessments were not conducted between 1994 and 1998. Therefore, baseline data for evaluating BASRC schools' progress on students' academic achievement in relation to other California and Bay Area schools on standardized student achievement data are not available prior to the start of the initiative. The evaluation examines four-year trends on the SAT-9 assessments, first administered in 1998 after the majority of BASRC Phase One schools had begun their reform work.

Table A.1 Design for Breadth and Depth of Evaluation: Nested Samples and Multiple Research Methods

Sample	Research Methods
Population of Bay Area districts and schools in the region: (118 districts and 1,200 schools in six counties)	California student assessment data: ▪ Regional comparisons by student demographics ▪ Matched-sample assessment of BASRC impact District administrator survey to assess reform policies and practices
Population of BASRC Leadership Schools: (N = 87)	Principal surveys (1998 and 2001) to assess change in school culture; Reform Coordinator survey (2001) to measure inquiry practices and school culture
Survey sample of BASRC Leadership Schools: (N=18 schools; 9 case study and 9 non-case study schools)	Teacher surveys (1998 and 2001) to assess change in school culture, instructional practices, and patterns of teachers' BASRC participation

Case Study Sample of BASRC Leadership Schools: (N=10; 5 elementary, 2 middle, and 3 high schools)	Multiple research methods beyond teacher surveys to assess school experiences with BASRC activities, processes of inquiry-based reform, and a range of student outcomes:
	▪ Principal interviews
	▪ Teacher interviews and focus groups
	▪ Observations of schools' on-site and off-site BASRC work
	▪ Student focus groups
	▪ Student cohort study
	  o Transcript data
	  o Surveys (1999 and 2001)

Samples for Special Focused Studies: ▪ High School Study: (N=10; 3 case study high schools plus 7 additional BASRC high schools) ▪ Leadership Study: (N=16; 12 elementary and 4 high schools) ▪ Professional Community Study: (N=2; 1 elementary and 1 high school)	Multiple methods to focus more intensively on the special challenges of high school reform Interviews with principals and teacher leaders and observations to assess patterns of effective reform leadership practices across diverse schools Intensive observations and interviews to assess teacher learning through inquiry practices

Addressing the core questions

CRC's evaluation of BASRC Phase One integrates these qualitative and quantitative data to address the core questions:

- *What has BASRC accomplished for students in the region, in terms of the quality and equity of educational outcomes?*

Two versions of this question are addressed: a) did BASRC have a significant impact on student outcomes across its funded Leadership Schools? and b) does a school's relative progress on inquiry-based reform explain the extent to which its student outcomes improved?

To address the question of BASRC's impact on student outcomes we use annual SAT-9 and API data for all BASRC Leadership Schools and for a matched sample of non-funded Membership Schools. Schools were carefully matched on School Characteristics Index measures in 1998, and pairwise tests of significance of differences in schools' mean SAT-9 scores across the four years were used to assess a BASRC impact. (See Appendix D for details.)

To address the question of how BASRC schools' reform work affects student outcomes, we statistically assess inquiry practice effects on improvements in students' SAT-9 scores using survey measures of the strength of a school's inquiry practices. The regression model estimates the inquiry effect on 2001 SAT-9 scores with controls for 1998 scores. Two data sets are used – one with survey ratings from teachers in 18 Leadership Schools, another with ratings from Reform Coordinators in 52 schools. (See Appendix C for definition of the "Inquiry Practices" scale and Alpha coefficients for the two sets of survey respondents.)

Student test scores used in these analyses are the school mean of math and reading/language scores for students across all grade levels. In assessing equity outcomes, we examine differences over time in mean scores for – poor versus non-poor, Hispanic versus non-Hispanic, and Black versus non-Black (the disaggregated data are reported in the 1999-2000 API database only for schools with sufficient numbers of both groups). Additional field-based data from student focus groups and transcripts are used to assess a broader range of student outcomes for case study schools. Table A.2 summarizes the evaluation's student outcome data.

- *To what extent has BASRC engaged Bay Area schools in inquiry-based school reform; with what consequences for school culture and education practice?*

Analyses of longitudinal survey and case study data address these core evaluation questions. Survey data measure Leadership Schools' participation in BASRC work and are used to assess participation effects on the strength of schools' inquiry norms and practices. This analysis takes into account schools' value ratings of particular BASRC structures, supports, and pressures, such as Reform Coordinator roles, Critical Friends visits, Accountability Events, participation in annual Collaborative Assemblies, and the annual Review of Progress.

Qualitative and quantitative evaluation data document Leadership Schools' progress on inquiry and inquiry effects on professional community, leadership, and school policies and practices. Case studies illustrate context conditions that enable and constrain school progress on BASRC's "Cycle of Inquiry," including whether the district administration actively supports this mode of school reform. Survey research assesses relationships between schools' inquiry practices and BASRC school culture outcomes such as broad reform leadership and teacher collaboration to improve instruction.

Table A.2 Student Outcomes: Data, Samples, and Analysis Strategies

Data	Sample	Analysis	Year Collected / Analyzed			
			1997 - 1998	1998 - 1999	1999 - 2000	2000 - 2001
Standardized student test scores in reading and math (SAT-9)	Bay Area; all schools	Comparisons of trends for BASRC schools and for similar schools in the region; impact analysis using matched samples;	X	X	X	X
Race/ethnicity/ poverty breakdowns within schools (API)		Gap closing analysis		X	X	X
Student survey measures of school /class culture and academic efficacy	Case study schools; students in grades 5, 8, and 11	Change analysis; correlation with school inquiry practices		X		X
Student transcript data (courses, grades, SAT-9 scores)	Case study schools; student cohorts in grades 3, 6, and 9 in 1998-1999	Trend analysis by race, language status, and baseline academic performance	X	X	X	X
Student focus group measures of school climate and perceptions of change	Case study schools; student sample linked to cohort study	Triangulation with teacher and administrator reports and with student survey data		X	X	X

- *What are the benefits of a regional strategy for school reform, and how has BASRC as an intermediary organization supported relationships, structures, and reforms that are likely to continue beyond the period of Hewlett-Annenberg funding?*

The evaluation addresses the issue of regional reform strategy partly by documenting patterns of inequality between schools and districts in the region and within BASRC – considering student poverty and demographics, achievement trends, and organizational capacity for inquiry-based reform at multiple system levels. Given BASRC's mission to close achievement gaps between and within schools, evidence concerning benefits of a regional strategy includes the extent of inequalities between districts. The region-wide district administrator survey and state record data are particularly useful in addressing this question.

The longitudinal case studies and multiple surveys address the key issue of how and how well BASRC served the reform-support needs of its widely diverse members. We documented schools' experiences with BASRC activities and resources, over time in the case study sites and in summative value ratings of BASRC required and optional activities and resources in 2001 surveys. Finally, the longitudinal case studies offer a critical window into the question of the sustainability of inquiry-based reform beyond BASRC's Phase One, since they reveal conditions affecting the ups and downs of reform progress over this period and provide some basis for assessing the robustness of change in school culture and practice. Beyond the case data, BASRC's 2001 Review of Progress survey obtained schools' ratings of which BASRC structures were important to sustain and what funds might ensure this. Of course, evidence concerning the sustainability of inquiry-based reform beyond BASRC's Phase One depends ultimately upon data collection in the future.

Further information on the evaluation surveys and field research methods is provided below –moving from breadth to depth of data collection and analysis. This description of methods treats quantitative and qualitative research separately and does not do justice to the interactions between them in the evaluation. For example, the evaluation team examined consistency between quantitative and qualitative measures of school culture and inquiry practices in case study sites, as a way of refining measurement issues and instruments and as a way to focus further inquiry in particular sites. Here we provide basic information about the design and data for each facet of the evaluation and briefly describe the evaluation's special studies.

Survey Research

Surveys of teachers in a sample of Leadership Schools and of principals and Reform Coordinators in all Leadership Schools were designed to develop quantitative measures of inquiry practices and school culture outcomes that BASRC envisions. Surveys conducted in 1998 and in 2001 serve several purposes for the evaluation. They document the range of Leadership School conditions at the beginning and end of BASRC Phase One and locate case study schools within distributions on key evaluation variables. For the schools included in the baseline and follow-up principal and teacher surveys, repeated survey measures provide estimates of school culture change over the course of Phase One. Further, the 2001 surveys measure the kinds and levels of schools' participation in BASRC work, as well as key school culture outcomes such as inquiry practices, shared leadership, and teacher collaboration to improve instruction. Survey measures of school culture outcomes are used, in turn, as predictors of measured student outcomes.

CRC's use of multiple surveys to measure school culture conditions made it possible to assess inter-rater reliability for key evaluation variables and determine how well school measures derived from dense teacher samples for small numbers of schools are replicated in surveys of principals and of Reform Coordinator representing broader school samples. In general, Reform Coordinator ratings of school inquiry practices and professional culture variables correlate highly with average teacher ratings of schools (correlations between .8 and .9), while principal ratings replicate teacher ratings well only for general school culture variables such as shared staff responsibility and commitment to students. For this reason, estimates of inquiry effects on student achievement outcomes rely on teacher and Reform Coordinator survey data and samples.

The central purposes, samples, and data from each survey are summarized below – moving from the broadest to the smallest school samples.

District Survey

The CRC conducted a region-wide district administrator survey in 1998-1999 to document Bay Area school districts' organization cultures and supports for school reform. Prior field research in case study schools revealed wide variation in BASRC schools' district contexts – from proactive administrative support of inquiry-based reform to practices that significantly undermined school reform progress. The survey sought to develop measures of district culture and practice variables and to assess their relationship to teachers' and principals' global ratings of their district and to inequalities in student demographics and achievement across the region.

The population of 118 school districts in the six San Francisco Bay Area counties was surveyed. Targeted respondents were district administrators responsible for curriculum and instruction. This decision was based on analysis of data from instrument pilot testing that included all central office administrators in several districts. The CRC analyzed correspondence between different respondents' ratings on key survey items and found high agreement among the responses of superintendents, administrators of curriculum and instruction, and professional development and/or human relations administrators (but not between these responses and those of business and assessment administrators). The survey targeted district administrators of curriculum and instruction (or similar titles) because their responses replicate those of other administrators working most closely with district schools and because individuals in this position have relatively long tenure in the district and are likely to know most about the district's work with schools around instruction.

Survey responses ultimately were obtained for 60 Bay Area districts, a response rate of 51 percent overall. Among BASRC districts the response rate was higher – 40 districts representing 67% of BASRC districts participated in the survey. The respondent district sample is not significantly different from non-respondent Bay Area districts in terms of poverty, student demographics, and size distributions. The region's three largest school districts – Oakland, San Francisco, and San Jose – are included in the respondent sample.

Survey scales were developed through principal components analysis of item-level responses. Scales tap qualitatively different roles that districts can take to support school reform –such as emphasis on standards, coordination of reform across schools, and instructional support. (See Appendix C for survey scale definitions and Alpha coefficients.)

Principal Surveys

Surveys of all BASRC Leadership School principals were conducted in 1998 and in 2001 with the primary purpose of assessing change in school culture for a broad sample of BASRC schools. The surveys also measured schools' experiences with their district context –level of "professionalism" and extent to which the central office provided particular kinds of support for inquiry-based reform – to obtain baseline data on district context conditions across BASRC Leadership Schools and to measure change in level and kind of central office support over the course of Phase One. The 2001 survey measured principals' participation in particular on-site and off-site BASRC reform activities to assess their effects on schools' reform progress.

All BASRC Leadership School principals were included in baseline and follow-up surveys. Response rates were 76 percent for 1998 and 79 percent for 2001. Panel data are available for 52 schools, or 62 percent of all funded BASRC Schools (schools with principal survey data for both years).

Survey scales were developed through principal components analysis of item responses from the 1998 survey (see Appendix C). The 2001 follow-up instrument replicated the scaled items, and measures were constructed using scale definitions developed through baseline data analysis. Factor analyses involving items for each survey scale were replicated and in each case confirmed the results from the baseline survey.

Reform Coordinator Survey

Individuals serving as "BASRC Reform Coordinator" in Leadership Schools were surveyed in 2001 to obtain measures of inquiry practices and school culture for the broadest possible sample of BASRC Schools. These individuals were intimately involved in all facets of BASRC Schools' work and were in a good position to report on their school's culture and practices during the last year of Phase One.

Of the 78 Reform Coordinators surveyed, 56, or 72 percent responded. These responses coincide with teacher survey data for 13 schools and principal survey data for 42 schools from the 2001 surveys. Comparing Reform Coordinator ratings of school culture with ratings by teachers and principals, we found very strong correlations with teacher data, indicating that these data provide reasonable proxies for teacher survey data for the broader sample of BASRC Leadership Schools.

Teacher Surveys

Surveys of all teachers in the ten case study Leadership Schools and in a broader sample of schools were conducted in 1998 and 2001. The primary purpose of the 1998 survey was to develop baseline measures of school culture and individual professional practice for comparing case study schools and to establish a large enough sample of diverse BASRC schools for repeated teacher surveys to support statistical analysis of change. Repeated measures in the 2001 survey were used to estimate change on key BASRC school outcome variables. In addition, the 2001 teacher survey is the only source of evaluation data on internal school variation in teacher participation in BASRC activities and reform work, as well as grade-level and subject department differences in inquiry practices and professional culture.

The school sample for baseline teacher surveys included 10 case study schools, 10 additional Leadership Schools, and 7 non-funded Membership Schools (N=27). Membership Schools were included in the baseline survey to increase the variance on evaluation variables, however their scores were within the distribution for funded schools and added little to correlational analyses. These schools were dropped from longitudinal analyses for this reason and because the N for these non-funded BASRC schools was too small to constitute a control group for analyses of funding effects. The follow-up survey in 2001 included 18 of the 20 Leadership Schools included in the 1998 survey; one case study school was de-funded in 1999 and dropped from the evaluation and one non-case study survey school refused to participate in the 2001 survey. Across the 20 Leadership Schools included in the 1998 teacher survey, the average teacher response rate was 76 percent; for the 18 schools participating in the 2001 teacher survey, the average response rate was 65 percent.

The BASRC teacher surveys replicated items that make up several scales developed through prior CRC research on school professional community; these scale definitions were confirmed through factor analyses of the 1998 survey data. New survey items and scales were developed to measure BASRC-specific school culture outcomes such as inquiry norms and practices (see Appendix C). Teacher survey measures of key evaluation variables were used as the standard for assessing reliability and validity of measures derived from principal and Reform Coordinator ratings of school culture variables.

Longitudinal case studies of Leadership Schools

Case studies of 10 Leadership Schools conducted over the course of BASRC Phase One are key to CRC's evaluation of BASRC's theory of school change and its theory of scaling up school reform through a regional Collaborative. Case studies are the primary source of evaluation data on schools' experiences with the initiative over time and on the conditions and processes entailed in inquiry-based reform. Given evidence from the evaluation that school inquiry practices pay off in improved student outcomes, questions of how schools progress on this model of reform and their responses to BASRC's support and pressures comprise the initiative's "bottom line." Questions of how to sustain and scale up inquiry-based school reform calls for in-depth analyses of the change process in a diverse sample of schools.

The longitudinal case studies address the three core evaluation questions and, most significantly, seek to understand the relationships among them. Beginning in 1997-98 and continuing through 2000-01, the case studies provide intensive documentation of student outcomes, processes of school change, and elements of BASRC work and regional infrastructure that mattered for schools' progress on their reform.

Case study sample

The sample of 10 Leadership Schools was selected in 1998 to represent the region's and BASRC's geographic diversity and the range of conditions likely to influence schools' experiences with BASRC and their progress on school reform. Contrasts represented in the case study sample include: school grade levels, student demographics, and district type (see Table A.3). Eight districts in five of the Bay Area's six counties are represented. The case study school sample also includes a wide range of schools' prior experience with reform and strength of professional community (see Chapter 3, Figure 3.1 and Chapter 5, Tables 5.1 and 5.4). These schools' experiences with BASRC and inquiry-based reform thus capture the likely range of reform challenges, resources, and change trajectories across all Leadership Schools.

Attrition from the case study sample occurred in 2000 when BASRC de-funded one of the elementary schools (School A in Table A.3) on grounds that it was making no reform progress and lacked capacity at the school and district levels to make good use of BASRC funds. District actions undermined school reform work, and teacher turnover was so high that only one of the school's 28 teachers in 1997 was still teaching in the school two years later. The CRC did not replace this school in the case study sample because School A remained an important case and outcome for the evaluation, because we lacked full longitudinal data for other sites, and because special focused studies (see below) had already expanded the sample of BASRC schools included in case study research.

Table A.3 BASRC Leadership School and District Sample for CRC Case Studies

School	Grade Level	Student Demographics					District Type
		Reduced or Free Meals	Black/ African American	Hispanic/ Latino	Asian/ Asian American	English Language Learners	
School A	K-8	81%	10%	76%	2%	76%	Small Urban
School B	K-6	68	33	46	10	46	Large Urban
School C	K-6	16	3	8	34	5	Medium Suburban
School D	K-6	5	2	4	30	7	Medium Suburban
School E	K-8	26	5	8	14	12	Large Urban
School F	6-8	80	24	24	47	64	Large Urban
School G	6-8	42	27	46	12	23	Large Urban
School H	9-12	12	4	14	17	5	Medium Urban
School I	9-12	3	2	6	3	0	Small Suburban
School J	9-12	44	18	39	11	30	Medium Urban

Case study data

Leadership School case studies used multiple methods to document each school's involvement in BASRC – including participation in various facets of BASRC's regional design for school knowledge sharing and Critical Friendships, its progress on inquiry-based reform, and both school culture outcomes and student outcomes. Data collection included: principal interviews, observations of school reform work on-site and at BASRC functions, Reform Coordinator interviews and survey responses, teacher focus groups and survey responses, student surveys and focus groups, and transcript data for a cohort sample of students.

Field research instruments were refined over the course of the evaluation to probe more deeply into cross-case and site-specific issues that emerged regarding a school's reform progress and to address issues that emerged from BASRC's evolving theory of action and design. For example, successive principal interview and teacher focus group protocols focused increasingly on particulars of a school's reform work and on the role of recent BASRC activities in supporting reform progress. Data were coded using a common set of NUD*IST codes and analyzed for themes across case study sites, as well as for case-specific patterns.

Student outcomes evaluated for case study schools, beyond those analyzed for broader evaluation samples, include: a) social-moral and academic self-efficacy outcomes measured through student surveys and b) equity of student learning opportunities assessed by comparing students' survey reports of classroom instruction between student groups with different GPAs. Data included in this report derive from 2001 surveys of students in 5th, 8th, and 11th grades in case study schools and analyses of GPA data from transcripts for these students when they were in 3rd, 6th, and 9th grades in the same schools.

In-depth, longitudinal case studies document connections between BASRC efforts and strategies and what occurs inside schools and classrooms. In turn, they assess implications of school change for changes in student social, cognitive, and affective outcomes.

Special studies

Special studies in selected samples of BASRC Schools focused intensively on the problems of high school reform, leadership for inquiry-based school change, and inquiry in teacher communities. Findings from these studies are incorporated into the summative evaluation report and reported in separate reports or research papers.

High School Study

This satellite research project began in summer 1999. The case study sample of 10 high schools includes the three schools in the core evaluation sample and an additional seven reforming high schools. These schools were selected for their active involvement in reform and for their diversity in school size, district type, and student demographics. All 10 schools were BASRC Leadership Schools; the CRC set out to find high schools known for their reform work that were not participating in BASRC and found none in the Bay Area.

Data for this study come from interviews with principals, Reform Coordinators, teachers, and students; from field-based observations of staff meetings, professional development activities, regional events, and from a 2000 teacher survey. Further, ongoing interviews and focus groups with support providers working with these schools were a critical source of data on inquiry-based high school reform in action.

Leadership Study

This study began in fall 1999 in a sample of 16 BASRC Leadership Schools identified by BASRC personnel or the CRC research team as particularly rich examples of schools developing a broad base of reform leadership. Included were four high schools, eleven elementary schools, and one K-8 school; schools varied widely in socio-economic and ethnic composition and in school size.

The case study research involved interviews with principals and teacher leaders serving in formal BASRC roles, such as Reform Coordinator, and field observations at the school sites.

Inquiry and Teacher Professional Community

In-depth studies of teacher communities within BASRC schools began during the 1999-2000 school year to investigate discourse and knowledge development around inquiry in professional communities. The research sites for these special studies were the primary grades of an elementary school that focusing its inquiry on English Learner issues and the

science department of a CRC case study high school. These sites were selected as typical teacher communities within schools committed to whole-school, inquiry-based reform.

These case studies involved intensive field-based observations and interviews with teachers in the selected grade-level and department communities.

Appendix B
Leadership Schools Demographics

Figure B.1. Geographic Locations of 87 Leadership Schools across the Bay Area, Six County Region

Figure B.2 Comparing CRC Evaluation Schools to BASRC Leadership Schools by Student Race and Ethnicity

Percent African American Students

Percent Native American Students

Percent White Students

14

11

1

7

38   38

28

Case Study Schools (N=10)

14

0

14

BASRC Leadership Schools (N=86)

15

Percent Asian Students

17

5

3

Matched Sample Schools (N=83)

3

Percent Filipino Students

2

33

5

Percent Hispanic Students

2

29

1

1

1

25

Percent Pacific Islander Students

Percent Multiracial Students
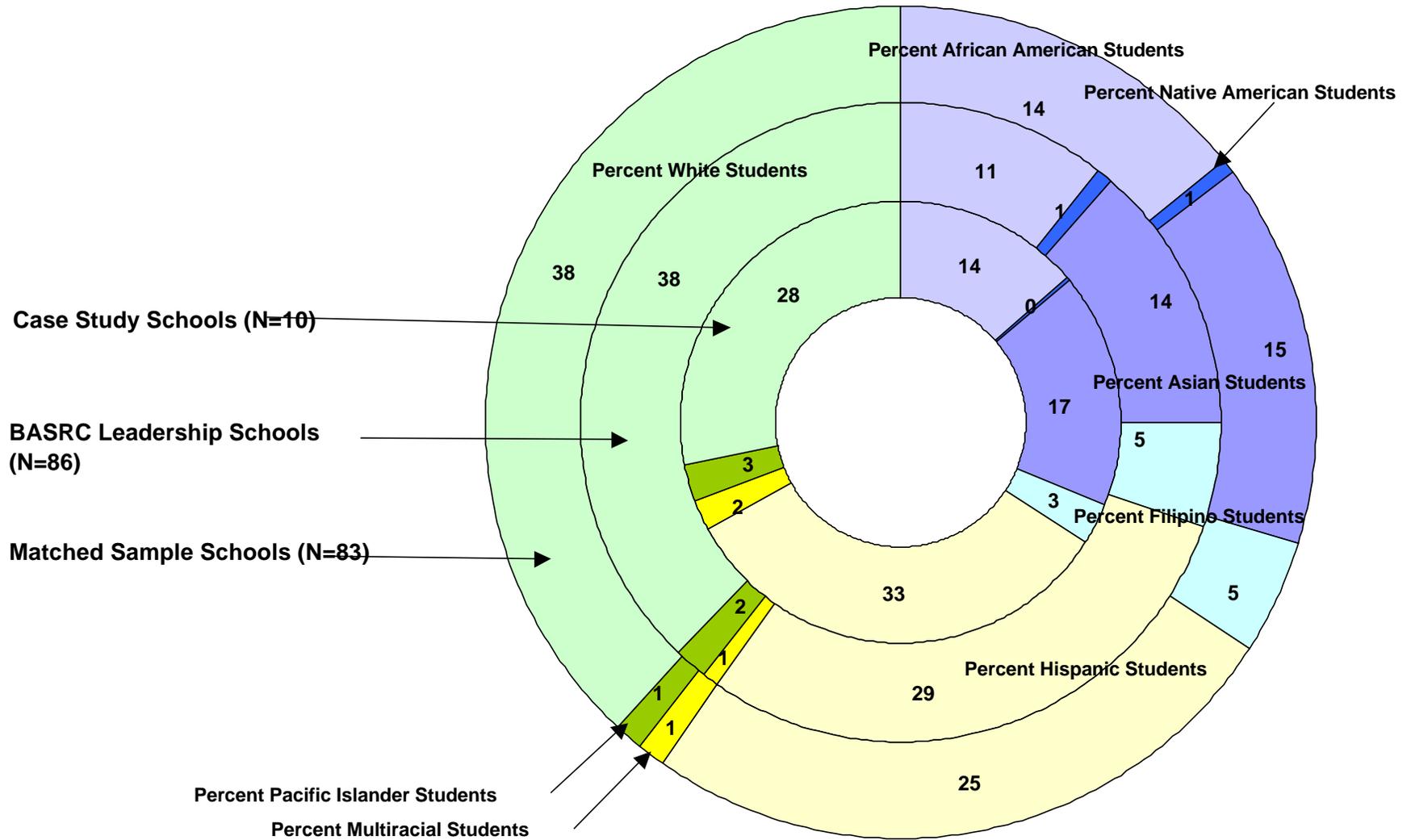
Figure B.3 Comparing BASRC Leadership Schools to the Bay Area and California by Student Race and Ethnicity

Percent Native American Students

Percent African American Students

Percent White Students

7

2

13

6

1

11

1

2

43

14

15

39

38

Percent Asian Students

BASRC Leadership
Schools (N=86)

5

Other Bay Area Schools
(N=1181)

Percent Filipino Students

5

Non-Bay Area, California
(N=7634)

2

1

29

Percent Hispanic Students

1

1

26

1

Percent Pacific Islander Students

Percent Multiracial Students

1

40
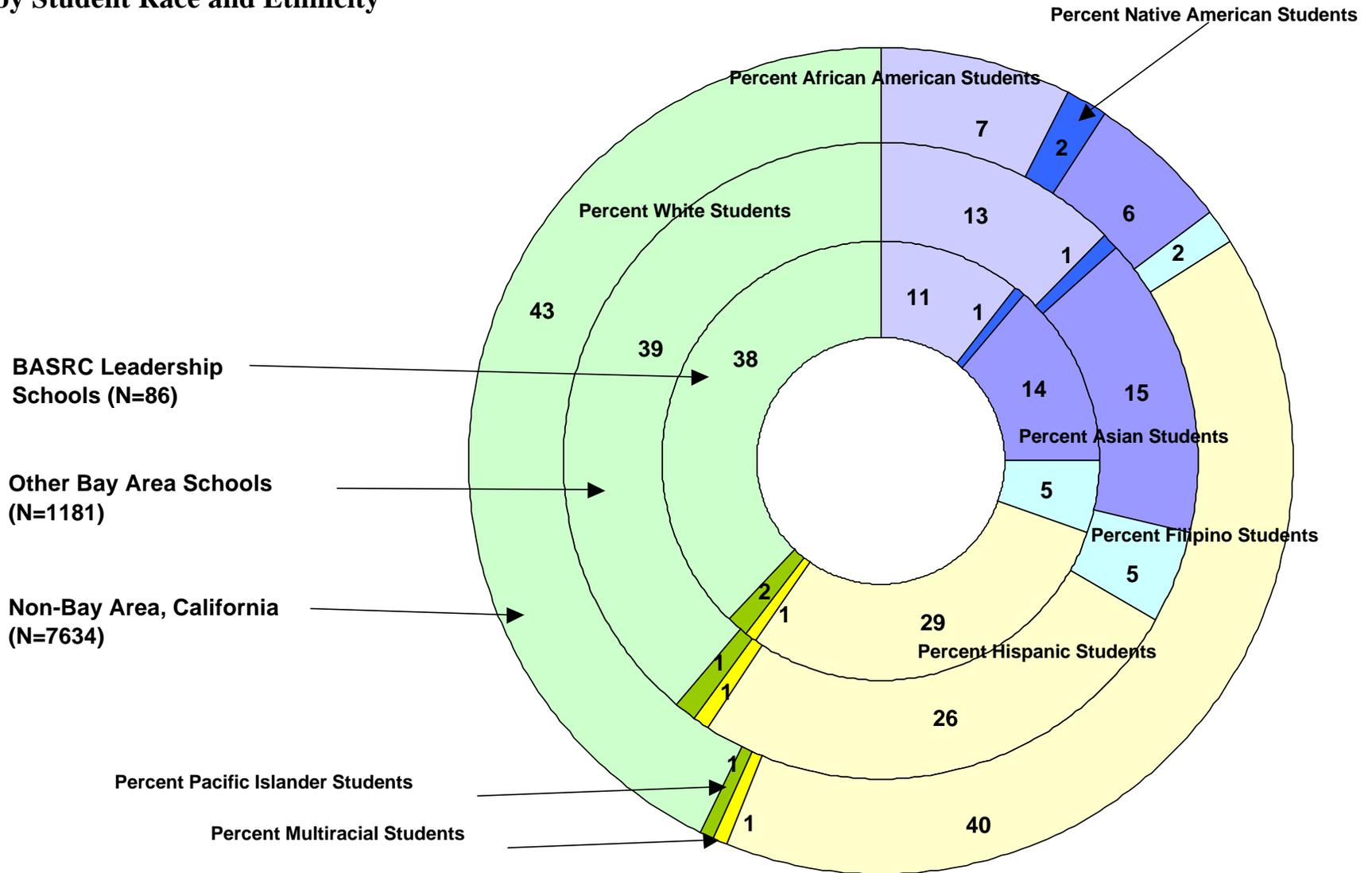
Figure B.4 Comparing CRC Evaluation Schools to BASRC Leadership Schools by Student Poverty

Case Study Schools (N=10)

BASRC Leadership Schools (N=86)

Matched Sample Schools (N=83)

32

30

42

Percent Free and Reduced Meals Students

58

70

68

Percent Not Free and Reduced Meals Students
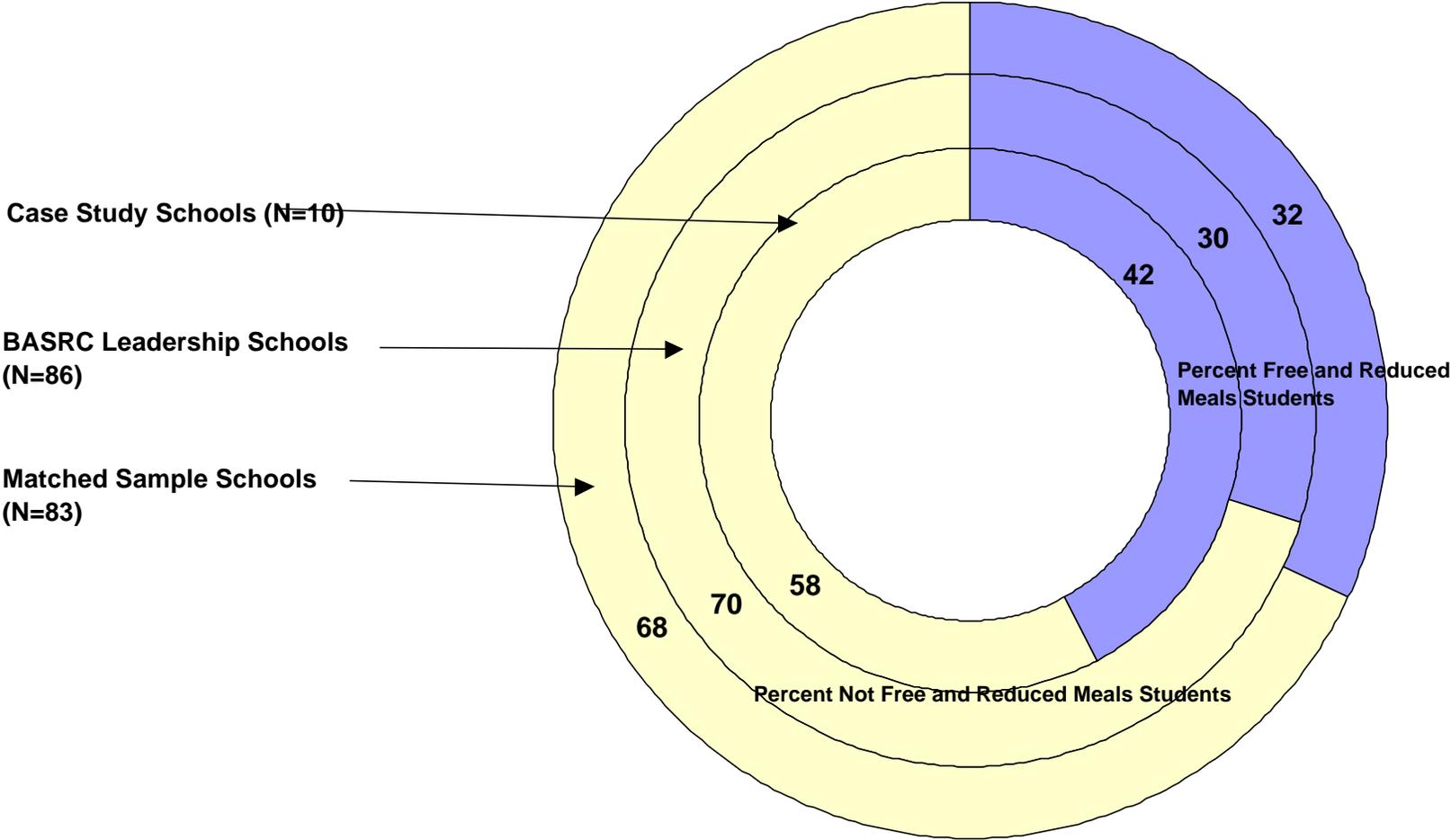
Figure B.5 Comparing BASRC Leadership Schools to the Bay Area and California by Student Poverty

BASRC Leadership Schools
(N=86)

Other Bay Area Schools
(N=1181)

Non-Bay Area, California
(N=7634)

49

31

30

Percent Free and
Reduced Meals Students

70

69

51

Percent Not Free and Reduced Meals Students
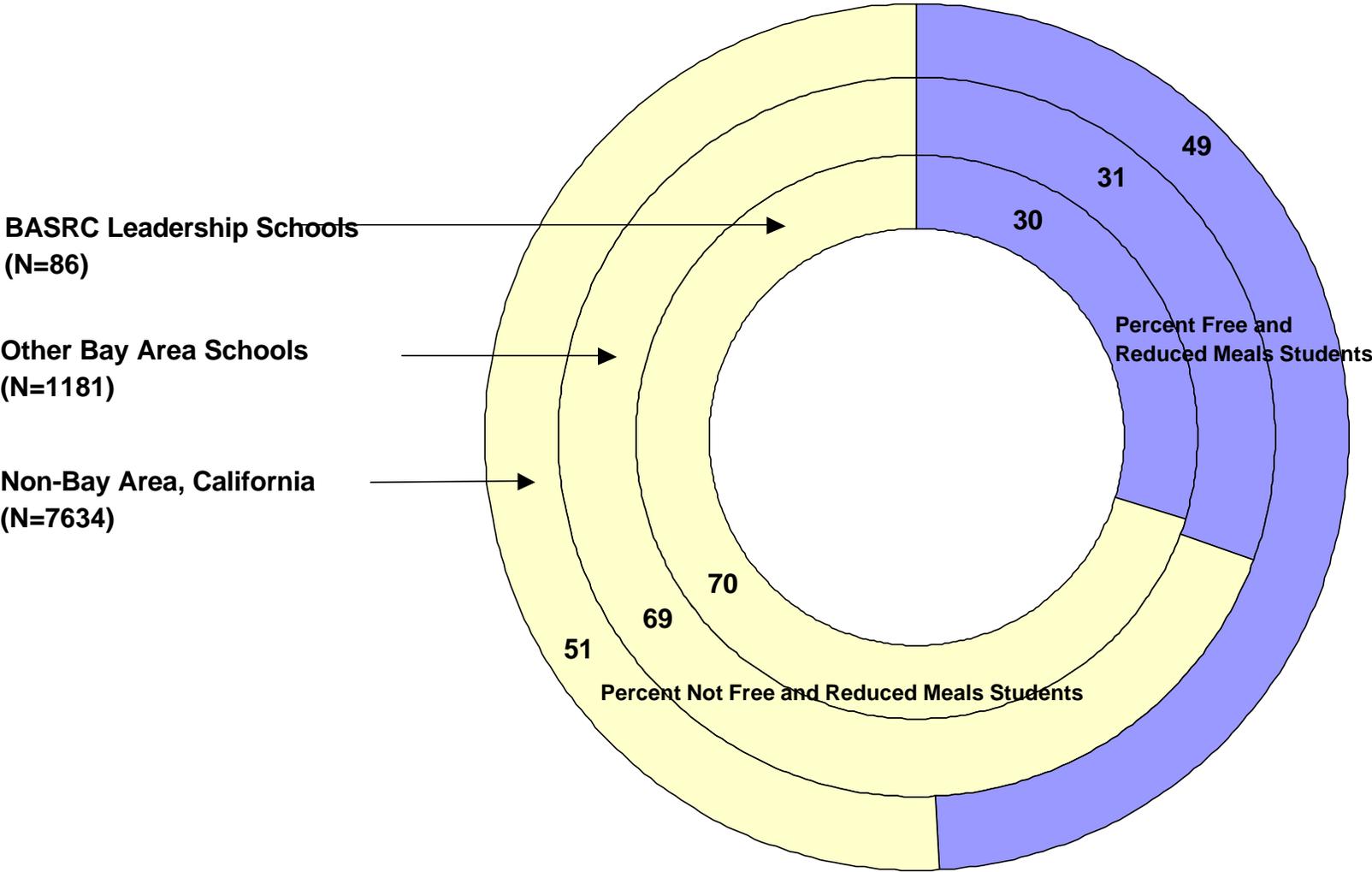
Appendix C

BASRC Survey Scale Definitions

Appendix C. BASRC Survey Scale Definitions

Teacher Survey
These scales were derived from the 1998 Bay Area School Reform Collaborative (BASRC) Teacher Survey. Principal components analysis was used to identify survey items that loaded on a common factor; alpha coefficients indicate the internal consistence of the scale.

School Conditions

Inquiry Practices
(5 point Likert scale, 9 items. Alpha=.90)

> Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the statements regarding professional development and the reform climate in your school.
> - My school has a clear vision of reform that is linked to standards for student learning and growth
> - My school encourages teachers to pursue inquiry into their classroom practice
> - Progress toward the school's teaching vision is openly examined and acknowledged
> - Teachers collect and use data to improve their teaching
> - My school has made changes designed to better meet the needs of our diverse student body
> - Teachers are engaged in systematic analysis of student performance data
> - Assessment of student performance leads to changes in our school's curriculum
> - Teachers in this school regularly examine school performance
>
> Please mark the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your school.
> - This school is actively involved in school reform

Teacher Learning Community
(5 point Likert scale, 4 items. Alpha=.84)

> Now consider the professional climate in your school. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about **general school climate.**
> - I feel supported by colleagues to try out new ideas
> - Teachers in this school are encouraged to experiment with their teaching
> - Teachers in this school trust each other
> - Teachers in this school feel responsible to help each other do their best

Collective Problem Solving
(5 point Likert scale, 4 items. Alpha=.83)

> Now consider the professional climate in your school. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about **general school climate.**
> - *In this school we take steps to solve problems, we don't just talk about them.*
> - The faculty has an effective process for making group decisions and solving problems
>
> Please mark the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your school**.**
> - Teachers take an active role in schoolwide decision making
> - Useful information to make informed decisions is readily available to teachers (e.g., about student performance, resources, community satisfaction)

Commitment to all Students
(5 point Likert scale, 4 items. Alpha=.85)

> Please mark the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your school.
> - Teachers in this school really listen to students
> - This school has high standards for academic performance
> - Teachers like students and treat them with respect
> - Most teachers here provide intellectually stimulating and challenging learning environments for their students

Class Observations and Collaboration
(5 point Likert scale, 3 items. Alpha=.80)

> This question concerns how teachers interact with each other in your school. Please indicate the frequency with which **you** do each of the following.
> - Observe another teacher teaching
> - Be observed by another teacher
> - Teach with a colleague

Classroom Instruction

Student Discourse and Reflection
(6 point Frequency scale, 4 items. Alpha=.74)

Please review the following list of possible **student lesson activities.** About how much time, if any, do your students do each of the following during class time?
- Review and discuss the work of other students
- Explain their reasoning to the class
- Discuss ideas for a sustained period
- Reflect on their work and set future learning goals

Reform Assessment Formats
(5 point Likert scale, 3 items. Alpha=.59)

> How important are each of the following <u>kinds</u> of assessments for you in judging how well students are learning?
> - Portfolio of student work
> - Products of group projects
> - Work samples

Reform Outcomes
(5 point Likert scale, 5 items. Alpha=.79)

> How much emphasis do you place on each of the following <u>criteria</u> in assessing student progress?
>
> The student showed increased ability to:
> - Ask probing questions about subject matter
> - Apply what he/she has learned to new questions, situations, and subjects
> - Reflect on his/her progress
> - Express his/her own ideas about subject matter
> - Provide constructive feedback to other students

District Conditions

District Professionalism
(5 point Likert scale, 11 items. Alpha=.96)

> Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the statements regarding the district in which you teach.
> - I feel that this district inspires the very best in the job performance of its teachers
> - I am proud to tell others that I work for this district
> - The district supports local innovation
> - The district holds high expectations for our school
> - The district builds community confidence in our school
> - The district supports my school's whole school change effort
> - The district promotes the professional development of teachers
> - The district ensures that student learning is the "bottom line" in this school
> - The district helps my school focus on teaching and learning
> - The district is committed to high standards for every student
> - District priorities are consistent with my school's priorities

Reform Coordinator Survey

These scales were derived from the 2001 Bay Area School Reform Collaborative (BASRC) Reform Coordinator Survey. Principal components analysis was used to identify survey items that loaded on a common factor; alpha coefficients indicate the internal consistence of the scale.

School Conditions

Inquiry Practices
(5 point Likert scale, 9 items. Alpha=.89)

> Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the statements regarding professional development and the reform climate in your school.
> - My school has a clear vision of reform that is linked to standards for student learning and growth
> - My school encourages teachers to pursue inquiry into their classroom practice
> - Progress toward the school's teaching vision is openly examined and acknowledged
> - Teachers collect and use data to improve their teaching
> - My school has made changes designed to better meet the needs of our diverse student body
> - Teachers are engaged in systematic analysis of student performance data
> - Assessment of student performance leads to changes in our school's curriculum
> - Teachers in this school regularly examine school performance
>
> Please mark the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your school.
> - This school is actively involved in school reform

Student Survey

These scales were derived from the 1998 Bay Area School Reform Collaborative (BASRC) Student Survey. Principal components analysis was used to identify survey items that loaded on a common factor; alpha coefficients indicate the internal consistence of the scale.

School Conditions

Teacher-Student Respect
(4 point Likert scale, 4 items; Alpha=.75)

> *How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your school?*
> - Teachers in this school really listen to students.
> - Teachers like students and treat them with respect.
> - This school is always trying to improve.
> - Students in this school really listen to teachers.

Classroom Conditions

Active Student Role
(4 point Likert scale, 5 items; Alpha=.65)

> How often do the following things happen in class?
> - The teacher and students plan together what work we will do.
> - The teacher and students decide together what the rules will be.
> - Students in this class can get a rule changed if they think it is unfair.
> - You can choose your own writing topics for this class.
> - You can choose your own reading materials for this class.
> - Students in the class treat each other with respect.
> - When someone in the class does well, everyone in the class feels good.

Student Outcomes

Class Self-efficacy
(4 point Likert scale, 3 items; Alpha=.59)

> How much do you agree with the following statements about the English or Language Arts Class?
> - I am certain I can learn the skills taught in this class.
> - If I have enough time, I can do a good job on all my class work.
> - I can do better work than I'm doing now.

Principal Survey

These scales were derived from the 1998 Bay Area School Reform Collaborative (BASRC) Principal Survey. Principal components analysis was used to identify survey items that loaded on a common factor; alpha coefficients indicate the internal consistence of the scale.

School Conditions

Inquiry Practices
(4 point Likert scale, 4 items. Alpha=.83)

> Now consider the professional climate in your school. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about **general school climate?**
> - Teachers are engaged in systematic analysis of student performance data
> - Assessment of student performance leads to changes in our school's curriculum
> - Teachers in this school regularly examine school performance
> - Useful information to make informed decisions is readily available to teachers (e.g., about student performance, resources, community satisfaction)

Shared Responsibility
(4 point Likert scale, 3 items. Alpha=.79)

> Now consider the professional climate in your school. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about **general school climate?**
> - In this school teachers take steps to solve problems, they don't just talk about them
> - Teachers in this school trust each other
> - Teachers in this school feel responsible to help each other do their best

District Conditions

District Professionalism
(4 point Likert scale, 11 items. Alpha=.94)

> Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the statements regarding your **district.**
> - I feel that this district inspires the very best in the job performance of its personnel
> - The district holds high expectations for our school
> - The district builds community confidence in our school
> - The district supports my school's whole school change effort
> - The district promotes the professional development of teachers
> - The district ensures that student learning is the "bottom line" in this school
> - The district helps my school focus on teaching and learning
> - The district is committed to high standards for every student
> - District priorities are consistent with my school's priorities
> - The district does not understand my school's reform agenda (reverse scored)
> - I am proud to tell others that I work for this district

District Administrator Survey

These scales were derived from the 1998 Bay Area School Reform Collaborative (BASRC) District Administrator Survey. Principal components analysis was used to identify survey items that loaded on a common factor; alpha coefficients indicate the internal consistence of the scale.

District Practices

District Instructional Support
(5 point Likert scale, 4 items. Alpha=.84)

> Please indicate the extent to which your district provides each of the following kinds of support for school improvement.
> - This district helps principals promote and nurture a focus on teaching and learning in school.
> - This district supports schools' efforts to be accountable to their own local communities.
> - This district provides support to enable teachers to adjust curriculum and instruction to meet all students' individual needs.
> - This district helps schools set benchmarks and evaluate progress toward school and district standards.

District Standards Emphasis
(5 point Likert scale, 9 items. Alpha=.94)

> Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements regarding how your district works with schools your district works with schools.
> - This district promotes the professional development of teachers.
> - This district ensures that student learning is the "bottom line" in school.
> - This district helps schools focus on teaching and learning.
> - This district builds community confidence in our schools.
> - This district is committed to high standards for every student.
> - District priorities are consistent with school's priorities.
> - This district has consistent standards from school to school.
> - This district uses data as a basis for decision-making.
> - This district emphasizes academic standards at all levels of the system.

District Inquiry Support
(5 point Likert scale, 3 items. Alpha=.69)

> Please read each of these statements about leadership and indicate how common it is in your district.
> - Leaders create structure, time and resources to support learning.
> - Leaders challenge others to find, clarify and solve problems.
> - Leaders use data and inquiry to create shared responsibility and accountability for high standards and equitable learning results.

District Leadership Building
(5 point Likert scale, 3 items. Alpha=.78)

> Please read each of these statements about leadership and indicate how common it is in your district.
> - Leaders discover common ground and shared values.
> - Leaders enable the school to create a shared sense of purpose.
> - Leaders use authority to create ways for everyone to have voice and power.

District Reform Coordination
(5 point Likert scale, 3 items. Alpha=.74)

> Now consider your district's general approach to school improvement.
> - This district provides all schools the same level and kind of support for reform.
> - This district has a good understanding of schools' reform agendas.
> - This district fosters communication between different schools in the district.

District Organizational Support
(5 point Likert scale, 5 items. Alpha=.81)

> Please indicate the extent to which your district provides each of the following kinds of support for school improvement.
> - This district helps schools develop and maintain high standards.
> - This district helps schools use information about student achievement relative to standards in order to improve instruction.
> - This district has helped schools establish systems of governance and decision making which include participation by key stakeholder groups (i.e., students, parents, and staff).
> - This district helps schools maintain open communication and public accountings to key stakeholders regarding the performance of students and the schools.
> - This district has helped schools establish processes and strategies for handling stress, conflict, and divergent views.

District Resource Flexibility
(5 point Likert scale, 2 items. Alpha=.70)

> Please indicate the extent to which your district provides each of the following kinds of support for school improvement.
> - This district provides flexibility to schools in how resources are allocated (i.e., time, materials, and personnel).
> - This district helps schools allocate resources, including time, money, and personnel, to support their reform efforts.

Appendix D
Establishing a Retrospectively-Matched Control Group

Appendix D. Establishing a Retrospectively-Matched Control Group

In order to evaluate BASRC's contribution to Leadership Schools' progress on SAT-9 outcomes, one needs a way of determining how the schools would have done had they not received BASRC funding and participated in the work of the Collaborative. In a traditional program evaluation design, eligible program applicants would be randomly assigned to either participate or not participate in the program (creating "treatment" and "control" groups). Random assignment from a common pool of potential program participants ensures that, in the aggregate, they are alike in all respects except for whatever is entailed with program participation. The program effect is determined subsequently by comparing gains on some desired outcome between the treatment and control groups: significantly greater gains for the treatment group constitutes evidence of the program's effect.

Random assignment was neither desirable nor feasible as a strategy for funding Leadership Schools in BASRC. Nevertheless, we need to establish a control group or strategy in order to address the question of whether the Leadership Schools' progress was improved significantly by their participation in BASRC. One standard approach to making such an evaluation is to statistically control for school characteristics that generally predict outcomes, in this case school progress on SAT-9, and then compare the "treated" schools' gains with those expected on the basis of each school's student demographics and the like. However, this control strategy does not take into account selection effects – or any special circumstances that attracted schools to the program and that predict gains independently of both demographics and program resources. In the case of BASRC, Leadership Schools may do better than comparable schools because of their reform orientation. For this reason, the CRC has developed a retrospectively-matched sample of schools that are similar in reform orientation as well as in school conditions.

The matched sample for evaluating BASRC effects on Leadership Schools' SAT-9 progress comes from the pool of BASRC Membership Schools – schools that were accepted for membership in the School Reform Collaborative through the Membership portfolio and review process. Membership Schools are like the schools ultimately funded as Leadership Schools in that: they were aware of the Collaborative's founding (a proxy for such conditions as school or district knowledge resources) and they sought and succeeded in obtaining membership (an indicator of school reform leadership and documented progress). These are key control variables in assessing effects of BASRC's funding on Leadership Schools' progress. Those Membership Schools that subsequently failed in their application for funding may have had less capacity for reform than successful schools, thus biasing the sample; however, some schools did not apply for funding because they already had been successful in finding support for their reform work, thus biasing the sample in the other direction.

Here we describe how we selected a sample of Membership Schools matched with Leadership Schools on multiple school characteristics and provide evidence that they are comparable on measures known to predict school performance on academic outcomes.

Constructing a matched sample of BASRC Membership Schools

The matched sample was drawn from a pool of 136 BASRC Membership Schools. Our aim in developing the sample was to find the school in this pool that best matched each of the Leadership Schools on school grade level (elementary versus middle versus high school), student demographics, district wealth, and county.

The state's School Characteristics Index (SCI) provided a useful summary measure of several student demographic and school variables and, second to school grade level, was the primary matching variable. Included in the index are measures of: student poverty, race and ethnicity, language status, mobility, average class size, teacher preparation, and year-round status. By relying on this index score as a key matching variable, we were forced to eliminate three Leadership Schools for which the state did not report SCI data; these are alternative schools classified by the state as "special" and excluded from the API data system. Numbers of schools at each grade level for Leadership and all Membership Schools involved in the matching process are:

	Leadership Schools	Membership Schools
Elementary schools	51	79
Middle schools	11	27
High schools	21	30

We selected the matched sample from the pool of same-grade Membership Schools; for example, 51 of the 79 Membership elementary schools were matched with a Leadership School using SCI scores and other characteristics. Matching ratios were comparable across grade levels, though selectivity was somewhat greater at the middle school level.

Matching procedures were as follows. Within each school grade level, we first listed all Leadership and Membership Schools in the order of their SCI scores and in adjacent columns arrayed component measures of percent students eligible for free or reduced-price meals), percent LEP Students, percent Hispanic, African American, and Asian students, county, and school district. Each funded school was matched with a not-funded school that has the closest SCI score. When more than one school had a similar SCI, the school with the best match on the key demographics was selected. Whenever possible, we tried to match schools in districts of comparable wealth and student demographics. All else equal, we broke a tie by taking into account whether the school had participated in our 1997-1998 teacher survey. (Please find the complete lists of BASRC Leadership Schools and matched Membership Schools in Talbert, Lin and Haertel, 2000.)

Evaluating potential bias in the matched sample

We evaluated potential bias in the matched sample by examining differences in means for Leadership and matched Membership Schools on each of the matching variables and on additional measures of district context. Given evidence summarized in this report that districts differ considerably in their support of schools' reform efforts, and that these differences are related to district wealth and size, we wanted to ensure that

the matched sample was comparable to Leadership Schools on these district context variables.

Results of this analysis are reported in Table D. The data show minimal sample differences on school or district characteristics for elementary, middle, and high schools. Means on the SCI are nearly identical, as expected. Some sample differences in schools' race/ethnic group composition are shown for elementary and middle schools. Differences that are statistically significant using dependent (paired) t-tests (p<.10) are shown for percent Asian and percent African American at the middle school level and for percent African American at the elementary school level; in each case, proportions are lower for Leadership Schools. Proportions of Hispanic students are higher at both school grade levels, though these differences are not statistically significant. The high school samples are very well matched on each student demographic variable. Importantly, district demographics and size are comparable between the samples at all school grade levels. Overall, the matching process yielded a control group of reforming Bay Area schools that is highly similar in student demographics, school organization conditions, and district context to BASRC Leadership Schools.

Table D. Comparisons of BASRC Leadership Schools and Matched-Sample Membership Schools

Elementary Schools

		School-Level Demographics						District-Level Demographics			
	SCI	Percent Free Meals	Percent LEP	Percent Hispanic	Percent African American	Percent Asian	Total School Enrollment	District Percent Free Meals	District Percent LEP	District Size: # Schools	District Total # Students
BASRC Leadership Schools (N=51, excluding 2 atypical schools)											
Mean	161.07	27.96	18.20	30.21	9.80	13.94	350.68	27.96	18.20	29	16822
S.D.	15.74	17.45	12.99	23.59	11.24	10.83	133.21	17.45	12.99	34	18715
Matched Sample of BASRC Membership Schools (N=51)											
Mean	160.89	24.47	18.18	25.19	15.59	11.02	350.25	28.47	18.18	32	19693
S.D.	15.33	19.10	13.75	21.20	21.79	11.82	136.97	19.10	13.75	32	19029
paired t=	1.01	1.62	1.55	1.56	-1.78	1.40	0.01	-0.20	0.01	-0.58	-0.88
p<	0.32	0.12	0.13	0.13	0.09	0.17	1.00	0.85	1.00	0.58	0.39

Middle Schools

	SCI	Percent Free Meals	Percent LEP	Percent Hispanic	Percent African American	Percent Asian	Total School Enrollment	District Percent Free Meals	District Percent LEP	District Size: # Schools	District Total # Students
BASRC Leadership Schools (N=11)											
Mean	158.50	36.17	19.62	31.01	8.53	12.52	955.00	32.00	17.04	45	26846
S.D.	12.04	20.61	17.71	15.11	8.72	12.26	330.45	16.60	11.20	35	19544
Matched Sample of BASRC Membership Schools (N=11)											
Mean	158.62	39.06	20.67	24.04	13.14	23.11	775.45	33.86	19.04	46	25758
S.D.	12.29	24.35	17.06	16.38	12.24	17.70	318.30	16.79	13.24	51	27142
paired t=	-0.15	-0.69	-0.33	1.40	-2.03	-2.24	1.23	-0.61	-0.64	-0.11	0.15
p<	0.89	0.51	0.75	0.20	0.07	0.05	0.25	0.56	0.54	0.92	0.89

High Schools

	SCI	Percent Free Meals	Percent LEP	Percent Hispanic	Percent African American	Percent Asian	Total School Enrollment	District Percent Free Meals	District Percent LEP	District Size: # Schools	District Total # Students
BASRC Leadership Schools (N=21, excluding 1 atypical school)											
Mean	155.01	24.34	14.70	24.50	13.50	15.95	1305.86	29.74	18.03	42	28001
S.D.	11.19	16.13	12.82	13.91	15.34	10.12	634.03	19.32	11.05	37	18878
Matched Sample of BASRC Membership Schools (N=21)											
Mean	154.97	22.44	14.24	23.26	14.41	18.50	1385.33	29.53	17.83	32	20928
S.D.	10.81	16.13	8.28	14.13	15.82	13.00	669.82	17.32	8.67	31	16308
paired t=	0.13	0.53	0.19	0.36	-0.23	-0.69	-0.41	0.05	0.09	1.24	1.60
p<	0.90	0.61	0.85	0.73	0.82	0.50	0.69	0.96	0.93	0.24	0.13

Appendix E

BASRC School ROP Rubric, Year 5 (2000-2001)

Criterion 1: Equity & Achieving High Standards

HOW ARE WE DOING AT RAISING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT, AND AT CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP?

Impact of the Work: All students are meeting higher standards. Race, class, language, culture, income, and gender are no longer good predictors of academic success (or failure). The norms, beliefs, structures, and skills for ongoing action to ensure the achievement of high standards by all students are widely shared and embedded in the school and district culture.

BEGINNING WORK To Support Impact	EMERGING WORK To Support Impact	SYSTEMATIC WORK To Support Impact	SUSTAINABLE CHANGE To Support Impact
Standards			
The school is working to develop, further develop, adopt, or begin to use some content standards or performance benchmarks for the focused effort. The standards are as yet incomplete and do not include the full range of the school's goals for students' intellectual, social, and ethical development. The school is developing curriculum, assessments, and student support strategies—and is planning to link this work to the focused effort and the standards.	The school has adopted a set of high content standards for the focused effort and many teachers are using them to guide teaching. The school is making plans to set performance standards for the focused effort, to extend content standards to other disciplines and to social and ethical domains, and to begin connecting the standards to assessment, curriculum development, and work on best practices. The school is beginning to formulate questions and initiate dialogue about the specific meaning of educational equity and closing the achievement gap.	The school has adopted and is using a linked set of content and performance standards to plan for all students in many curriculum areas, sometimes including social and ethical domains. Teachers are using content standards to revise curricula and social and ethical standards to reorganize fundamental structures and practices in order to create personalization and access.	Teachers, students, and parents understand and are using a complete set of intellectual social and ethical standards, including content and performance standards and aligned assessments. Standards are revised regularly as the school community revisits its goals for its students. The school community is habitually inquiring into further needs for, and effectiveness of, changes that ensure that each student has the personalized support she needs to meet the high standards.
Equity and the cycle of Inquiry			
Some members of the school leadership team are beginning to collect evidence about student learning and about school practices related to the focused effort. Some initial analysis of aggregate data is in progress; more careful focus and planning may be needed to avoid common pitfalls: lack of	Many teachers are beginning to collect and use baseline data (sometimes disaggregated) to define a problem statement that includes gaps in achievement among subgroups of students. They are also identifying and making plans to address inequities of access to high standards, expectations, and quality learning	The school is using disaggregated data strategically in schoolwide agreements and decisions about student achievement, standards, equity, and best practices. The school community is developing an explicit definition of equity and setting specific goals for achieving it. As a result of completion of a full Cycle of	Teachers and the school community are: strategically using multiple sources of data that clearly show a pattern of more students meeting high standards, as well as a closing of the achievement sap. They are habitually using this, and other data, to learn what works, what doesn't, and what's next to increase student achievement

disaggregated data; data collection and analysis that proves the obvious; or analysis that leads primarily to the discovery of shortcomings in the data collection process.	experiences. Many individuals are participating in data analysis and occasionally there is schoolwide analysis. The school may be experiencing "data overload" and having difficulty beaming-in on central issues.	Inquiry, the school is showing some evidence of improved student learning and a closing of the achievement gap. Building on these findings, teachers are refining and focusing data collection to identify both gaps and opportunities and to adjust teaching strategies and the work plan to address or take advantage of them.	and to close achievement gaps.

Personalization, priorities, and best practices

Most teachers are engaging in professional development related to current curriculum and instruction topics identified by the district or school leadership or by one or two staff members. The school is beginning to see the need to make closer connections between the focused effort and professional development priorities. Some teachers are active in networks and professional organizations that meet their individually identified needs.	Building on the standards and the focused effort, many teachers are participating in professional development to learn ways to improve teaching and learning especially for under-served students; the school is exploring alternative school structures and practices that promote personalization and equity of access to a quality education.	Informed by data and based on a Collaboratively-developed, overall plan for professional development, many teachers are engaging in in-depth learning experiences (subject matter knowledge, pedagogy, curriculum) linked to standards, the focused effort, closing the achievement gap, and increasing achievement for all students. Teachers are using a varied set of teaching strategies to fit individual learning needs and to close the achievement gap.	Teachers are continuously and strategically developing and expanding a repertoire of curriculum and instructional practices that are linked to standards for students and for teachers. They are making equity and increased student achievement a reality.

Partnerships and inclusion

Some teachers, staff, and professional educators engage in dialogue, planning, and action related to the focused effort, work plan, and initial parts of the Cycle of Inquiry.	The school and teachers are beginning to find ways for some parents and students, including those from diverse subgroups, to occasionally participate and provide input into the school's work on standards, assessment, curriculum instruction, and best practices.	Diverse stakeholders are actively participating in the school's Cycle of Inquiry and beginning to take responsibility for change and results. Effort and attention is going into strategies for expanding involvement of under-served students and parents.	The school is proactively creating ways for diverse stakeholders to participate in every part of the Cycle of Inquiry; under-served students and parents are providing input that influences decisions. Parents and community members understand, support, and advocate for the school's reform effort

Criterion 2: Depth

HOW ARE WE DOING AT DEPTH, AT ACTUALLY CHANGING WHAT HAPPENS IN CLASSROOMS?

Impact of the Work: Fundamental changes in the relationships among curriculum, teachers, and students support progress in intellectual, ethical, and social development. The norms, beliefs, structures, and skills for innovation and continuous improvement in teaching and best practices are embedded in the culture of the school and district.

BEGINNING WORK To Support Impact	EMERGING WORK To Support Impact	SYSTEMATIC WORK To Support Impact	SUSTAINABLE CHANGE To Support Impact
Student / teacher relationships			
Teachers are beginning to focus on individual differences among students and are developing a greater variety of teaching strategies and curriculum materials that match a range of student strengths, needs, and interests. Teachers respect students and expect hard work from them.	Based on initial data analysis and classroom observation, teachers are implementing programs and teaching strategies that better meet students' individual strengths, needs and interests. There is a growing mutual respect between teachers and students. Teachers and students expect and accept higher expectations for quality work. Interactions between teachers and students are mutually caring and respectful.	Through such tools as the Cycle of Inquiry, Critical Friendship, peer coaching, and self-reflection, teachers are developing an understanding of their own teaching practices and students' diverse strengths, interests, and needs. As a result, they are learning how both to personalize and individuate learning experiences. Students are becoming more actively engaged in more authentic learning work.	Teachers are in the habit of continually learning about their students' diverse strengths, interests, and needs and personalizing and individuating learning experiences for each student using a range of teaching strategies that engage every student in working hard at important things. As a result, students and teachers are continuously and actively engaged in authentic learning.
Study and expertise in subject matter			
Teachers are participating individually in self-selected subject matter projects, discipline-based workshops and summer institutes, or college courses. Groups of teachers are often working together to exchange knowledge and teaching ideas in disciplinary areas of common interest and need. The school's emerging focused effort is beginning to spawn more Collaborative work on subject matter expertise.	Teachers are beginning to join together in formal and informal intra- and inter-school collaborations in order to deepen their knowledge and skills in curriculum and instruction. Teachers are beginning to use the focused effort to define and drive individual and collective areas for professional development.	Teachers are participating in intra- and inter-school networks to deepen learning and subject matter expertise in order to implement new knowledge and skills in support of improved student achievement. The school supports long range staff development and aligns its resources to support ever-deepening professional development.	Teachers regularly tap into research-based knowledge of subject matter, knowledge about teaching and knowledge about students in order to create an environment that supports all students reaching high standards. Classroom level Cycles of Inquiry are linked to school level Cycles and the school community and district are proactively aligning resources and structures to support professional growth.

Inquiry and adjustment of curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment			
Teachers are participating in some aspect of developing and using standards; many are involved in planning and beginning to implement initial parts of the Cycle of Inquiry. Teachers are planning to collect data about student achievement related to the focused effort.	Teachers are continuing to develop standards and are beginning to connect them to development of improved classroom practice. Teachers are also beginning to see the connection between gaps in their own practice and gaps in student achievement.	Teachers are using research and standards-based practices to make decisions about the curriculum, teaching strategies, and assessment. They are collecting data about their own practice as part of a schoolwide inquiry into gaps in achievement.	Teachers are regularly participating in standards-based practice, ongoing inquiry, and consequent strengthening and adjustment of curricula, pedagogy, and assessment. They are continuously collecting, analyzing, and reflecting on the quality of student work and achievement, student voice, disaggregated data, implications for equity and improving of classroom practice.
Teacher culture and best practices			
Teachers are collaborating with colleagues at their grade-level or in their discipline areas. The focus of Collaborative work and learning is on sharing best practices and learning about innovative practices from outside sources.	Teachers are collaborating in a variety of intra-school configurations: grade-level, cross grade-level and cross discipline teams. The focus of Collaborative work and learning is reaching agreement about best practices. Some capacity for self-critique and reflection is emerging Teachers are discussing the need for professional teaching standards.	Teachers are using collaboration as a well-established strategy for honest identification of gaps, self-critique, and problem-solving both for individual teachers and the school community. Teachers are identifying shared beliefs about best practices, which grow and change constantly as teachers and the school continue to learn. Collaborative structures are supporting new teachers. Teachers are beginning to use professional teaching standards to assess and guide their work.	Based on honest identification of gaps, teachers are working Collaboratively as Critical Friends to take personal responsibility for results in their classroom—and collective responsibility for the quality, coherence, and effectiveness of schoolwide structures and teaching practices. Teachers are asking hard questions, reflecting, and engaging in critique of both individual and collective practice, based on agreed-upon schoolwide professional teaching standards.

Criterion 3: Breadth

HOW ARE WE DOING AT BREADTH, AT IMPACTING TH ENTIRE SCHOOL COMMUNITY?

Impact of the Work: All members of the school community – students, parents, teachers, administrators, district people, school board, and community members – understand the high standards, reform goals, and work plan, and accept responsibility for progress; participate in cycles of inquiry; and take action to make the school a vital place to teach and to learn.

BEGINNING WORK To Support Impact	EMERGING WORK To Support Impact	SYSTEMATIC WORK To Support Impact	SUSTAINABLE CHANGE To Support Impact
Stakeholder involvement and accountability			
Some stakeholders and school community members are participating as the initial parts of the Cycle of Inquiry are being implemented. Many teachers and stakeholders are carrying out reform activities and strategies efficiently and effectively. Conflict among stakeholders and individuals is either not yet surfacing, or is surfacing and causing some amount of delay, difficulty, or confusion.	Stakeholders and community members are participating in carrying out the school's work plan, as well as in collecting and analyzing baseline data about its impact. The school's work is beginning to reflect stakeholder questions and concerns. The work is beginning to impact more people and to call into question long-standing practices. As a result, conflicts may be arising which sometimes lead to helpful clarifications of the reform work, and other times slow down the momentum.	Stakeholders and community members are taking ownership of the school's reform effort and they are examining a large number of school policies, programs, practices, and structures. Stakeholder concerns are shaping the school's action plan and a variety of community members are taking on important roles in implementing it. Stakeholders view conflict as a natural part of the change process; teachers and other stakeholders are becoming more comfortable and skilled at working through conflict toward common purposes and shared agreements.	A spectrum of stakeholders is joining the school community in examining student achievement – and in providing input, Critical Friendship, and support in planning and taking action for improvement. The school is providing ongoing events and structures for two-way learning that generate more effective strategies for increasing student achievement. Stakeholders view conflict as natural part of enlarged participation in school change; they are acknowledging and managing it in order to identify problems, clarify priorities, and improve the teaching and learning environment.
Outreach and inclusion			
The school is implementing several proactive outreach and inclusion efforts to ensure greater participation and involvement, including outreach to under-served students and parents. The school is realizing the importance	The school is beginning to use some effective strategies to expand participation in its reform efforts, and, as a result, new voices and perspectives – in particular those of parents of color – are beginning to be	Active outreach, inclusion, and two-way communication is emerging as the norm at the school. Teachers, students, parents, and community members are coordinating their respective efforts to raise	Through active outreach, inclusion, and two-way communication, students, parents, and community members are participating in the varied aspects of the school community and reform effort (e.g.:

of finding ways to learn about the perspectives and school experience of under-served groups of students – as a means to improving educational services.	reflected in the evolving work plan. Teachers are placing priority on building personalized partnerships with parents to improve instruction and raise achievement.	achievement. Community members are participating in the life of the school community and the reform effort. Many under-served students and parents are participating as partners and are influencing the rethinking, adjusting, and improving of educational experiences to support their success.	parent-teacher dialogue; all parts of the Cycle of Inquiry; decision-making; accountability dialogues). Students and parents of color are essential and influential partners in improving educational experiences for students.
All teachers, all kids, all elements of school			
Some teachers are participating enthusiastically in classroom and school reform efforts. Others are as yet at the margins of the effort; the leadership team is beginning to implement strategies for schoolwide participation of all teachers.	The reform effort is expanding from a few active pockets, to many teachers, students, and parents. The school is planning different ways for stakeholders to be involved. The leadership team is involving teachers in expanding their professional expertise. A growing group of teachers and students is assessing and improving the school's program. Some students are beginning to see changes, innovations, or improvements in their classroom experiences.	Fundamental changes in the relationship among curriculum, teachers, and students are impacting most students, parents and teachers. A broad, inclusive set of stakeholders (teachers, students, parents, district, community members) is taking responsibility and building capacity for school change. Stakeholders are supporting new teachers and staff members to join in the Collaborative teacher culture and to contribute new perspectives to the reform effort. Shared decision-making and leadership are becoming part of the broader school culture.	Nearly all teachers and students are being impacted by fundamental changes in the relationships among curriculum, teachers, and students. Classroom and schoolwide improvements are touching almost all of the elements which shape the learning context: curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, professional growth and development, leadership capacity, decision-making structures, new teacher induction, parent and community partnerships. Working relationships with the district and the school board support the greater site flexibility and authority over decision-making and resource allocation necessary to sustain the change process.

Criterion 4: Leadership

HOW ARE WE DOING AT DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP AND AT TAKING ON A LEADERSHIP ROLE?

Impact of the Work: The principal and leadership team build and sustain widely distributed leadership systems, processes, and capacities. Consequently, work on reform is continuous and focused on students, high standards, equity, and best practices in teaching and learning. The school organizes its reform work around actions that will make a difference to increase achievement for all students. The school actively manages its context to sustain its work, including taking on leadership roles and sharing its progress and challenges in the district and region.

BEGINNING WORK To Support Impact	EMERGING WORK To Support Impact	SYSTEMATIC WORK To Support Impact	SUSTAINABLE WORK To Support Impact
Leadership Capacity			
The principal and teachers are serving on the reform leadership team, a group which is taking primary responsibility for decision-making and implementing the action plan. While the school is using initial parts of the Cycle of Inquiry, the purposes of the parts of the Cycle are mostly unclear among those outside the leadership team.	Teachers are serving as important members of the leadership team. They are working to involve others in understanding the big picture of the reform effort and are taking some leadership roles in activities involved in the work plan. This leadership team is taking primary responsibility for decision-making, often using input from a broader number of teachers and stakeholders. Initial parts of the Cycle of Inquiry are in place and involve a number of individuals.	Many school community members and teachers are serving on the reform leadership team, working to involve others in understanding the big picture of the reform effort and taking leadership roles in activities involved in the work plan. The principal and leadership team are designing new ways to sustain development of skilled and widespread leadership. Leadership decisions, priorities, and action plans are becoming closely linked to the processes and the completion of a Cycle of Inquiry.	Developing and supporting leadership capacity is an ongoing priority. The principal and other leaders are modeling and supporting others to engage in: open, honest surfacing of problems and gaps; development of a coherent set of strategies that make a difference to equity and student achievement. Multiple Cycles of Inquiry are part of the school culture—and are being used as the guiding system for planning, decision-making, and accountability.
Learning Relationships			
Learning relationships are valued by many individuals in the school. Professional development and relationships with particular support providers may be topical, relatively short-term, or loosely connected to the focused effort.	The principal and leadership team are viewing individual and collective learning among teachers as central to improving student achievement. Consequently, individual and collective learning relationships (e.g.: support providers, networks, professional organizations, consultants, district office) are being	Individuals and the school are maintaining several learning relationships to support multidimensional work. These relationships support self-critique, assist in self-diagnosis and encourage the school to adjust its work based on data analysis. The school is taking steps to ensure that all levels of	Teachers and school leadership are in the habit of building, using, and maintaining learning relationships with carefully selected support providers, networks, professional organizations, consultants, and the district. These learning relationships allow the school to be proactive in meeting new challenges;

	developed to support longer-term and cohesive work on the focused effort.	support are coordinated, coherent, and connected to the Cycle of Inquiry.	consequently, they are being viewed as integral elements of the school's continuous improvement and reform work. The school has developed systems to ensure that all levels of support are coordinated, coherent, and connected to the Cycle of Inquiry.
Managing the Context			
Attention is focused on the school, its students, teachers, parents, and most immediate stakeholders. The principal and leadership team are working to build relationships among the most close-at-hand partners by responding to their concerns. Attention to the larger context for reform (district, community, and state policy systems) is missing.	Attention is focused on the school, parents, teachers, and students, with some connections being made with feeder pattern schools, Critical Friends, or other schools. The school is creating time and ways for teachers to collaborate. The school is attempting to establish a mutually beneficial relationship with the district in order to promote and support flexibility for reform work.	The school's context for reform is continually widening to include district and community. The school is not only responding to these constituencies, but also beginning to manage them. The principal and leadership team are beginning to build agreements with the district about the district's support for reform — including key issues like professional development, finding time for teacher collaboration, and delegating the authority the school needs to use its resources flexibly.	The school is actively managing its context, which includes community, district, and state policy systems, to generate the resources and support it needs for ongoing change. The principal and leadership team anticipate leadership turnover (e.g.: principal, teacher leaders) and have structures and processes in place to assure continuity of leadership. The school reaches out to the district to create a relationship of mutual learning, accountability, flexibility, and support for innovation and increased student achievement.
Leadership Role			
The school is not yet feeling ready to take on a leadership role beyond the school's own reform work.	The school is occasionally making presentations and sharing its reform work within the district and with schools in network activities.	The school is engaging in two-way learning by sharing its work within the district, in the BASRC network, and in the region.	The school is playing multiple leadership roles—in the district, in BASRC and other networks, and in the region—to generate new partners and new learning for itself to better serve students, spark increased school reform activity and to publicly share its progress and challenges.

Criterion 5: Coherence and Focus

HOW ARE WE DOING AT STAYING FOCUSED?

Impact of the Work: The norms, beliefs, structures, and skills for maintaining Cycles of Inquiry, innovation, and continuous improvement are a part of the day-to-day school culture. Consequently, there is a constancy of effort and progress, and a sense of efficacy and accomplishment in the midst of the long-term change process.

BEGINNING WORK To Support Impact	EMERGING WORK To Support Impact	SYSTEMATIC WORK To Support Impact	SUSTAINABLE WORK To Support Impact
Relationships among the parts			
The school is clarifying the initial problem statement to focus on specific gaps in student learning. New roles, activities, and elements of the work plan are underway. The leadership team is recognizing the need to begin making connections among the building blocks of the reform effort: vision; problem statement; focused effort; standards; accountability framework; data systems; action; and work plan. Data collection for accountability questions is underway, but is not yet clearly connected to a complete Cycle of Inquiry.	The revised problem statement and focused effort are being used to guide initial implementation activities. The school is looking for ways to connect more closely several of the building blocks such as the focused effort, data collection strategies, and the accountability framework. For example: strategies are being developed and tried to increase participation in the Cycle of Inquiry; baseline data is being collected and the staff is beginning to use aggregate data to make some decisions about next steps.	The school's reform work is constantly being linked to an explicit Theory of Action that connects vision, clear and focused problem statement; focused effort, standards, accountability framework, data systems, action, and work plan. The school is regularly using the parts of the Cycle of Inquiry to develop and maintain alignment of their vision, standards, problem statement, and work plan. The school involves a broad cross-section of the school community in its work.	The various parts of the reform effort — and all of the people involved — are seen as interdependent and pull together in a constant direction toward achieving a shared vision. An explicit Theory of Action is guiding the reform work—that is, the school is habitually using Cycles of Inquiry to link their vision, standards, problem statement, and work plan and to ensure the reform effort is impacting improved student achievement. The school is routinely involving all members of the school community in every part of theses systems.
Focus on priority problems			
Teachers and school staff are seeing a mixture of many challenging problems. They are working to sort among them and are selecting a specific problem about student learning to define the focused effort and drive the Cycle of Inquiry.	The focused effort is being defined and refined as priorities and gaps in student achievement are being identified. Teachers and school staff are struggling with how to select and focus on a few specific problems with greatest promise for increasing student achievement. Consequently,	The school is collecting and using disaggregated data to formulate a problem statement and to focus on strategies most likely to impact the problems and to raise student achievement. Teachers, students, school staff, and community are using data, tools, and inclusive processes to	Individual teachers, groups of teachers, and the entire school community are continuously working together to uncover fundamental problems and issues to understand their root causes, and to define the most worthy and important problems on which to focus. Schools have the

the school is planning to collect disaggregated data to use in decision-making.	develop clear and shared priorities around compelling work. The school is continuously refining the focused effort and all the work supporting school change through a consistent use of completed Cycles of Inquiry.	ability to document their own progress and to make their own case about where they are and what they need to improve student achievement.

Action, impact, and momentum

The school is taking initial action on its original focused effort and on collecting and analyzing data. The school is working to connect the kind of actions and activities outlined in the work plan to specific student needs and learning gaps.	The school is adjusting the work plan in response to the issues and challenges raised by the school through data analysis, accountability dialogues, and ongoing reflection among teachers about the previous year's work. Teachers and some members of the community are beginning to use data to identify learning gaps and are looking for ways to adjust schoolwide and classroom practices to close those gaps.	Individual teachers and members of the school community are using all elements of the Cycle of Inquiry to make adjustments "in the moment." The school is regularly reviewing, adjusting, and aligning resources to increase the likelihood of positive impact on student achievement. Increasingly, concrete evidence of improved student achievements is supporting the pursuit of new strategies and the adjustment of existing ones.	The school is using its ongoing data systems and Cycles of Inquiry to support asking hard questions about the impact of the reform work and to adjust time, strategies, and resources to support those changes which are showing greatest impact. Concrete evidence of impact is fueling implementation of new strategies, as well as adjustment or expansion of promising ones. Growth in student achievement is propelling all students to high standards.

Resource use and alignment

Budgets from several discrete categories of funds are being considered in relation to one another for strategic support of the work plan. Some parts of the work plan are looking under-resourced—in terms of either funds, people, time, or personnel preparation.	The school is thinking of resources as including time, money, and people. The school is using several categories of funds for strategic support of the work plan. Some parts of the work plan are looking under-resourced—in terms of either funds, people, time, or personnel preparation, but bother people and time are being used in some creative ways.	The school is thinking of resources as time, money, and people, and also as capacity (knowledge and skills) to impact student achievement. The school is strategically aligning resources to support its work plan. The principal and leadership team are planning from "where they want to be" and then looking for matching resources, rather than planning around available funds.	Decisions reflect a clear understanding of the cause-effect relationship between resource use and student achievement. The school has the authority to, and the habit of, aligning its resources with the goals and activities of the current work plan. The school is using its funds, fund-seeking efforts, time schedule, personnel, and staff development to provide coherent support for carrying out the work plan. The school is focusing all available funds only on those activities that address student needs and identified reform work..

Appendix F.
BASRC Program Expenditures (1996-2001)

Appendix F. BASRC Program Expenditures (1996-2001)

Program Expenses	Allocation 1996	Allocation 1997	Allocation 1998	Allocation 1999	Allocation 2000	Allocation 2001	Allocation 1996-2001
Funding to 87 Leadership Schools	--	**45.5%**	**61.8%**	**65.0%**	**70.7%**	**63.0%**	**62.3%**
Support for Schools	**100.0%**	**17.6%**	**7.0%**	**4.6%**	**1.7%**	**1.8%**	**6.8%**
Workdays and WAC Workshop on Accountability	100.0%	14.3%	2.6%	2.5%	1.3%	1.3%	5.0%
Summer Leadership Institutes	--	3.2%	4.3%	2.0%	0.3%	0.6%	1.8%
Support Provider Services	--	--	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	--	0.1%
Accountability	--	**4.9%**	**1.6%**	**1.5%**	**1.4%**	**0.2%**	**1.5%**
Review of Progress	--	--	0.0%	1.5%	1.4%	0.2%	0.7%
Portfolio Reviews	--	4.9%	1.6%	--	--	--	0.7%
Collaborative Learning and Sharing	--	**8.0%**	**3.8%**	**2.4%**	**2.4%**	**2.5%**	**3.1%**
Collaborative Assembly	--	8.0%	3.7%	2.4%	2.4%	2.5%	3.1%
Affinity Groups	--	--	0.1%	--	--	--	0.1%
Regional Spread	--	**3.7%**	**2.3%**	**1.9%**	**1.4%**	**2.5%**	**2.1%**
Membership School Services	--	--	0.0%	0.7%	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%
"Our Schools, Our Media"	--	--	0.8%	0.0%	--	--	0.2%
Public Engagement	--	3.7%	1.5%	1.0%	0.5%	1.9%	1.4%
Speakers Bureau	--	--	--	0.1%	0.7%	0.6%	0.3%
Evaluation	--	**3.7%**	**2.5%**	**2.6%**	**1.2%**	**4.5%**	**2.7%**
2001 Planning	--	--	--	**0.3%**	**0.5%**	**0.2%**	**0.2%**
Program Support	--	**9.5%**	**6.7%**	**5.8%**	**5.5%**	**6.7%**	**6.3%**

Program Expenses	Allocation 1996	Allocation 1997	Allocation 1998	Allocation 1999	Allocation 2000	Allocation 2001	Allocation 1996-2001
R&D Initiatives	--	**7.1%**	**14.2%**	**15.9%**	**15.1%**	**18.5%**	**14.8%**
Technology	--	2.0%	1.9%	1.8%	--	--	1.0%
School to Career	--	2.8%	2.7%	2.0%	3.4%	1.4%	2.4%
BANDL	--	--	1.0%	1.2%	2.1%	2.5%	1.5%
School / University Partnerships	--	2.3%	5.2%	9.6%	6.4%	10.5%	7.3%
Diversity and Equity	--	--	0.3%	--	1.1%	2.2%	0.8%
Strengthening Leadership for Reform	--	--	0.6%	1.2%	1.5%	1.8%	1.1%
National Board for Prof. T.S.	--	--	--	0.1%	0.6%	0.0%	0.2%
Leadership Literacy Connection	--	--	2.0%	--	--	--	0.4%
Early Literacy	--	--	0.5%	--	--	--	0.1%
External Evaluator	--	--	--	--	0.1%	--	0.1%
Delegates Assembly	--	--	**0.2%**	**0.1%**	**0.1%**	**0.0%**	**0.1%**
TOTAL	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**