School Improvement Planning: What’s Missing?

Spring, 2005
Preface

This report stems from growing concern about the limited nature and scope of school improvement planning. It asks and answers the question:

*What’s missing?*

Our specific concerns are about how current school improvement planning guides address barriers to learning and teaching, particularly with respect to improving what is done when students are doing poorly and what is done to prevent students from experiencing learning and behavior problems.

This document is designed as a stimulus for discussion of the matter. As such it is being distributed to policy makers at all levels. The intent is to elicit responses about the concerns raised and to compile the responses into subsequent reports and diffusion processes aimed at promoting essential improvements in school improvement efforts.

The lens we use in analyzing the breadth and depth of planning is a three component model for school improvement. This model stresses that any school where a significant number of students are not doing well academically must not only focus on enhancing its instruction and curriculum, but also must focus on enabling learning through a comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive approach for addressing barriers to learning and teaching. And, it must govern and manage its resources in ways that treat both these components as primary and essential in daily school practice.

As always, we owe many folks for their contributions to this report, and as always, we take full responsibility for its contents and especially any misinterpretations and errors.

Finally, we want to acknowledge that portions of the work were done as part of a project funded by the Office of Adolescent Health, Maternal and Child Health Bureau (Title V, Social Security Act), Health Resources and Services Administration with additional support from the Center for Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. At the same time, it should be noted that the report is an independent work.

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