Smart Districts Framework

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AISR Background

- **Mission**
  - *To develop, share, and act on knowledge that improves the conditions and outcomes of schooling in America, especially in urban communities.*

- **Work Areas**
  - Communications, Dissemination and Learning Opportunities
  - Research and Knowledge Product Development
  - Capacity Building
    - School Districts
    - Communities
CORRE brings a team of leaders from the district, schools and the community together with staff from the Annenberg Institute to conduct a collaborative inquiry of all district stakeholders.

The inquiry collects qualitative data from all stakeholder groups. This data informs a set of AISR recommendations on how to improve district practice in ways that provide better support for teaching and learning in the schools.
Why the Smart District Framework?

To bridge the research/reality gap where AISR operates, make our tacit knowledge base explicit, and help us communicate more effectively with the districts we serve.
Knowledge Base

- *School Communities that Work* national task force
- Central Office Review for Results and Equity
  - Experience in 8 sites
  - Cross site analysis
- Other work with districts
  - Capacity-building
  - Research
- Review of literature on district wide improvement
How it Works

- Rooted in three themes
  - Results
  - Equity
  - Community

- Focuses on what we take to be key functions of a district concerned with results, equity and community – not necessarily exhaustive

- Assessment of a district’s “smartness” or how well it supports teaching & learning for all students
Smart Districts Functions

- Lead for Results & Equity
- Manage Human Capital
- Focus on Instruction
- Use Data for Accountability
- Build Partnerships & Community Investment
- Align Infrastructure with Vision
Practical Uses

**Internal**
- Help focus the different inquiries we help districts do
- Help organize the qualitative data we collect in those inquiries
- Help determine areas for reform in a district
- Help facilitate strategic planning
- Provide a way to look across sites and identify trends and patterns

**External**
- Provide a common language we can use to discuss reform with school districts
- Serve as the structure for a rubric that any stakeholder can use to assess their school district
- Help school districts reflect on their practice and the way in which they allocate time, resources etc.
- Provide a guide for developing a reform agenda’s strategic plan
- Serve as the architecture for an external website/wiki that contains our knowledge base
Challenges

- Getting It Right and Making It Useful
- Level of Detail and Keeping It Simple
- Alternative Governance Structures
- Cross-cutting Themes
What’s Most Important

- The framework attempts to balance research and best practice with the experience of practitioners and the day-to-day realities of school districts.
- It tries to identify the most important areas of work for a district that focuses on results, equity and community.
- It emphasizes people as strongly as process, systems, and technical/professional knowledge.
To learn more…

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