LEADING WITH HEART AND SMARTS:
Lessons about Raising Achievement and Closing Gaps from Schools, Districts and States on the Performance Frontier
Tale of two states
Average Low-Income Scale Scores by State

Grade 4 – NAEP Reading (2009)

Source: NAEP Data Explorer, NCES (Proficient Scale Score = 238)
Average African-American Scale Scores by State

Grade 4 – NAEP Reading (2009)

Source: NAEP Data Explorer, NCES (Proficient Scale Score = 238)
Average Latino Scale Scores by State

Grade 4 – NAEP Reading (2009)

Source: NAEP Data Explorer, NCES (Proficient Scale Score = 238)
Average White Scale Scores by State

Grade 4 – NAEP Reading (2009)

Source: NAEP Data Explorer, NCES (Proficient Scale Score = 238)
Average White Scale Scores by State

Grade 8 – NAEP Math (2009)

Source: NAEP Data Explorer, NCES (Proficient Scale Score = 299)
Average Latino Scale Scores by State

Grade 8 – NAEP Math (2009)

Source: NAEP Data Explorer, NCES (Proficient Scale Score = 299)
Average African-American Scale Scores by State

Source: NAEP Data Explorer, NCES (Proficient Scale Score = 299)
Average Low-Income Scale Scores by State

Grade 8 – NAEP Math (2009)

Source: NAEP Data Explorer, NCES (Proficient Scale Score = 299)
So that’s where we are.

Are we at least getting better?
Michigan NAEP Performance
Students Overall – Grade 4 Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average Scale Score</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relative Rank</td>
<td>Tied 25th</td>
<td>Tied 30th</td>
<td>Tied 30th</td>
<td>Tied 34th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Rankings are among all 50 states
Source: NCES, NAEP Data Explorer
# Michigan NAEP Performance

Students Overall – Grade 8 Math

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Average Scale Score</th>
<th>Relative Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>34&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>33&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>Tied 35&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>Tied 36&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Rankings are among all 50 states  
Source: NCES, NAEP Data Explorer
Just Detroit?
Percentage of African American Students Meeting or Exceeding Standards By District
2009 Grade 4 Reading MEAP

Source: Michigan Department of Education
Percentage of African American Students Meeting or Exceeding Standards By District
2009 Grade 8 Math MEAP

All African American Students in Michigan

Source: Michigan Department of Education
Percentage of Latino Students Meeting or Exceeding Standards By District
2009 Grade 4 Reading MEAP

All Latino Students in Michigan

Source: Michigan Department of Education
Percentage of Latino Students Meeting or Exceeding Standards By District
2009 Grade 8 Math MEAP

Source: Michigan Department of Education
High school graduation, college entry and completion?
College Going Rate for Recent High School Graduates, 2008

Source: Postsecondary Education Opportunity

National Average = 63.3%
When High School Dropout Rate is Factored In, the Picture is Different

( HS Grad Rate x College Continuation Rate, 2008 )

Source: Postsecondary Education Opportunity

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Six-Year College Graduation Rates, 2008

First-time, full-time freshmen completing a BA within 6 years

Source: NCHEMS Information Center, 2008
First-time, full-time freshmen completing a BA within 6 years

Source: NCHEMS Information Center, 2007
Six-Year College Graduation Rates
Hispanic, 2007

First-time, full-time freshmen completing a BA within 6 years

Source: NCHEMS Information Center, 2007
Six-Year College Graduation Rates
African American, 2007

First-time, full-time freshmen completing a BA within 6 years

Source: NCHEMS Information Center, 2007
Adults Ages 25-64 with at least an Associate’s Degree, 2008

Source: NCHEMS Information Center, 2008
Adults Ages 25-64 with at least a Bachelor’s Degree, 2008

National Average = 29.5%

Source: NCHEMS Information Center, 2008
Certainly, some exceptions to this pattern.
North Godwin Elementary School
Wyoming, Michigan

• 414 students in grades preK-6
  – 36% African American
  – 23% Latino
  – 37% White

• 70% Low-Income

Source: Michigan Department of Education
High Performance Across Groups at North Godwin

Grade 5 Reading (2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>North Godwin</th>
<th>Michigan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Income</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Income</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Michigan Department of Education
Fall 2009 Math proficiency rates at Michigan's regular public elementary and middle schools

Source: Preliminary Education Trust Analysis of Michigan Department of Education Data
Available at Harvard Education Press (www.hepg.org) or Amazon.com
So, we know it can be done. Some schools, right here in Michigan and elsewhere, are already doing it.
What can we learn from the high performers?
A lot of people in Michigan have been seduced by idea that all of Michigan’s problems would go away if we just radically expanded charter schools.
We’ve got to get over that myth.
Fall 2009 Math proficiency rates at Michigan's charter elementary and middle schools

Source: Preliminary Education Trust Analysis of Michigan Department of Education Data
Fall 2009 Math proficiency rates at Michigan's regular public elementary and middle schools

Source: Preliminary Education Trust Analysis of Michigan Department of Education Data
Fall 2009 Math proficiency rates at Michigan's regular public and charter elementary and middle schools

Source: Preliminary Education Trust Analysis of Michigan Department of Education Data
Whether schools are charters or traditional public schools, several features distinguish the high performers from all the rest.
#1. They set their goals high.
M. Hall Stanton Elementary:
Percent of 5th Graders ADVANCED
Michigan: Student Performance on State Exams vs. National Assessment
Grade 4 Reading 2009

Percent Proficient and Above

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MEAP</th>
<th>NAEP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4 Reading</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Michigan Department of Education and NAEP Data Explorer
Michigan: Student Performance on State Exams vs. National Assessment
Grade 8 Math 2009

Source: Michigan Department of Education and NAEP Data Explorer
That is why the State Board’s recent decision is the right one--tough times or not.
#2. They don’t leave anything about teaching and learning to chance.
An awful lot of our teachers—even brand new ones—are left to figure out on their own what to teach and what constitutes “good enough” work.

Result?

A System That:

- Doesn’t expect very much from MOST students
- Expects much less from some types of students than others.
‘A’ Work in Poor Schools Would Earn ‘Cs’ in Affluent Schools

Students can do no better than the assignments they are given...
A frequent theme in literature is the conflict between the individual and society. From literature you have read, select a character who struggled with society. In a well-developed essay, identify the character and explain why this character’s conflict with society is important.
Grade 10 Writing Assignment

Write a composition of at least 4 paragraphs on Martin Luther King’s most important contribution to this society. Illustrate your work with a neat cover page. Neatness counts.
High Performing Schools and Districts

• Have clear and specific goals for what students should learn in every grade, including the order in which they should learn it
• Provide teachers with common curriculum, assignments
• Have regular vehicle to assure common marking standards
• Assess students every 4-8 weeks to measure progress
• Act immediately on the results of those assessments
In other words, they strive for consistency in everything they do.

And they bring that consistency to school discipline, as well.
#3. Principals are hugely important, ever present, but NOT the only leaders in the school
In high performing schools...

• Teachers regularly observe other teachers
• Teachers have time to plan and work collaboratively
• New teachers get generous and careful support and acculturation
• Teachers take on many other leadership tasks at the school
#4. Good schools know how much teachers matter, and they act on that knowledge.
Students in Dallas Gain More in Math with Effective Teachers: One Year Growth From 3rd-4th Grade

10 Percentile Point Average Difference for Students who have Top and Bottom Quartile Teachers

Cumulative Teacher Effects On Students’ Math Scores in Dallas (Grades 3-5)

Source: Heather Jordan, Robert Mendro, and Dash Weerasinghe, The Effects of Teachers on Longitudinal Student Achievement, 1997
So, there are VERY BIG differences among our teachers.
BUT...

We pretend that there aren’t.
When it comes to measuring instructional performance, current policies and systems overlook significant differences between teachers. There is little or no differentiation of excellent teaching from good, good from fair, or fair from poor. This is the Widget Effect: a tendency to treat all teachers as roughly interchangeable, even when their teaching is quite variable. Consequently, teachers are not developed as professionals with individual strengths and capabilities, and poor performance is rarely identified or addressed.

• The New Teacher Project, 2009
In districts that use a two-rating teacher performance evaluation system—most commonly “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory”—the “unsatisfactory” rating is rarely used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>S: Number of Satisfactory Evaluation Ratings SY03-04 - SY07-08¹</th>
<th>U: Number of Unsatisfactory Evaluation Ratings SY03-04 - SY07-08²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denver³</td>
<td>2,676</td>
<td>22 (0.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonesboro⁴</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pueblo⁵</td>
<td>1,284</td>
<td>2 (0.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toledo⁶</td>
<td>1,768</td>
<td>3 (0.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All data for tenured/non-probationary teachers.

¹ Source: District extant data supplied between April 2008 and March 2009
² Source: District extant data supplied between April 2008 and March 2009
³ Number evaluation ratings assigned between SY 2003-04 to SY 2007-08
⁴ Number of evaluation ratings assigned between SY 2003-04 to SY 2007-08
⁵ Number of evaluation ratings assigned between SY 2003-04 to SY 2005-06
⁶ Number of evaluation ratings assigned between SY 2005-06 to SY 2007-08

Source: The New Teacher Project 2009

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Districts that use multiple evaluation ratings—three or more ratings—regularly award teachers the highest evaluation ratings.

Estimated percent of tenured/non-probationary teachers who received one of the top two highest performance evaluation ratings for evaluations conducted in SY 2007-08.

- **99%**
  - Cincinnati
  - (Based on a 4-Rating Scale)

- **98%**
  - Rockford
  - (Based on a 3-Rating Scale)

Source: District evaluation data supplied by Cincinnati Public Schools and Rockford Public Schools human resources departments from October 2008 to March 2009.
So, we paper over the differences among our teachers AND...we continue to assign our weakest to the kids who need the strongest.
Math Classes at High-Poverty and High-Minority Schools More Likely to be Taught by Out of Field* Teachers

Note: High Poverty school - 75% or more of the students are eligible for free/reduced price lunch. Low-poverty school - 15% or fewer of the students are eligible for free/reduced price lunch. High minority school - 75% or more of the students are Black, Hispanic, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander. Low-minority school - 10% or fewer of the students are non-White students.

Students at High-Minority Schools More Likely to Be Taught By Novice* Teachers

Note: High minority school -75% or more of the students are Black, Hispanic, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander. Low-minority school -10% or fewer of the students are non-White students.

*Novice teachers are those with three years or fewer experience.

Tennessee: High poverty/high minority schools have fewer of the “most effective” teachers and more “least effective” teachers

Note: High Poverty/High minority means at least 75% qualify for FRPL and at least 75% are minority.
Low-Achieving Students are More Likely to be Assigned to Ineffective Teachers than Effective Teachers

High performing schools and districts...

• Work hard to attract and hold good teachers
• Make sure that their best are assigned to the students who most need them
• Chase out teachers who are not “good enough” for their kids.
#5. They don’t give in, and they never give up—not on a single student.
“At my old school, it was functional for me to act stupid. If I did that, nobody expected anything of me and I could kind of just slip by. But at this school, nobody lets me act stupid. Not the principal. Not my teachers. Not the other students.”

--Elmont Student
Not giving up on a single child takes courage. It means you have to tackle the hard stuff, not just what is easy.
That from these last full measures of devotion that we here highly resolve these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.
FREEDOM IS NOT FREE
Preserving our freedoms as Americans has required courage, tenacity and a high level of skill from generations of soldiers.

Today, it requires those same things of us.