

APPENDIX

Case Study Interview Guide

Paperwork Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1850-NEW v.1, 4260. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. **If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to:** U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4537. **If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to:** Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, 555 New Jersey Ave, NW, Rm 611a, Washington D.C. 20208-5530.

The U.S. Department of Education is identifying the critical requirements for successful school improvement. We believe that you are especially well qualified to tell us about this, given [the length of your experience and/or role] in this school. Would you be willing to discuss your school's improvement efforts, knowing that your remarks will be kept completely confidential? Your comments will be combined with comments from teachers and administrators across several schools in several states and will never be associated in print with your name or the name of your school. **Yes**___ **No**___

Location of interview (school, district state):

Date of interview:

Interviewer:

Respondent:

Job Title:

Best email address:

Day phone number:

Evening phone number:

1. Tell me a little about yourself. What is your position in this school? When did you begin working here? [Obtain contact information and complete items above.]
2. What were your first impressions of this school, district and community? Have your impressions changed? What caused the change?
3. Here is a copy of the institutional timeline we sent last week. It identifies select events and interventions occurring here between 2003 and 2006. Can you identify other **major** school reform efforts occurring here during that period, whether positive or negative in effect?

[Wait for and record response.] Did any of the following events figure **prominently** in reform here? For each item, answer **yes** or **no** and briefly explain your answer.

- Changes in state, district and/or school leadership
 - Changes in student enrollment
 - Reconstitution of school
 - Changes in external pressures or supports including changes in funding.
 - Introduction of comprehensive, research-based school redesign process with assistance from an external organization
 - Changes in school staff; adult learning opportunities, norms of professional community, or programming coherence
 - New instructional strategies (e.g. project-based learning, cooperative learning, tiered interventions, tutoring, CAI, change in math/reading/ writing curriculum, block scheduling, use of student data to guide planning/PD)
 - Changes in school/class size or the daily/weekly/yearly school schedule
 - Changes in approach to engaging families or the community.
 - New ways of channeling student behavior, encouraging positive identities, and disrupting negative behavior
4. Of all events and interventions, which **two or three** individually or in combination would you say best defines the school improvement efforts of 2003 through 2006?
5. Please describe fully the two or three interventions you identified as typical of the period. If several minor innovations clustered, please describe those interventions as a group. Include the following elements in your descriptions:
- Intervention design (Was intervention dramatic or forceful in scale or method? What was approach to curriculum, pedagogy and assessment?)
 - Dynamics of initiation (Why was intervention initiated? Was the impetus from outside/inside the school? Who were champions of this approach?)
 - Challenges (What were the challenges posed by the school, community, district, and state context and what adjustments were made to accommodate this context?)
 - Supports (Was this intervention enabled by any changes in funding, leadership, program alignment, adult learning opportunities, data and data use opportunities, approach to professional community?)
 - Participant responsiveness (Did resistances or conflicts emerge over this intervention? How were these addressed? Did changes occur in staff on-the-job behavior? How did students respond to the intervention?)
 - Change (Did you see strengthening or weakening of implementation over time?)
6. If you were to put a headline or title on improvement efforts at this school in 2003-06, what would that be and why?
7. Let's make sure I understand your overall assessment of the impact of interventions in 2003-2006. Would you say that these interventions had no effect or they caused achievement outcomes to improve or get worse? *If there was an effect*, was the magnitude of the effect small (barely noticeable), medium (noticeable), or large (unmistakable)?

8. How would you explain results? [Wait for and record response.] Probe the following: intervention scope and design, intervention alignment/misalignment with context, attention to improving collective capacity of staff, reach or intensity of intervention.]
9. Returning to the present time, do you see evidence of 2003-06 change efforts in the way this school does business now? Where would I see that legacy?
10. In what ways, if any, has this school strengthened or weakened its capacity for effective teaching and learning since 2006? What more could the school do? What, if anything, stands in the way?
- 11.** Looking back over this school's experience, what advice would you give another school in challenging circumstances about improving teaching and learning? What advice would you give the district or the state about doing its part for improvement?
12. Thank you for participating in this study. Is there anything else you would like us to know about school improvement efforts here?