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Longitudinal Assessment of

Comprehensive School Reform Program

Implementation and Outcomes

FIRST-YEAR REPORT

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Longitudinal Assessment of Comprehensive School Reform Program Implementation and Outcomes

First-Year Report

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Executive Summary

The Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) program is one response to the persistent failure of some schools to provide students with educational opportunities to meet high standards for learning. The program was formed in an atmosphere of increased focus on school accountability and provides both a framework and the funding to enable schools to change their organization and practices so all students can achieve high standards.

In 1998, Congress appropriated $145 million for the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) program. It was designed not as an add-on to be placed on top of already existing programs and efforts but as a way to encourage schools to integrate local, state, and federal resources into a comprehensive effort that would better meet student learning needs. Like schoolwide Title I programs, CSRD was intended to help schools use multiple sources of funds and integrate programs while allowing flexibility and enhancing accountability for student learning. Its unique aspect was the expectation that schools would collaborate with expert partners to implement whole-school reform models that had a strong research base and a successful replication record.

With the passage of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act in 2002, CSR became a fully authorized program and is no longer a demonstration program. Further, NCLB described 11 components of comprehensive school reform (Exhibit E-1), and, some argue, focused less on models than on the underlying processes that facilitate the kinds of changes needed in order for schools to ensure that all students learn.

Exhibit E-1

Eleven Components of Comprehensive School Reform

Described in the No Child Left Behind Act

- **Proven methods** and strategies for student learning, teaching, and school management that are based on scientifically based research and effective practices and have been replicated successfully in schools with diverse characteristics.
- **Comprehensive design** for effective school functioning, integrating instruction, assessment, classroom management, and professional development and aligning these functions into a schoolwide reform plan designed to enable all students to meet challenging state content and performance standards and address needs identified through a school needs assessment.
- **Professional development.** High-quality and continuous teacher and staff professional development and training.
- **Measurable goals** for student performance and benchmarks for meeting those goals.
- **Support from staff.** Support from school faculty, administrators, and staff.
- **Support for staff.** Support for school faculty, administrators, and staff. (Added in 2001)
- **Parent and community involvement.** Meaningful involvement of parents and the local community in planning and implementing school improvement activities.
- **External assistance.** High-quality external support and assistance from a comprehensive school reform entity (which may be a university) with experience in schoolwide reform and improvement.
- **Evaluation.** Plan to evaluate the implementation of school reforms and the student results achieved.
- **Coordination of resources.** Identification of how other available resources (federal, state, local, or private) will help the school coordinate services to support and sustain the school reform.
- **Scientifically based research.** Scientifically based research to significantly improve the academic achievement of students participating in such programs as compared with students in schools who have not participated in such programs or strong evidence that such programs will significantly improve the academic achievement of participating children. (Added in 2001)

Source: No Child Left Behind Act, Title I, Part F, Section 1606.

Study Purpose

The Longitudinal Assessment of Comprehensive School Reform Implementation and Outcomes (LACIO) responds to the NCLB Act's requirement for an evaluation of the federal Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) program. The legislation stipulates two broad goals for the evaluation: first, to evaluate the implementation and outcomes achieved by schools after

three years of implementing comprehensive school reforms and, second, to assess the effectiveness of comprehensive school reform in schools with diverse characteristics. In order to address these requirements, the study focused on four evaluation questions:

1. How are CSR funds being targeted?

2. How is comprehensive school reform implemented in schools receiving CSR funds, in schools receiving Title I funds and in other schools?

3. What is the relationship between CSR implementation and student achievement outcomes?

4. What conditions (at the state and district level) influence the implementation of comprehensive reform programs?

This report presents data collected from a random sample of 400 CSR schools that received funding in 2002 and 400 non-CSR schools with similar demographic and achievement characteristics.[1] It draws from three data sources—school-level surveys of principals and teachers, the *National School-Level State Assessment Score Database* and the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) *Common Core of Data* (CCD). The data were collected in spring 2003 at the end of the first year of CSR implementation (2002-03). The emphasis in this report is on the first two evaluation questions that focus on school reform activities and the targeting of CSR program funds.

First-Year Findings

The first year of the evaluation has yielded information with implications for federal policy. The implications relate to two key findings:

- Although both CSR and non-CSR schools are engaged in reform, reform in CSR schools is more likely to include adoption of models and other activities closely associated with research-based models.

- CSR funds are strongly targeted to high-poverty schools and low-performing schools, and schools receiving CSR funds are lower performing than are other schools with similar demographic characteristics at the time they receive awards.

[1] The sample of 400 represents 36 percent of the approximately 1,100 schools reported to receive CSR funds for the calendar year 2002. As a random sample, it does not mirror the universe on all characteristics. The distribution of the sample across locale and school level were comparable to the distributions of the universe, while reading and mathematics scores were slightly higher for the CSR sample. Similarly, the non-CSR schools, which were required to be in the same districts as the sample schools and with no current or past CSR funding, had slightly higher baseline achievement levels. These comparison schools represent the best available matches given these requirements. Further, analyses of achievement outcomes will control for variables such as achievement and poverty level, among others.

Implementation of School Reform Activities in CSR Schools and Other Schools

Both CSR and non-CSR schools reported they were implementing specific activities that prior research indicates are associated with reform. However, as discussed below, the CSR schools differed from the non-CSR schools in their implementation of components directly related to selecting, implementing and evaluating models for reform. Further, CSR funding seems to contribute to building capacity for ongoing reform, with schools reporting more school activity that reflects coherence and cohesiveness during the first year of implementation (2002-03) compared with the previous year.

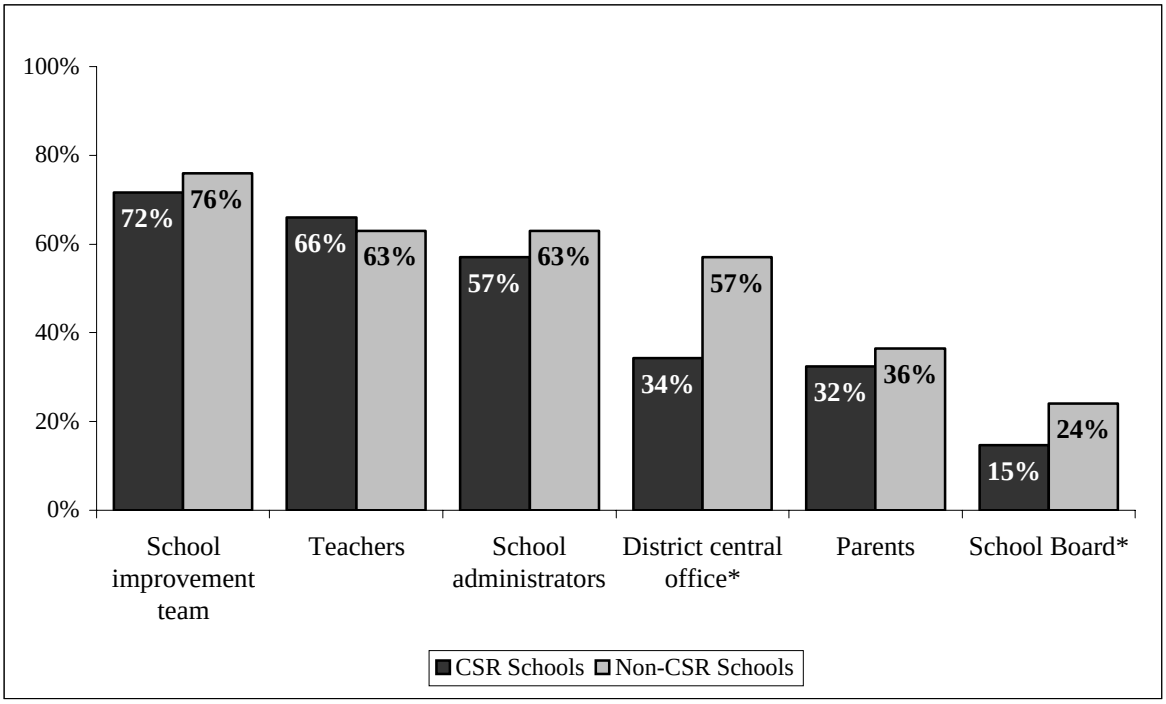
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Nearly all schools in the sample (CSR and non-CSR schools) reported they had formal comprehensive plans for school reform. Principals at both CSR and non-CSR schools indicated these plans included components similar to the 11 CSR components, although CSR schools were more likely to report seeking research evidence about a proposed reform and adopting a reform created outside of the school.

Teachers and school administrators were involved in selecting the reform model or approach being implemented, both at CSR schools and non-CSR schools. However, the school board and the district central office played a more significant role in selecting reform at non-CSR schools than at CSR schools, indicating more "top-down" requirements for changes in practice in non-CSR schools. One third of CSR schools reported that the district central office was one of several entities responsible for selecting the reform, compared with 57 percent of non-CSR schools, which reported this method. Non-CSR schools reported that school board members were involved in the decision at a higher rate than did CSR schools (24 percent for non-CSR schools compared with 15 percent of CSR schools) (Exhibit E-2). Further, state or district mandates were more likely to contribute to the selection of reform at non-CSR schools (60 percent) than at CSR schools (31 percent).

Exhibit E-2

Entities Involved in Selecting a Reform Model or Approach at the School



**Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level.*

Exhibit reads: School staff were involved in selecting a reform model or approach at both CSR and non-CSR schools. However, the district central office (57 percent) and school boards (24 percent) had a greater role at non-CSR schools than at CSR schools (34 percent; 15 percent).

A higher percentage of CSR principals reported their schools had a comprehensive written plan in the first year of CSR implementation, 2002-03, (93 percent) as compared with the previous year (75 percent), indicating some influence of CSR. In contrast, principals in non-CSR schools reported little change (89 percent had comprehensive written plans in 2002-03, compared with 86 percent in 2001-02). In addition, **CSR schools were significantly more likely to report engaging in whole school reform in 2002-03 (76 percent) than the prior year (55 percent)**.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development for *all* teachers was included in the school reform plan more frequently in CSR schools than in non-CSR schools. A greater number of CSR schools than non-CSR schools provided more than 10 days for professional development and received on-site assistance from external supporters.

Ninety percent of CSR schools included professional development for *all* teachers in their school reform plan compared with 73 percent of non-CSR schools. CSR schools also provided more than 10 days for professional development more often than did non-CSR schools (56

percent as compared with 39 percent). External assistance providers supported reform efforts on-site in significantly more CSR schools (86 percent) than non-CSR schools (57 percent). Finally, formal evaluation plans in CSR schools were more likely to include assessment of the utility of external assistance than such plans in non-CSR schools (41 percent vs. 30 percent) (Exhibit E-3).

Exhibit E-3

Status of Professional Development in School Reform

	CSR schools	Non-CSR schools
Professional development for *all* teachers is included in school improvement plan	90%	73%*
School provides 10 or more days for professional development	56%	39%*
School receives on site support for reform efforts from external providers	86%	57%*
School evaluation plan includes assessment of the utility of external assistance	41%	30%*

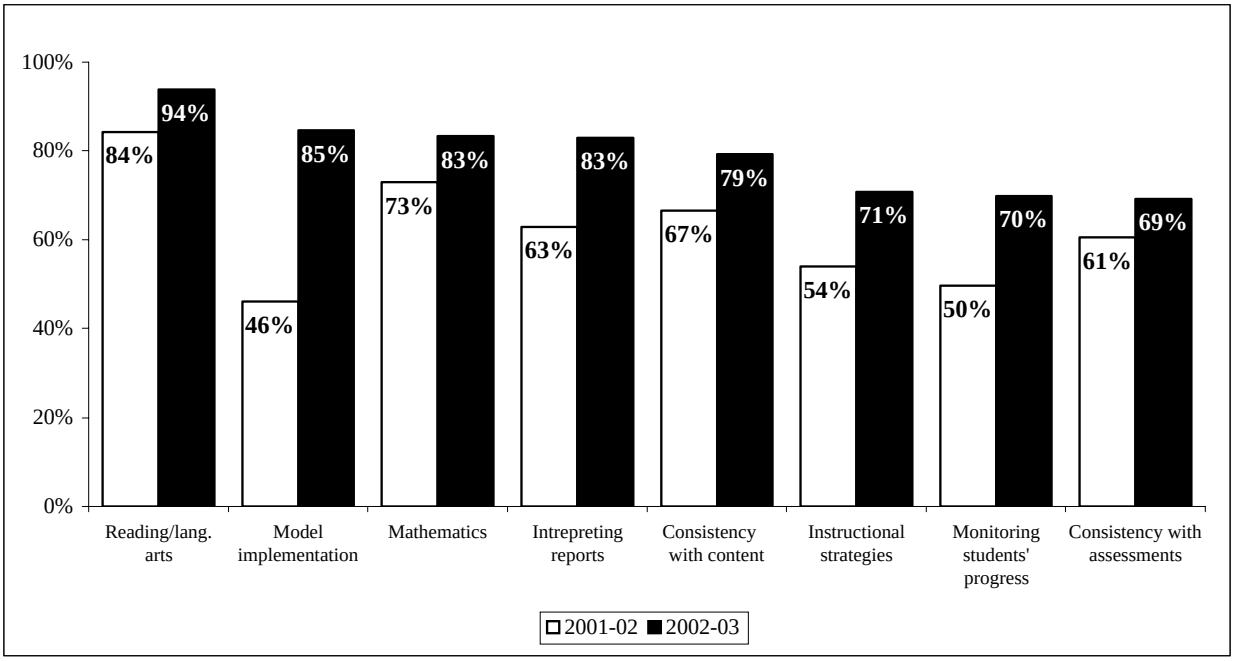
**Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level.*

Exhibit reads: In CSR schools as compared with non-CSR schools, professional development more often was included in the school reform plan (90 percent vs. 73 percent), offered for over 10 days (56 percent vs. 39 percent) and took the form of on-site assistance from external sources (86 percent vs. 57 percent).

Teacher participation in grade-level or content area teams increased significantly in CSR schools in 2002-03, compared with 2001-02. In addition, CSR teachers reported receiving more days of professional development in 2002-03 than in the prior year, and the training was more focused on issues related to reform (Exhibit E-4).

Exhibit E-4

Types of Professional Development in Which CSR Teachers Participated During the First Year of Reform Implementation (2002-03) Compared with the Previous Year



Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level for all items.

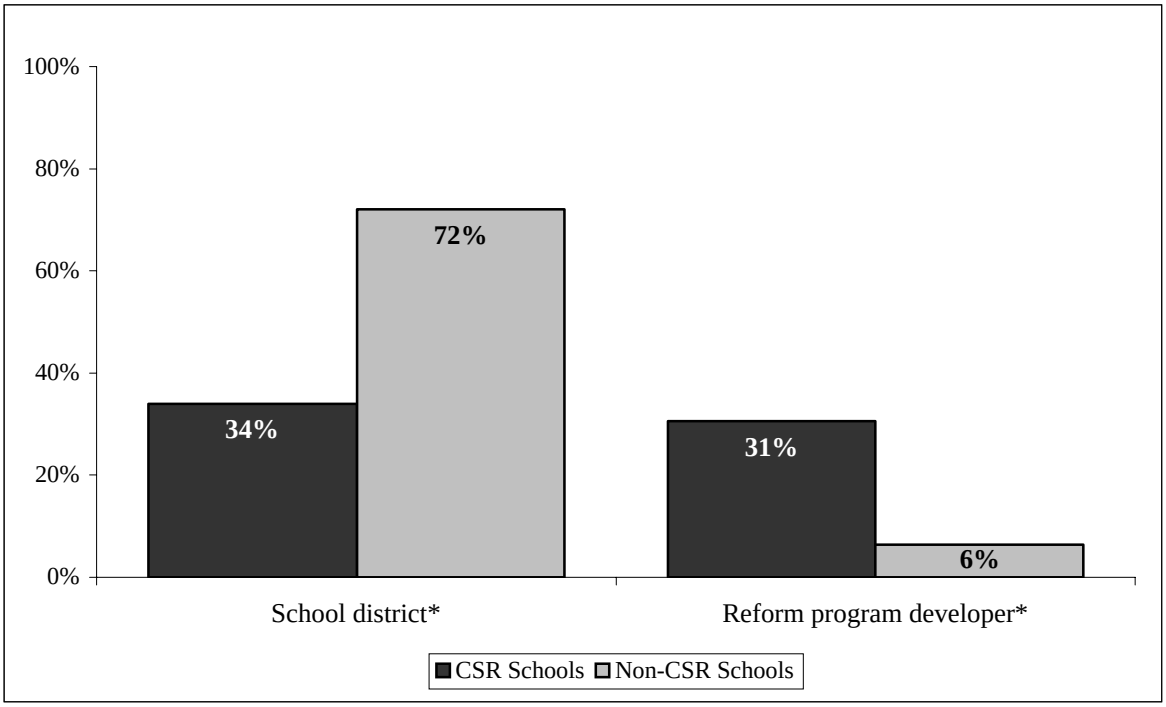
Exhibit reads: CSR teachers were much more likely to receive training on model implementation (85 percent), monitoring students' progress (70 percent) and interpreting reports (83 percent) in 2002-03, compared with 2001-02 (the year prior to CSR implementation).

SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL REFORM

Significant differences existed between CSR and non-CSR schools in the type of support they receive. As might be predicted, **CSR schools were far more likely to receive support from a model developer than non-CSR schools** (31 percent vs. 6 percent). However, **non-CSR schools were more likely to report receiving support for school reform efforts from the district than were CSR schools** (72 percent of non-CSR schools vs. 34 percent of CSR schools) (Exhibit E-5).

Exhibit E-5

Entity Primarily Responsible for Supporting Reform Efforts at the School

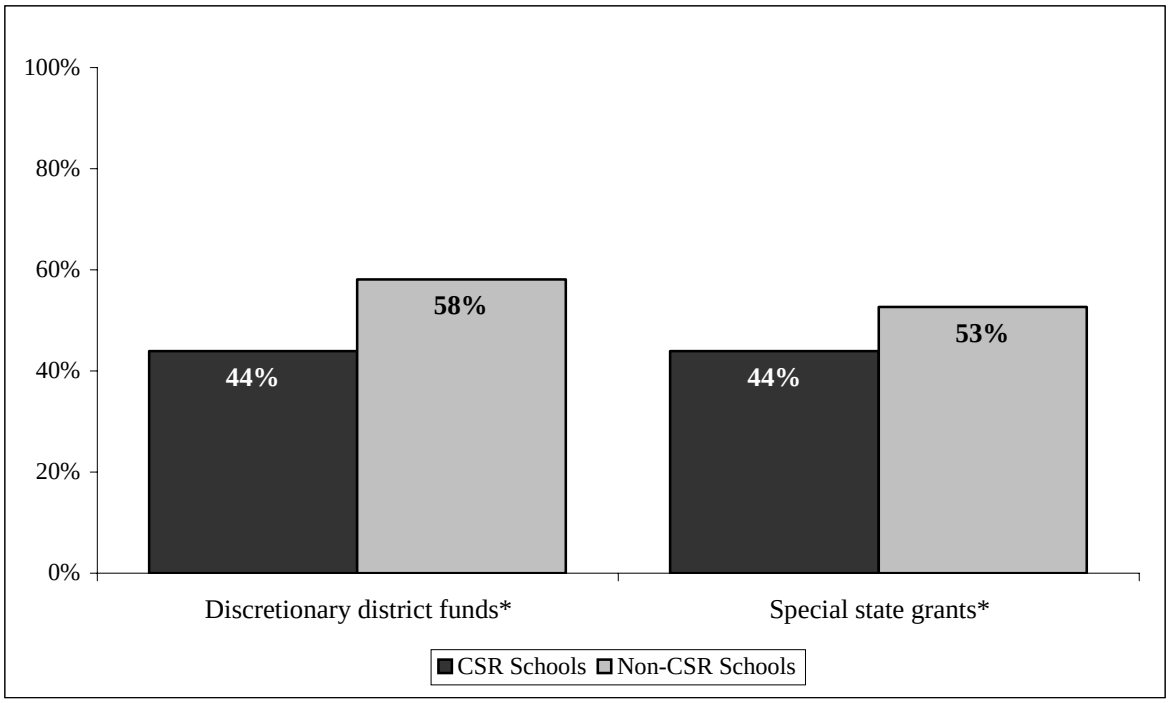


**Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level.*

Exhibit reads: CSR schools were far more likely to identify model developers as the primary supporters of reform at their school (31 percent for CSR schools vs. 6 percent for non-CSR schools). Conversely, non-CSR schools (72 percent) reported more district support for school reform efforts than did CSR schools (34 percent).

S**tates and districts were more likely to provide funds for reform to non-CSR schools than to CSR schools**. Discretionary district funds went to 58 percent of non-CSR schools compared with 44 percent of CSR schools. Special state grants were awarded to 53 percent of non-CSR schools compared with 44 percent of CSR schools (Exhibit E-6). Further, in 2002-03, districts supported different kinds of activities in CSR schools as compared with the previous year. Districts were more likely to help CSR schools select a school reform model in 2002-03 (45 percent) than in 2001-02 (32 percent) but were less likely to provide CSR schools with professional development for school reform in 2002-03 (72 percent) than in 2001-02 (86 percent).

Exhibit E-6
Sources of Funding that Contribute to Implementation and Operation of School Reform



**Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level.*

Exhibit reads: Special state grants and district discretionary funds were more commonly used for reform at non-CSR schools (58 percent for district funds; 53 percent for state funds) than at CSR schools (44 percent for each source of funds).

SUMMARY OF CSR IMPLEMENTATION

CSR comprises 11 components whose interaction may improve schools. Respondents to the survey indicated that both CSR and non-CSR schools were implementing a number of the components. However, CSR schools were more likely than non-CSR schools to implement components most associated with adopting a model. Consequently, the presences of some similar components in CSR and non-CSR schools may not indicate equal progress toward reform nor lead to equal outcomes for students. The differences in the components that are implemented in CSR and non-CSR schools may well encompass different interactions, which, in turn affect the extent to which schools are coherent and cohesive, enabling them to provide students with focused and challenging opportunities to learn to high standards.

CSR schools, as compared with non-CSR schools, were more likely to implement the following components:

- Adopt externally developed strategies that have been replicated. They did so by:

- Identifying a specific reform model (85 percent compared with 49 percent).

- Using evidence from research that the reform model chosen improves student achievement (42 percent compared with 26 percent).

- Provide more continuous professional development. They did so by:

  - Including professional development activities for *all* teachers (90 percent compared with 73 percent).

  - Allocating over 10 days to teacher professional development (56 percent compared with 39 percent).

- Include measurable goals for student performance associated with the reform model (57 percent compared with 41 percent).

- Reflect support from staff by including a formal vote by teachers for the reform model (82 percent compared with 55 percent).

- Provide support for staff by receiving on-site consulting relevant to the reform (85 percent compared with 57 percent).

- Evaluate the reform. They did so by:

  - Including the requirements of the reform model in the scope and content of evaluation (66 percent compared with 42 percent).

  - Assessing the utility of external assistance (41 percent compared with 30 percent).

In sum, both CSR and non-CSR schools exhibited many aspects of comprehensive reform. However, CSR schools were more likely to adopt externally developed models. Other differences between the two types of schools were related to model adoption.

Targeting of CSR Funds

The legislation intends for CSR funds to be targeted to low-performing schools that serve high-need students.

CSR funds were strongly targeted to high-poverty schools and those with high concentrations of minority students. Almost half (45 percent) of CSR schools had poverty rates of at least 75 percent, nearly three times greater than the percentage of all schools in this highest-poverty group (16 percent) and close to double the percentage of Title I schools (26 percent) (Exhibit E-7). Similarly, schools with high concentrations of minority students (75

percent or higher) accounted for nearly half (47 percent) of CSR schools, compared with 30 percent of Title I schools and 21 percent of all schools. CSR schools were much more likely to be located in urban areas (46 percent of CSR schools) than were Title I schools (26 percent) or all schools (25 percent). Rural schools were equally represented among CSR schools, Title I schools and all schools (13 percent of each group). CSR schools were less likely than Title I and all schools to be located in suburbs and towns.

The distribution of CSR schools by poverty and minority status was similar to the distribution of Title I schoolwide programs—not a surprising finding, because both programs are targeted to high-need schools. For example, the highest-poverty schools accounted for 45 percent of CSR schools and 42 percent of Title I schoolwides. However, CSR schools were more likely to be located in urban areas (46 percent) than were Title I schoolwides (37 percent). The proportion of CSR schools that were operating Title I schoolwide programs was 56 percent, compared with 25 percent of all schools operating Title I schoolwide programs.

Exhibit E-7

Distribution of CSR Schools and Other Schools by School Poverty Rate

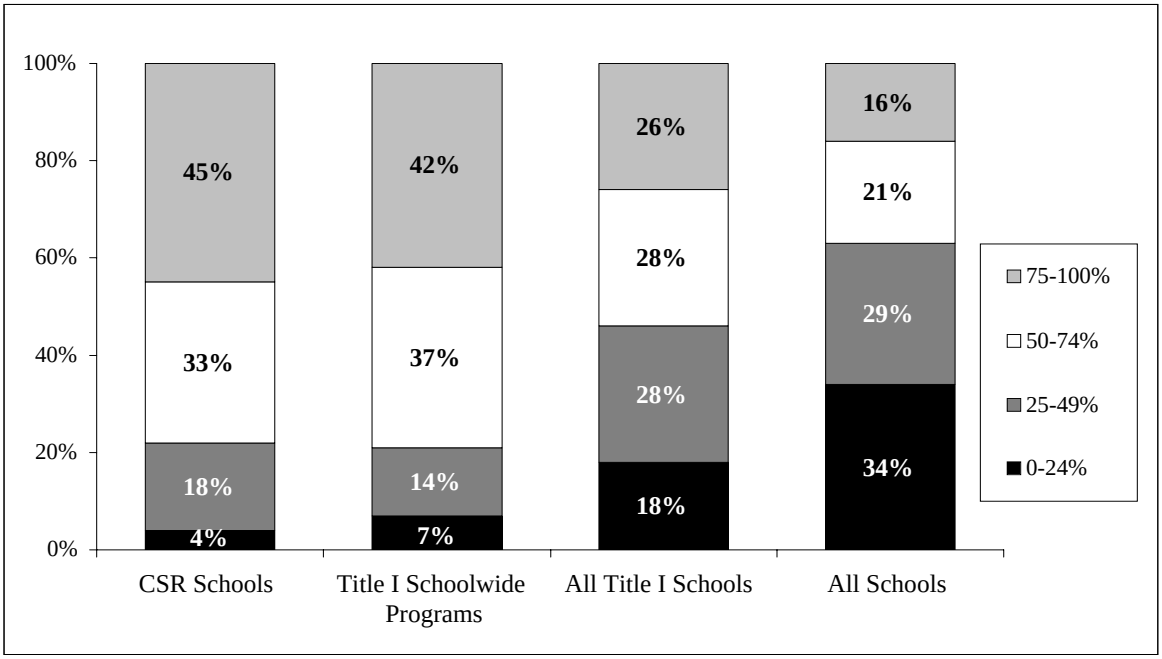


Exhibit reads: Almost half (45 percent) of CSR schools had poverty rates of at least 75 percent, nearly three times greater than the percentage of all schools in this high poverty group (16 percent) and close to double the percentage of Title I schools (26 percent). The distribution of high poverty CSR schools was similar to the distribution of Title I schoolwide programs (42 percent).

At the time of funding, CSR schools were significantly more likely to report that they were identified as a low-performing school according to the criteria used in their state (46 percent) at the time of award than were the non-CSR schools (28 percent). When they received CSR funding they were also more likely to have received state sanctions due to low performance

(11 percent as compared with 3 percent). These are additional indicators that CSR funds are being targeted to schools in need of improvement.

CSR schools had lower baseline achievement scores than did Title I schoolwides in reading and mathematics at most grade levels (elementary, middle, and high school) at the time the awards were made. For example, in elementary and middle grades, students in CSR schools scored an average of .4 standard deviations lower in reading and math achievement than students in Title I schoolwides. Further, the difference was true regardless of school locale or poverty level, a further indication of targeting.

Conclusion

Taken together, the findings about CSR implementation and targeting raise interesting questions. One such question is whether the use of CSR funds accelerates reform in the lowest performing schools. States and districts seem to have targeted CSR funds to those schools that have the greatest need to change practices in order to support high achievement for all students. With CSR funds, the schools were more likely to adopt models, focus professional development, and track student performance than were non-CSR schools. Both CSR and non-CSR schools were engaged in other reform activities. In subsequent years, the evaluation will provide information about whether CSR schools implement more reform components more thoroughly than do non-CSR schools. If they do, CSR can be seen as adding value to improvement by providing a mechanism that focuses efforts and enables school staff to organize themselves in ways that offer greater educational opportunities for students. Perhaps CSR helps schools jump-start improvement.

Second, data from the first year of this evaluation indicate that all schools in the sample are engaged in many aspects of what the legislation defines as "comprehensive school reform." Consequently, the study carries implications about the nature of reform in general. Most low-performing schools in the non-CSR group are making efforts to improve. Questions then arise as to whether the efforts are associated with improved outcomes: Do schools succeed in reform without models to organize them? Are models only important in the lowest performing schools?

I. Introduction

This report of the Longitudinal Assessment of Comprehensive School Reform Implementation and Outcomes (LACIO) responds to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act's requirement that an evaluation of the federal Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) program be completed. The legislation stipulates two broad goals for the evaluation:

- To evaluate the implementation and results achieved by schools after three years of implementing comprehensive school reforms.
- To assess the effectiveness of comprehensive school reform in schools with diverse characteristics.

The federal CSR program provides funds to states, which, in turn make grants to schools to support comprehensive reform. The intention is that the vast majority of these schools will be Title I schools "in need of substantially improving" their student achievement levels. Further, the CSR program delineates 11 components of "comprehensive school reform," which are supported by research and evaluation.

This first-year report begins with an overview of the context for the CSR program, a description of its history, and a description of the 11 components of comprehensive school reform included in NCLB. It then addresses the goals of NCLB by presenting preliminary findings related to implementation of CSR and an examination of the types of schools receiving CSR program funding. The report includes information drawn from surveys sent to 400 CSR program schools ("CSR schools") and 400 matched non-CSR program schools ("non-CSR schools") that examine the presence and characteristics of the 11 components of CSR, as well as other elements (e.g., school organization) that prior research has shown to be associated with successful program implementation.

Background

Comprehensive school reform was a response to the persistent failure of some schools to provide students with educational opportunities to meet high standards. As state and federal governments have increased emphasis on academic standards, they have also increasingly held schools accountable for ensuring that students meet those standards. However, they have also provided guidance and funds to help schools change so students can successfully achieve high standards. CSR constitutes one mechanism for providing such assistance.

This section provides background on CSR, including the relationship of the program to ongoing efforts to hold schools accountable for results and the history of CSR as a *program* funded through the U.S. Department of Education (ED). It then moves to a discussion of the purpose of this evaluation, including how the study addresses emerging issues in CSR and the evaluation questions from NCLB. The section concludes with an overview of the report.

Assessment, Accountability, and Schoolwide Reform

Since 1965, the federal government has authorized formula grants to states and local education agencies (LEAs) for the education of elementary and secondary students with low academic achievement who are enrolled in schools serving low-income areas. These grants, known as Title I, were designed to accomplish four primary goals:

- Provide supplemental education to students eligible for services.
- Provide additional funding to schools and LEAs serving high concentrations of children from low-income families.
- Focus educators on the needs of special student populations.
- Improve the academic achievement of eligible students, reduce performance gaps between advantaged and disadvantaged students, and assist eligible students in meeting high academic standards.

In 1994, Congress changed the focus of Title I programs in the Improving America's Schools Act (IASA). This act, which reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), included Title I provisions calling for schools that receive Title I funds to set high standards for *all* students, to assess *all* students relative to these standards, to report results to the public, and to make instructional and structural changes to ensure that *all* students have the opportunity to meet these standards (Quenemoen et al. 2001). This movement, part of standards-based reform, marked a shift away from providing disadvantaged students with basic skills and toward more advanced content and performance standards for all students.

The authorization signaled a new focus on schoolwide reform for Title I schools serving high concentrations of low-performing, high-poverty students (U.S. Department of Education 2001). This focus came as evaluations suggested that targeted, "pull-out" education programs for students, the previous use of Title I funds, showed no clear positive effect on student achievement in high poverty schools. In fact, studies showed that pulling students out of their regular classes for special programs disrupted the classroom, stigmatized the students, reduced time spent in the regular class with their peers, and yielded uneven instruction (U.S. Department of Education 1997). In contrast, studies supported the notion that *schoolwide* reform would benefit even the most low achieving students by raising standards, implementing a challenging curriculum, and assessing learning (U.S. Department of Education 1996a; U.S. Department of Education 1996b; U.S Department of Education 1993).

As a result, schools with high concentrations of high-poverty students were allowed to pool resources and encouraged to use these resources to leverage additional funds, as well as to integrate programs related to curriculum, parent involvement, professional development, and drug prevention (U.S. Department of Education 1998). The U.S. Department of Education identified several characteristics of schoolwide programs including:

- A comprehensive approach that integrates the whole school (students, faculty, parents, and the community), uses data to assess students' needs, and then ties instructional and assessment practices in all curricular areas to this understanding.

- A focus on examining and reforming the curriculum in multiple subject areas, not simply one or a few.

- Collaboration between the school and district to implement reform, where the school receives autonomy in areas such as management, budget, and program development, while also getting district support and funding.

- Strong leadership from the principal to shape a common vision.

- Qualified professionals who receive professional development, small classes, and the right materials and equipment to facilitate excellent teaching.

- An environment where everyone believes in the ability of students to achieve high standards—with no exceptions.

- Accountability measures that monitor student progress, use data to continuously improve teaching and learning, and provide the necessary support for success (U.S. Department of Education 1998).

Of course, change or reform is a complicated, demanding process. For change to take hold, consistent leadership is needed, as is support from the district (Finnan 2000; U.S. Department of Education 2000a; Stringfield et al. 1997). School reform is a political process requiring buy-in from a broad range of constituencies, including teachers, parents, and the larger community; developing this buy-in takes time. These challenges to reform are further complicated by changing expectations for schools, the growth of new programs, and the dismantling of old ones—all of which take staff time and can create a culture of cynicism about change (Sarason 1996).

NCLB raises the stakes for schools, particularly low-performing schools. As with earlier Title I authorizations, schools are required to make "adequate yearly progress" (AYP) toward state achievement standards. In addition, NCLB tightens requirements about how such progress is shown by mandating annual testing and reporting outcomes of key subgroups of students. Further, Title I schools "in need of substantially improving" student achievement levels can be subject to sanctions. Such schools also must make supplemental services available to students and can, if the need for improvement persists, be reconstituted. Students can also receive opportunities to attend different schools.

The stakes, therefore, are high. Schools must focus on student achievement and change curriculum, instruction, organization, and other elements to meet students' needs better. CSR is a source of both ideas and funds to bring about school reform designed to facilitate schools' abilities to meet accountability requirements.

The Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) Program

In 1998, Congress appropriated $145 million for the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration program (CSRD). It was designed as a way to encourage schools to engage in a comprehensive effort that would better meet student learning needs (U.S. Department of Education 2000a). CSRD was not to be an add-on placed on top of already existing programs and efforts but a way to encourage schools to integrate local, state, and federal resources to bring about improved student learning (U.S. Department of Education 1999).

Like schoolwide Title I programs, CSRD was intended to help schools leverage funds from both public and private sources and integrate programs while giving them flexibility and enhancing accountability for student learning. Its unique aspect, relative to other Title I programs and the IASA legislation, was the expectation that schools collaborate with expert partners to implement whole-school reform programs that had a strong research base and a successful replication record (Hale 2000).

As its cornerstone, CSRD had nine criteria that the reform programs used by funded schools had to meet (U.S. Department of Education 1999; U.S. Congress 105th Session). The legislation offered 17 programs as *examples* of the models schools might choose to employ but enabled schools to choose other models, combine models, or create their own reform programs, provided they met the nine criteria. The models include some developed for a school's entire curriculum, some models focused on specific content areas, and process models that guide schools through the development of their own vision and corresponding materials and practices. In addition, schools had the option of crafting their own models (Hale 2000). A quick review of the models adopted by schools in the first cycle of CSRD funding indicates that subject-specific (mainly reading) models were among the "top 30" models adopted by schools (http://www.sedl.org/csrd/awards.html). Further, schools implemented different configurations of the nine components, with some schools focusing on fewer than all nine.

The CSRD appropriation spurred a dramatic growth in school reform. Even prior to CSRD, more than 2,100 schools were affiliated with one of three schoolwide reform programs (Success for All, School Development Project, or Accelerated Schools) (Consortium for Policy Research in Education 1998). The CSRD initiative was expected to more than double the number of schools embarking on such reform efforts (Consortium for Policy Research in Education 1998). As of September 2000, 1,800 schools had received CSRD funds (U.S. Department of Education 2000b). About 2,000 schools were funded as a result of the next round of applications for CSRD funds. Several states have adopted initiatives similar to CSRD. States such as Colorado, Hawaii, Wisconsin, and North Carolina have used the CSRD model to restructure their efforts at reform, providing similar grants to districts in their states; other states (Oregon, Tennessee, and West Virginia) used the CSRD model to guide how they distribute Title I and state school improvement funds (U.S. Department of Education 2000b).

With the passage of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act in 2001, CSR became a fully authorized program and is no longer considered a demonstration program. Further, NCLB described 11 components of comprehensive school reform (Exhibit 1) and did not include a list of models.

Exhibit 1

Eleven Components of Comprehensive School Reform

Described in the No Child Left Behind Act

- **Proven methods** and strategies for student learning, teaching, and school management that are based on scientifically based research and effective practices, and have been replicated successfully in schools with diverse characteristics.
- **Comprehensive design** for effective school functioning, integrating instruction, assessment, classroom management, and professional development and aligning these functions into a schoolwide reform plan designed to enable all students to meet challenging state content and performance standards and address needs identified through a school needs assessment.
- **Professional development.** High-quality and continuous teacher and staff professional development and training.
- **Measurable goals** for student performance and benchmarks for meeting those goals.
- **Support from staff.** Support from school faculty, administrators, and staff.
- **Support for staff.** Support for school faculty, administrators, and staff. (Added in 2001)
- **Parent and community involvement.** Meaningful involvement of parents and the local community in planning and implementing school improvement activities.
- **External assistance.** High-quality external support and assistance from a comprehensive school reform entity (which may be a university) with experience in schoolwide reform and improvement.
- **Evaluation.** Plan to evaluate the implementation of school reforms and the student results achieved.
- **Coordination of resources.** Identification of how other available resources (federal, state, local, or private) will help the school coordinate services to support and sustain the school reform.
- **Scientifically based research.** Scientifically based research to significantly improve the academic achievement of students participating in such programs as compared with students in schools who have not participated in such programs; or strong evidence that such programs will significantly improve the academic achievement of participating children. (Added in 2001)

Source: No Child Left Behind Act, Title I, Part F, Section 1606.

The schools included in this evaluation received funding starting in 2002. States applied the NCLB definition of comprehensive reform to the schools they funded as described in the Department's guidance for the program, despite the fact that some funding came from earlier appropriations. The 11 components, then, frame the study. The underlying questions related to implementation are:

- To what extent do schools receiving CSR funding implement the 11 components?

- How is implementation of reform in CSR schools different in schools, particularly Title I schoolwides, that do not receive program funding?

This report focuses on the implementation question in the first year of funding. Later reports will assess progress on implementing the components and will relate implementation to outcomes in both CSR and non-CSR schools.

Study Purpose

The CSR program has evolved along with the changing context for education. It is one approach to improving opportunities for students in low-performing schools. NCLB includes other approaches, some of which focus on students (e.g., access to supplemental services; the option to transfer students to higher performing schools) and some of which focus on improving the schools (e.g., schoolwide Title I; CSR; professional development). Further, federal, state, and district policies create increased pressure on low-performing schools because accountability for results has increased. Such pressure could potentially increase "CSR-like" activities in non-CSR schools. As a result, the study, while focused on CSR, has implications for how all schools in need of improvement may serve their students better. This section focuses first on the potential implications of the evaluation and then moves to the questions that guided the evaluation, placing them within the broader context as well.

Emerging Issues in CSR

CSR as a program facilitates access to models with scientifically based evidence of their effectiveness. It also articulates a set of principles (in the form of components) that are designed to reform low-performing schools so students in such schools can meet high standards. The current study is evaluating the extent to which CSR achieves its objectives. As such, the findings of the study will have broad implications for both policy and practice. This section points to a few such implications and places this evaluation within the framework of earlier CSR-related research and evaluation related.

This study represents an important change in evaluating CSR. Whereas earlier evaluations focused strongly on models, this evaluation focuses on comprehensive school reform as manifested in the 11 components and interactions among them. Examples of work focused on models abound. Borman, Hewes, Overman, and Brown used meta-analysis to review "research on the achievement effects of comprehensive school reform (CSR) and summarizes the specific effects of 29 widely implemented models" (Borman et al. 2003). Similarly, Desimone addressed the question "Can comprehensive school reform models be successfully implemented?" (Desimone 2002). Both articles focus attention on the use of "proven strategies and proven methods for student learning, teaching and school management" that have "been found to have strong evidence that such programs will significantly improve the academic achievement of participating children" (components 1 and 11). They also include some discussion of a "comprehensive design for effective school functioning," "high quality and continuous teacher

and staff professional development," and support by "teachers, principals and administrators" (components 2, 3, and 5).

As NCLB makes clear, the use of scientifically based research is not confined to adopting models. The principle of basing practice on scientific research runs throughout the law. However, CSR focuses on principles beyond a single subject or service to students. CSR presumes that low-performing schools, as *institutions,* should (and can) change to serve students more effectively. The institutional focus of CSR differentiates it from, for example, programs that focus on improving reading instruction or any other curriculum area. Further, CSR assumes that *comprehensiveness* itself is a spur to reform. Although NCLB includes 11 components of comprehensiveness, their nature is such that interactions among them (and with the context in which the school exists) are expected to lead to greater impact than each of them alone or even a subset of them. In short, the CSR components are not a checklist for comprehensiveness, but rather are indicators of *coherence* and *cohesiveness* of school structures and processes (Newmann et al. 2001). This evaluation provides a vehicle for addressing such views empirically.

As a result of the evaluation, ED will have information about the extent to which CSR helps low-performing schools change practices and improve outcomes with appropriate support, including support in implementing research-based practices and organizational structures.

Evaluation Questions

In NCLB, Congress required a national evaluation to: (1) evaluate the implementation and results achieved by schools after three years of implementing comprehensive school reforms; and (2) assess the effectiveness of comprehensive school reforms in schools with diverse characteristics (No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, P.L., 107-110). In order to address these requirements, this study is focused on four broad questions:

1. How are CSR funds being targeted?

    - Are states targeting CSR funds to low-performing and under-performing schools in both urban and rural areas? Does the funding reach students at all grade levels?

2. How is comprehensive school reform implemented in schools receiving CSR funds, in schools receiving Title I funds, and in other schools?

    - How well have schools implemented the eleven components of comprehensive school reform identified in the NCLB Act of 2001?

    - What types of school reform models or strategies are schools implementing?

    - Do CSR resources help schools build their capacity for reform? How do schools sustain the reform process, given natural attrition in staff, changes in district priorities, and shifts in funding?

3. What is the relationship between CSR implementation and student achievement outcomes?

    - To what extent have CSR schools made progress on state assessments, in comparison to other schools in their state with similar characteristics?

    - Were schools previously identified as in need of improvement able to make sufficient progress to move out of "school improvement" status?

    - How do achievement trends vary across different types of CSR schools (e.g., high poverty, high minority)?

4. What conditions (at the state and district level) influence the implementation of comprehensive reform programs?

    - To what extent have state and district policies supported the implementation of comprehensive school reform? Have state and district policies or support helped develop the capacity to begin the reform process? How have states, districts, and schools planned to sustain reforms after the federal funding ends?

Focus and Organization of the Report

In this report, the primary emphasis is on the first two evaluation questions that focus on school reform activities and the targeting of CSR program funds. In the report, this chapter is followed by a description of the evaluation design, including data collection and analysis approaches. The third chapter presents the findings from the study, including:

- A look at which schools received CSR program funds in 2002, including comparisons of baseline achievement levels of CSR schools and non-CSR schools prior to implementation.

- The status of various aspects of reform in the CSR and non-CSR schools.

- The school-based practitioners' perceptions of state and local policy influence in implementing school reform.

The findings section concludes with a discussion of the nature of comprehensive reform as it currently exists in the sample, including how components relate to one another and the value of CSR funds in advancing reform and helping schools build their capacity for reform. The final chapter summarizes the findings and points to policy implications.

II. Evaluation Design

The five-year evaluation will employ a quasi-experimental design to analyze student data and school reform at multiple points in time, comparing CSR program and non-CSR program schools. The evaluation will include multiple methods of data collection and analysis in order to increase the robustness of the study. The study will include three approaches, each contributing to answering the questions posed by the legislation. The approaches comprise a complementary set of inquiries, going beyond the capability of any single method. The approaches are:

- An analysis of student achievement in all CSR schools that received funding in 2002, compared with student achievement in a sample of similar schools that have not received CSR funding as well as with a sample of Title I schoolwides.

- An analysis of survey and interview data from a large sample of schools, a smaller sample of districts and each state.

- A field-based inquiry of a small sample of CSR program and nonprogram schools in the district and state context.

The section below briefly outlines the data collection and analysis plan for the five-year evaluation, as well as the evaluation activities used in preparing this first-year report.

Study Data Collection and Analysis

Analysis of Student Achievement

For all schools in the evaluation, a *quantitative analysis of changes in student achievement* will be conducted. The analyses will cover the universe of CSR schools funded in 2002 compared with a sample of 400 non-CSR schools selected to match the CSR schools in the sample for the surveys (see below). In addition, student achievement will be compared with a sample of Title I schoolwides.

Survey of School Reform Activities

The study includes a survey of a sample of 800 schools (400 CSR schools and 400 comparable schools) that will complete survey forms asking them to describe the various reform activities occurring at the schools. The CSR schools in the evaluation represent a random sample of all schools receiving CSR funds in 2002.

The survey instrument will be distinguished from a typical survey form in that it will include items that are evidence-based and measure behaviors, rather than measuring attitudes and expectations (see Appendix B for a complete discussion of the use of the survey forms). The survey will inquire into the extent to which the 11 elements of comprehensive school reform

included in NCLB are present and other elements (e.g., school organization) that prior research shows to be associated with successful program implementation.

In addition to the mailed surveys, the evaluation will collect data about CSR activities and state and district policies from a smaller sample of districts and each state. These telephone interviews will provide a more complete picture of CSR implementation, as well as data needed to analyze the effects of state and district policies on CSR implementation and outcomes. Such effects will be addressed using multilevel modeling techniques (Bryk and Raudenbush 1992). Subsequent reports will include those analyses.

Field-Based Study of Reform Activities

Out of the larger sample of 800 schools, a subsample of 15 pairs of schools (half of each pair is CSR program school and half, non-CSR) have been selected to participate in the *Field-Based Study of Reform Activities at CSR Program and non-CSR Program Schools*.

The field-based study will include two visits to each site, occurring during the second and third years of a school's CSR award. Each "site" consists of four entities:

1. A CSR-funded school.
2. A demographically matched non-CSR school (a school that has not received any federal CSR funds) located in the same district as the CSR-funded school.
3. The district within which the two schools are located.
4. The state within which the district is located.

By covering these four entities, the field-based component will address all four evaluation questions and also produce an understanding of the dynamic of the actual relationships among school, district, and state actions, policies, and practices.

During the site visits in the field-based component, the evaluation team will complete organizational inventories covering relevant events at the "site." Data for the inventories will come from classroom observations, using a formal observation instrument, as well as other direct field observations, reviews of relevant school documents and materials, and discussions with school staff and parents. The field-based study is underway and will be concluded by early spring 2005. Data from the study will be included in later reports.

Methods Used in the First-Year Report

The First-Year Report presents data collected from a random sample of 400 CSR schools that received funding in 2002 and 400 non-CSR schools with similar demographic and

achievement characteristics.[2] It draws from three data sources—the mailed school-level surveys of principals and teachers, the *National State Assessment Score Database* and the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) *Common Core of Data* (CCD).

Mailed School-level Survey

Survey data were collected from a random sample of CSR schools that received funding in 2002 and the comparison schools in spring 2003 at the end of the first year of implementation. Of the schools selected for the survey, 367 CSR and 356 non-CSR schools agreed to participate in the evaluation, with 350 of them representing matched pairs. In addition to schools that refused to participate, some late in the school year, the sample included five schools that had closed. They were replaced with a second random sample and mailed surveys in fall 2003 (Appendix B). Five additional comparison schools were eliminated from the sample because they were later found to be CSR schools. These comparisons will not be replaced.

The analyses presented in this year-one report are based on responses from 89 percent of participating target schools and 89 percent of participating non-CSR schools. Matching individual CSR and non-CSR schools is not crucial for the descriptive analyses in this report. It will become important when implementation and outcomes are related in subsequent years. Currently, the study data includes matched responses from 88 percent of schools.

National State Assessment Score Database

The *National State Assessment Score Database*, maintained by the American Institutes for Research (AIR), includes student achievement data from all states. The data will be used to compare outcomes in CSR and similar non-CSR schools. In the first-year report, the data were used to establish the baseline for later comparisons.

Common Core of Data

The CCD, which provides information about demographic and other school characteristics, served two roles in the first-year report. First, it was an important source of data for matching CSR and non-CSR schools. Second, CCD provided the data to analyze the extent to which CSR funds were targeted as intended by NCLB.

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[2] The sample of 400 represents 36 percent of the approximately 1,100 schools reported to receive CSR funds for the calendar year 2002. As a random sample, it does not mirror the universe on all characteristics. The distribution of the sample across locale and school level were comparable to the distributions of the universe, while reading and mathematics scores were slightly higher for the CSR sample. Similarly, the non-CSR schools, which were required to be in the same districts as the sample schools and with no current or past CSR funding, had slightly higher baseline achievement levels. These comparison schools represent the best available matches given these requirements. Further, analyses of achievement outcomes will control for variables such as achievement and poverty level, among others.

III. First-Year Findings

Comprehensive school reform is both a concept and a program. As a concept, it implies systematic, whole school, coherent reform in how a school is organized, delivers instruction, uses curriculum, provides professional development, and integrates resources. As a program, comprehensive school reform is defined by 11 components, which reflect research and practice in school reform. This evaluation is designed to provide information about both the concept of comprehensive school reform and the program, and the analyses will relate outcomes to school reform, not to program funding. Consequently, the data collection instruments included questions about the extent to which CSR and non-CSR schools were engaged in reform, whether the characteristics of reform differed in CSR and non-CSR schools, and the outcomes of reform activities in both types of schools. To that end, and because CSR is frequently associated with implementation of "models," the surveys avoided the use of the terms "comprehensive school reform" and "models."

Overall, *both* CSR and non-CSR schools were engaged in activities associated with most of the 11 components, probably because both were responding to similar state and federal accountability requirements. However, implementation of reform at the CSR schools differed from implementation in the non-CSR schools on the components that were most closely associated with externally developed models.

This section contains the findings from the first year of the evaluation. The findings are drawn from the *National School-Level State Assessment Score Database*, NCES *Common Core of Data*, and the school-level surveys developed for the evaluation. Only selected exhibits are in this section; a complete set of tabulations appears in Appendix A.

Targeting of CSR Funds

Funding for schools in the 2002 cohort varied. CSR schools received an average of $100,565 for CSR activities per year, which represents an increase of funding from $66,175 in 1998. However, the amount varied by type of school, with high schools receiving more money than elementary and middle schools. Although high schools received more money, the allocation per student was smaller at $122 than in middle schools ($162 per student) or elementary schools ($189 per student). Further, schools in urban districts received more funding than schools in suburban districts and small towns, but rural schools received more money than small town schools. Funding also varied by state, with California granting $387,403 as an average award and Maine granting $50,000.

The CSR legislation intentionally targets CSR funds to low-performing schools that serve high-need students.

CSR funds were strongly targeted to high-poverty schools and those with high concentrations of minority students, as well as to urban schools. Almost half (45 percent) of CSR schools had poverty rates of at least 75 percent, nearly three times greater than the percentage of all schools in this highest-poverty group (16 percent) and close to double the

percentage of Title I schools (26 percent) (Exhibit 2). Similarly, schools with high concentrations of minority students (75 percent or higher) accounted for nearly half (47 percent) of CSR schools, compared with 30 percent of Title I schools and 21 percent of all schools (Exhibit 3). CSR schools were much more likely to be located in urban areas (46 percent of CSR schools) than were Title I schools (26 percent) or all schools (25 percent). Rural schools were equally represented among CSR schools, Title I schools, and all schools (13 percent of each group). CSR schools were less likely to be located in suburbs and towns than in rural or urban communities (Exhibit 4).

The distribution of CSR schools by poverty and minority status was similar to the distribution of Title I schoolwide programs—not a surprising finding, because both programs are targeted to high-need schools. For example, the highest-poverty schools accounted for 45 percent of CSR schools and 42 percent of Title I schoolwides. However, CSR schools were more likely to be located in urban areas (46 percent) than were Title I schoolwides (37 percent). The proportion of CSR schools that were operating Title I schoolwide programs was 56 percent, compared with 25 percent of all schools operating Title I schoolwide programs.

Exhibit 2

Distribution of CSR Schools and Other Schools by School Poverty Rate

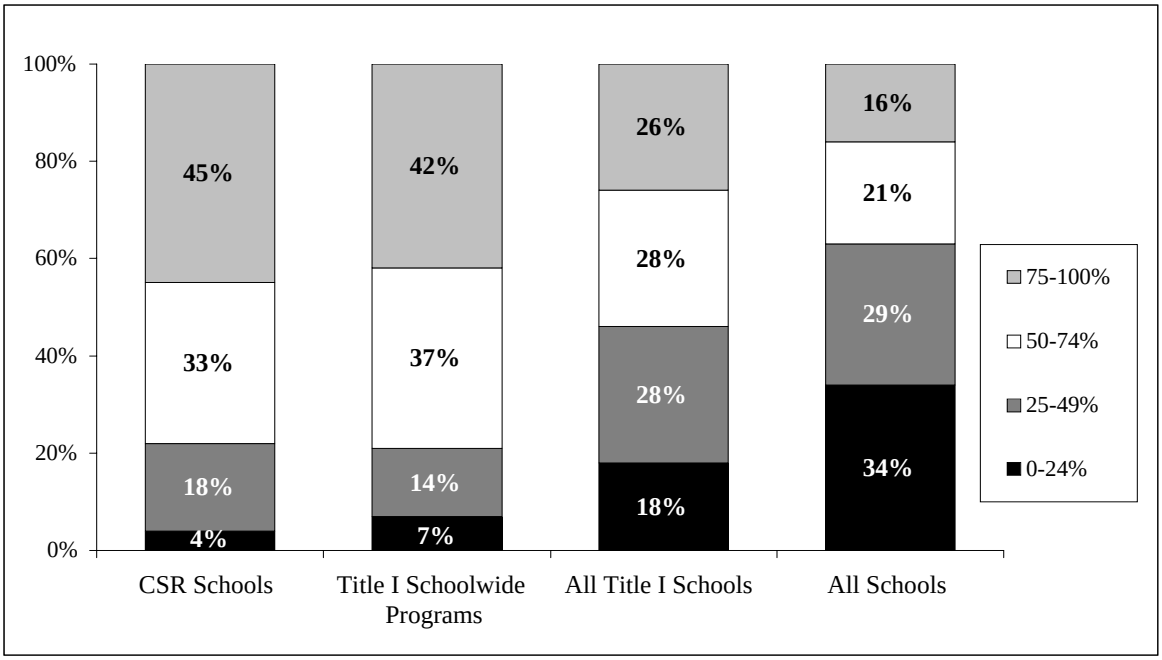


Exhibit reads: Almost half (45 percent) of CSR schools had poverty rates of at least 75 percent, nearly three times greater than the percentage of all schools in this high poverty group (16 percent) and close to double the percentage of Title I schools (26 percent). The distribution of CSR schools by poverty status was similar to the distribution of Title I schoolwide programs (42 percent).

Exhibit 3

Distribution of CSR Schools and Other Schools by Percentage of Minority Students

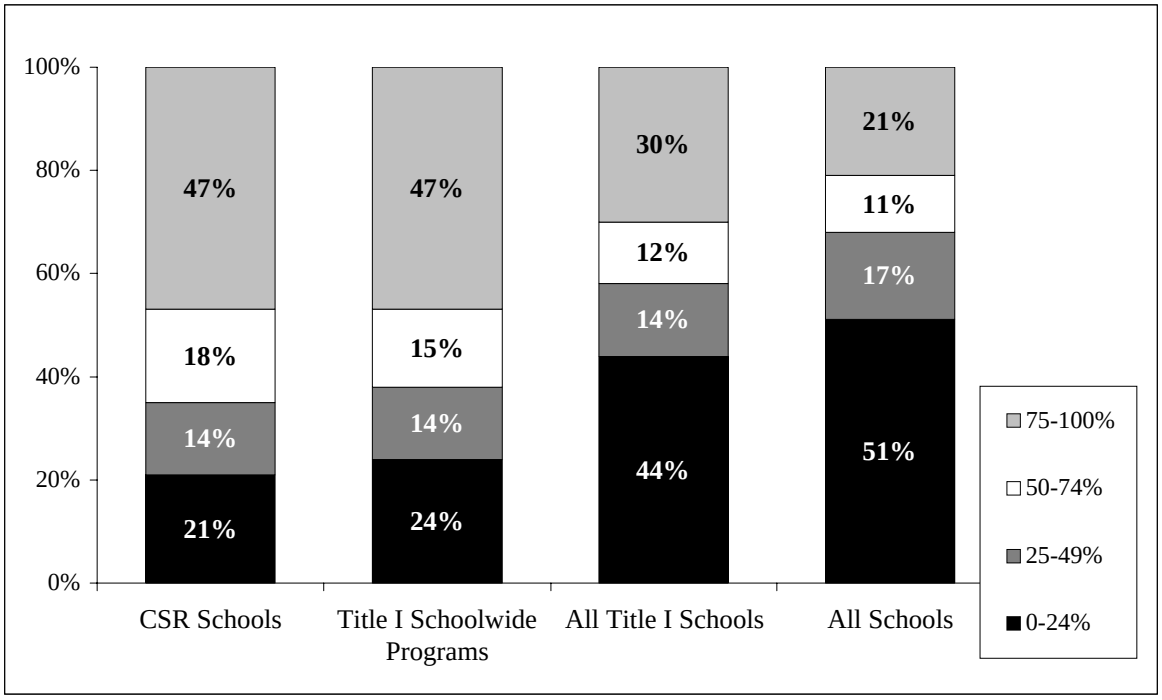


Exhibit reads: Schools with high concentrations of minority students (75 percent or higher) accounted for nearly half of CSR schools and Title I schoolwide programs (47 percent each), compared with 30 percent of Title I schools and 21 percent of all schools.

Exhibit 4

Distribution of CSR Schools and Other Schools by Urbanicity

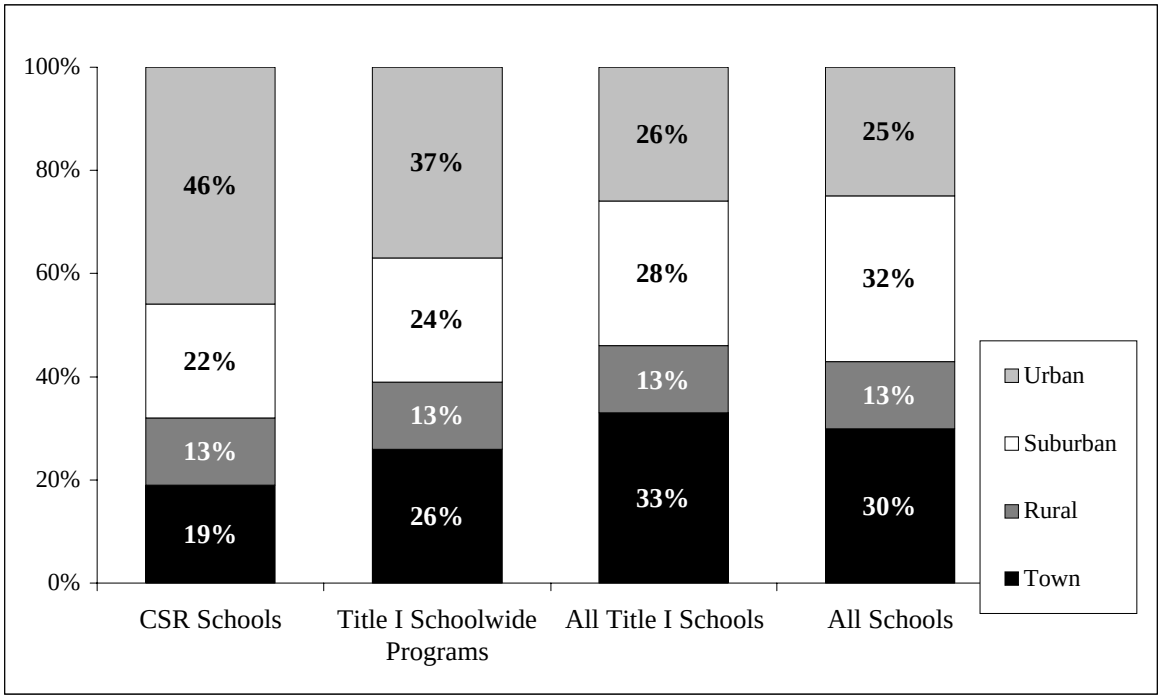
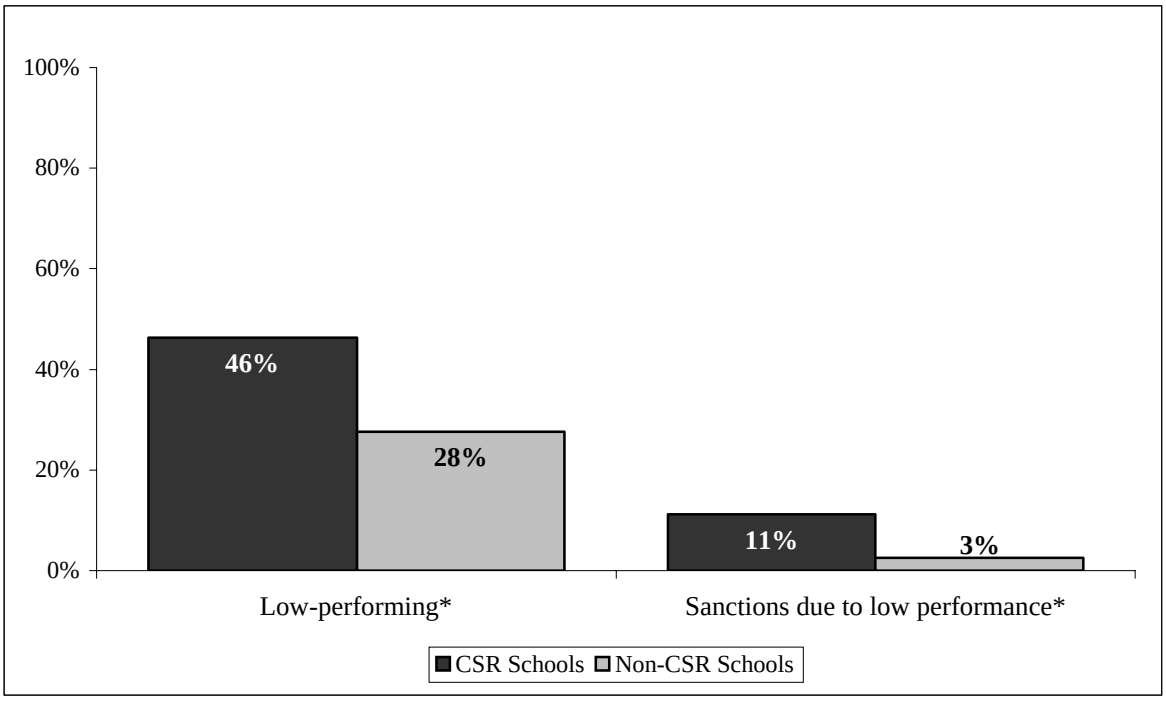


Exhibit reads: CSR schools were much more likely to be located in urban areas (46 percent of CSR schools) than were Title I schoolwides (37 percent), Title I schools (26 percent), or all schools (25 percent). Rural schools were equally represented among CSR schools, Title I schools, and all schools (13 percent of each group).

Perhaps more important, school survey data show that **CSR schools were significantly more likely to report that they were identified as a low-performing school according to the criteria used in their state** at the time of award (46 percent) than were non-CSR schools (28 percent). When they received funding CSR schools were also more likely to have received state sanctions due to low performance (11 percent as compared with 3 percent). These are additional indicators that CSR funds are being targeted to schools in need of improvement (Exhibit 5).

Exhibit 5

Schools Reported Being *Identified* as Low-Performing or *Sanctioned* Because of Low Performance According to State Criteria



**Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level.*

Exhibit reads: CSR schools were significantly more likely to report that they were identified as a low-performing school and had received sanctions due to low performance.

Perhaps the most important characteristic of CSR schools is the level of student achievement prior to receiving funds. Because student achievement is measured and reported differently across states, available scores cannot be directly compared. In order to summarize data across states in the simplest manner, scores within each state were first transformed into z-scores. Z-scores are centered on state means and are scaled in units of standard deviations. Thus, the average z-score for all schools, across all states is, by definition, zero. In this case, a negative average z-score indicates that the performance of a group is below state averages, across all states. Reports in subsequent years will use meta-analytic techniques to aggregate data across states. (For more information about this year's calculation of student achievement z-scores, see Appendix B.)

To compare baseline student achievement scores across funding groups, average school-level z-scores were calculated in reading and mathematics for each school level. **CSR schools had lower baseline achievement scores than did Title I schoolwides in reading and mathematics at most grade levels** (elementary, middle and high school in math; elementary and middle in reading) at the time awards were made (Exhibit 6). Further, the difference was true regardless of school locale or poverty level (Exhibit A-1).

Exhibit 6

Average School-Level Z-Scores for Math and Reading at CSR Schools (2002 Cohort), Title I Schools, and All Schools

Math	CSR Schools	Title I Schoolwides	All Title I Schools	All Schools
Elementary	-0.95	-0.50	-0.24	0.0
Middle	-0.86	-0.46	-0.19	0.0
High	-0.68	-0.66	-0.24	0.0
Reading				
Elementary	-0.92	-0.54	-0.26	0.0
Middle	-0.89	-0.49	-0.21	0.0
High	-0.69	-0.72	-0.25	0.0

Exhibit reads: CSR schools had lower baseline achievement scores in math and reading than did Title I schoolwides, Title I schools, or all schools. (A negative average z-score indicates that the performance of a group is below state averages).

The differences between 2002 CSR schools and the population of Title I schoolwides points to an important policy issue. CSR schools' lower initial scores may reflect additional targeting to schools with the greatest need for improvement. Interviews with state and district officials will explore the rationale for allocating funds.

CSR was designed to provide support for school reform in low-performing, high-need schools. Funding is provided through states, which then select schools within districts for funding. Clearly, **states are selecting schools that meet the intent of the legislation**.

Implementation of School Reform Activities in CSR Schools and Other Schools

Both CSR and non-CSR schools reported they were implementing specific activities that prior research indicates are associated with reform. However, as discussed below, the CSR schools differed from the non-CSR schools in their implementation of components directly related to selecting, implementing, and evaluating models for reform. Further, CSR funding seems to contribute to building capacity for ongoing reform, with schools reporting more school activity that reflects coherence and cohesiveness during the first year of implementation (2002-03) compared with the previous year.

This section begins with data related to the extent to which the 11 components of CSR were present in the CSR and comparison schools. It concludes with a discussion of the nature of comprehensive school reform. Because this is the first year of data collection and analysis, the final section is fairly speculative, pointing to areas for greater concentration in future years. (All

data in this section are drawn from the mailed surveys, and significance is reported at the $p < .01$ level.). Because of the large association between the teacher and principal responses, only the principal responses are reported here as the measure of school reform. However, on a small number of items minor disagreements between principals and teachers existed. On those items, the responses for both teachers and principals are noted. These differences will be explored in subsequent reports.

School Improvement Plans

Nearly all schools in the sample (CSR and non-CSR schools) reported they had formal comprehensive plans for school reform (93 percent for CSR schools; 89 percent for non-CSR schools) (Exhibit A-2). Principals at both CSR and non-CSR schools indicated that these plans included components similar to the 11 CSR components, although CSR schools were more likely than non-CSR schools to report seeking research evidence about a proposed reform and adopting a reform created outside of the school.

According to respondents, nearly all improvement plans for both CSR and non-CSR schools included measurable goals and objectives (98 percent in both groups) and professional development activities (94 percent in both groups). Both were highly likely to include curriculum and instruction (90 percent and 89 percent), a mechanism for periodic evaluation of goals (88 percent and 84 percent), and a plan for parental involvement (83 percent and 81 percent). Both were less likely to include classroom management guidelines (48 percent and 39 percent) or student assessment rubrics in the plan (52 percent and 49 percent) (Exhibit 7). It may be that state and federal regulations for underperforming schools influence all schools. As data are gathered from interviews with state and district policymakers, the study will explore that possibility.

Exhibit 7

Aspects of Reform Covered by School Improvement Plans

	CSR Schools	*Non-CSR Schools*
Measurable goals and objectives	98%	98%
Professional development activities	94%	94%
Curriculum and instruction	90%	89%
Periodic evaluation of goals	88%	84%
Parental involvement	83%	81%
Student assessment rubrics	52%	49%
Management guidelines	48%	39%

Exhibit reads: Nearly all school improvement plans included measurable goals and objectives (98 percent for CSR schools and non-CSR schools), professional development activities (94 percent for both groups) and plans for curriculum and instruction (90 percent and 89 percent).

Few differences were found in the factors that influenced the content of the school improvement plan. Both CSR and non-CSR schools cited state and district content standards as the major influence on the plan (90 percent compared with 91 percent), and, although non-CSR schools selected "state or district performance standards" more frequently (91 percent) than did the CSR schools (87 percent), the difference was not significant. However, **CSR schools were significantly more likely than non-CSR schools to cite the specifications of a reform design as influencing their school improvement plan** (63 percent as compared with 34 percent) (Exhibit A-3). This indicates that reform models are more widespread in CSR schools than in non-CSR schools.

Characteristics of Reform

Although CSR schools and non-CSR schools were equally likely to state the reform was "adapted with modifications from an external source" (42 percent and 41 percent) (Exhibit A-4), they indicated different primary designers. **Recipients of CSR funds reported they were more likely to adopt a reform that was created outside the school than were non-CSR schools** (32 percent compared with 6 percent) (Exhibit A-5). Further, CSR schools were influenced by design specifications of the reform significantly more than were non-CSR schools (63 percent and 34 percent, as mentioned above and cited earlier in Exhibit A-3). **CSR schools also were more likely than non-CSR schools to identify a specific reform model (85 percent vs. 49 percent) and indicate they were implementing only one reform (67 percent vs. 57 percent)**.

However, both groups were equally likely to claim participation in reform by all grades and the "whole school." Further, if they were not involved in whole-school reform, both CSR and

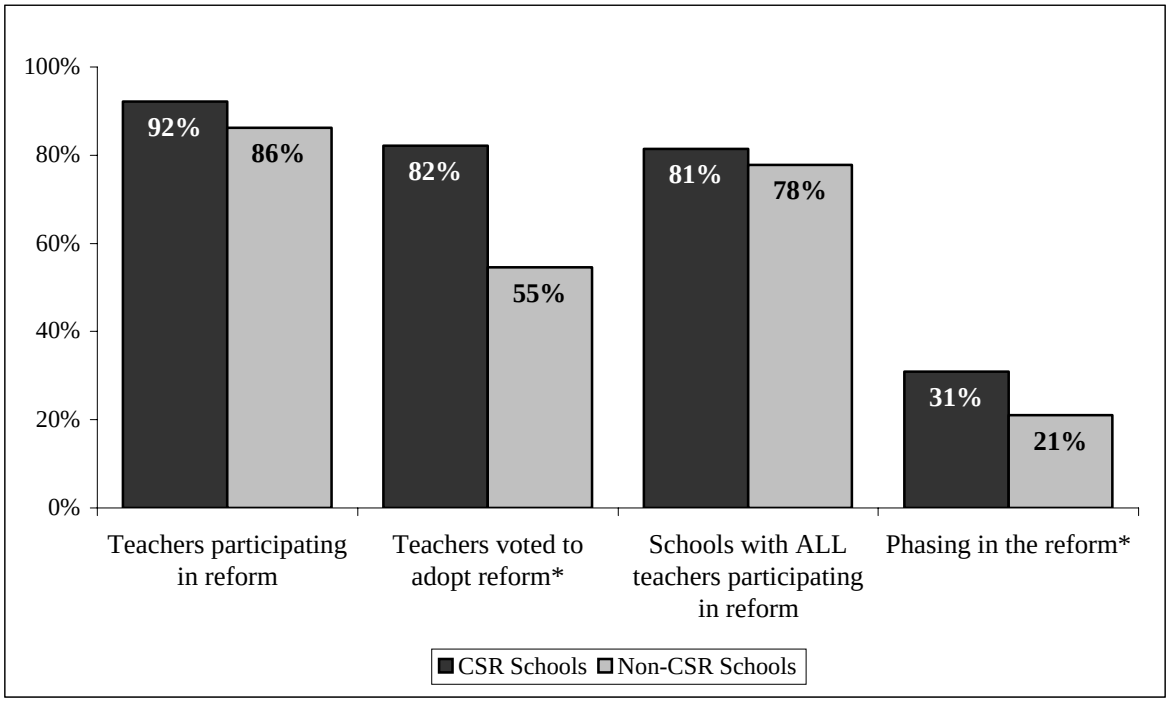
non-CSR schools focused primarily on reading and language arts, followed by mathematics. Relatively few respondents from either group indicated that the reform involved science, social studies, or the arts. These similarities will be explored further in the field-based inquiry, interviews with district officials and a second round of survey data collection. Later analyses will also focus on the extent of implementation over time.

Faculty Role

The presence of CSR funding is associated with differences in the faculty role in reform. **Teachers in CSR schools were significantly more likely to have voted to adopt the reform than in non-CSR schools** (82 percent as compared with 55 percent). Further, although the greatest number of CSR respondents indicated that all teachers participate in the reform (81 percent), this was not significantly different from the response from the non-CSR schools (78 percent). However, CSR schools were more likely to be phasing in the reform (31 percent) and involving additional teachers over time than were non-CSR schools (21 percent), according to respondents (Exhibit 8).

Exhibit 8

Extent of Faculty or Teacher Participation in Reform at the School



**Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level.*

Exhibit reads: Teachers at CSR schools were significantly more likely to have voted to adopt the reform effort at their school (82 percent compared with 55 percent at non-CSR schools). CSR schools also were more likely to be phasing in the reform (31 percent) than were non-CSR schools (21 percent).

Most model developers require a faculty vote before they work with a school, so the association of votes with CSR is also an association with the use of a model. In addition, the phasing in of reform may also be associated with working closely with model developers. As will be seen, developers provide on-site assistance, which gives them knowledge of the school and faculty and may lead to their advising phasing in reform. As the evaluation continues, it will explore more closely whether developers influence such strategies as phasing in reform. Further, the evaluation will assess the extent to which actions such as faculty votes, phasing in reform, and receiving on-site assistance influence implementation and outcomes.

School Performance Goals

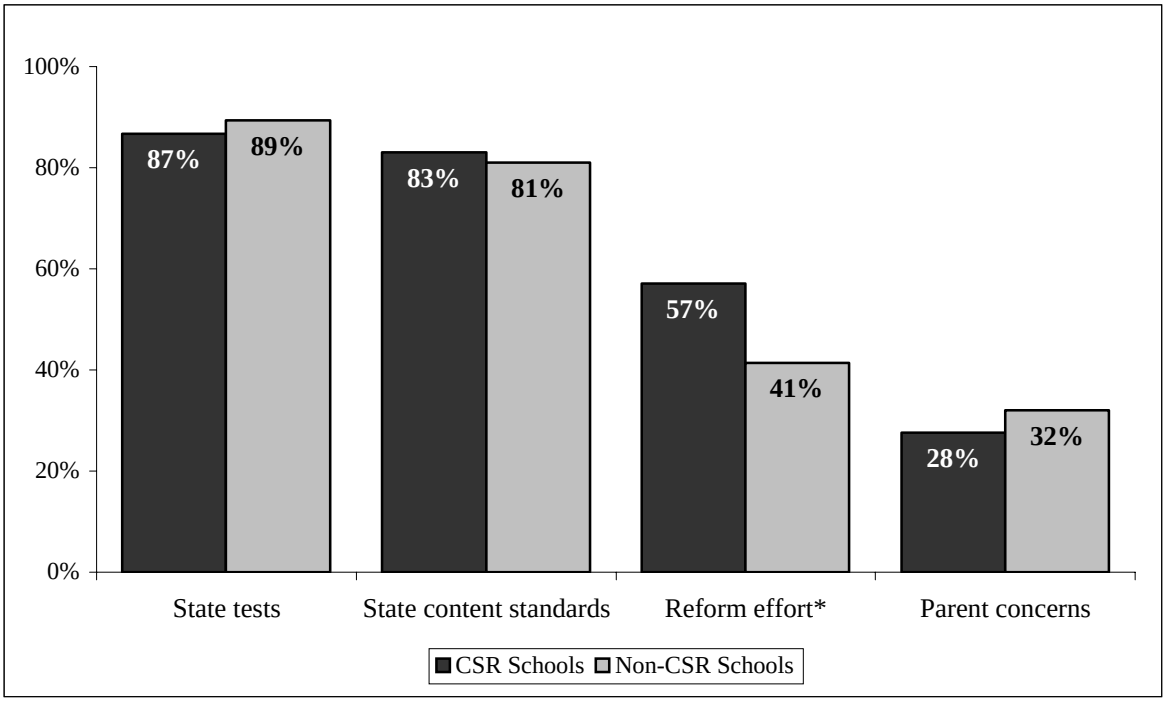
Almost all respondents in both groups reported having performance goals in reading and language arts (98 percent and 100 percent) and mathematics (94 percent and 96 percent) (Exhibit A-6), and less than half of either group have annual performance goals by either grade level (48 percent and 44 percent) or other content area (32 percent and 29 percent) (Exhibit A-7). (The new requirements of NCLB and the influence of state performance goals are likely to change such findings in the next round of data collection). In both groups, more teachers than principals reported that their schools had annual performance goals by grade level and content area (80 percent of teachers compared with 48 percent of principals in CSR schools; 78 percent of teachers compared with 44 percent of principals in non-CSR schools).

However, differences existed about the factors that influence the performance goals and how the goals and the reform were evaluated. Each of these is discussed in turn.

State tests were the major determinant of school performance goals for both CSR and non-CSR schools (87 percent and 89 percent). Both groups were also greatly influenced by state content standards (83 percent and 81 percent). Few in either group are influenced by parent concerns (28 percent and 32 percent). However, **schools participating in CSR report that the reform effort influences their performance goals more often than do the non-CSR schools** (57 percent vs. 41 percent) (Exhibit 9). This difference is significant.

Exhibit 9

Factors Influencing the Creation of Performance Goals at the School



**Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level.*

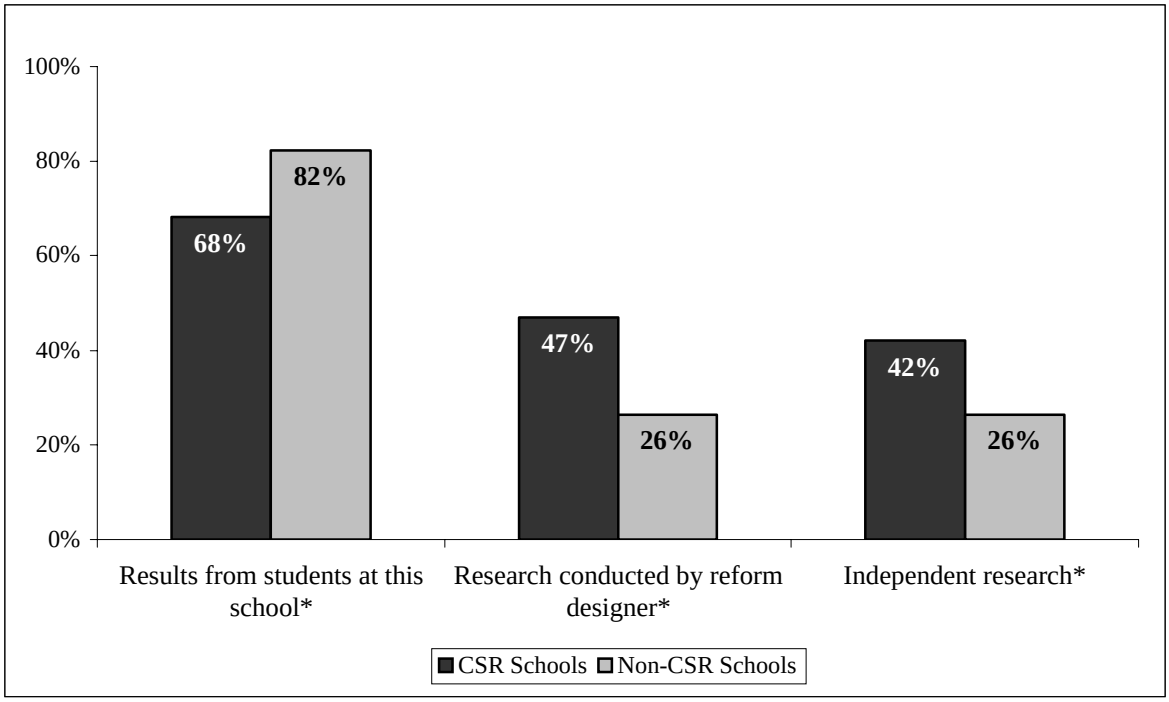
Exhibit reads: State tests and state content standards were the major determinants of school performance goals for both CSR and non-CSR schools. However, 57 percent of CSR schools reported that the reform effort being implemented influenced their performance goals, compared with 41 percent of non-CSR schools.

CSR schools differed from the non-CSR schools in how they evaluated their performance and the evidence they used to show the progress of reform. **CSR schools were significantly more likely to have a formal plan to evaluate their progress** (91 percent compared with 82 percent). However, the greatest influence on the questions addressed in evaluation comes from state requirements for both CSR and non-CSR schools. Nonetheless, CSR schools were more likely to attend to the requirements of reform (66 percent), than were non-CSR schools (42 percent) (Exhibit A-8).

Equally important, CSR and non-CSR schools use different evidence for evaluation. Non-CSR schools use "results from students at this school" significantly more than do CSR schools (82 percent for the non-CSR schools and 68 percent for the CSR schools). (Because the information comes from the surveys, it is not possible to tell whether the results being used are formal evaluations or informal assessments. The field-based study will pursue this question further.) In contrast, the CSR schools, used research conducted by the reform designer (47 percent compared with 26 percent for non-CSR schools) and independent research (42 percent vs. 26 percent for non-CSR schools). The difference in sources of evidence seems related to the adoption of a reform model. It may also be an indication that CSR schools' capacity for reform is increasing (Exhibit 10).

Exhibit 10

Source of Evidence to Link School Reform to Student Achievement



**Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level.*

Exhibit reads: When evaluating school reform efforts, non-CSR schools use "results from students at this school" (82 percent) significantly more often than CSR schools (68 percent). CSR schools, on the other hand, were more likely to rely on research conducted by the reform designer (47 percent) and independent research (42 percent).

Professional Development

Professional development is an essential component of school reform because reform requires teachers to learn new practices, either for classroom application or engagement in different forms of school organization. The surveys showed differences in professional development practices in CSR and non-CSR schools, in the locus of activity, the number of days provided, and the content. CSR schools noted changes in the kinds of professional development activities from last year to this year.

Professional development was included in the school reform plan more frequently in CSR schools than in non-CSR schools. In addition, a greater number of CSR schools than non-CSR schools provided more than 10 days for professional development and received on-site assistance from external supporters. Ninety percent of CSR schools included professional development for *all* teachers in their school reform plan compared with 73 percent of non-CSR schools. CSR schools also provided more than 10 days for professional development more often than did non-CSR schools (56 percent as compared with 39 percent). External assistance providers supported reform efforts on-site in significantly more CSR schools (85 percent) than non-CSR schools (57 percent). Finally, formal evaluation plans in CSR schools

were more likely to include assessment of the utility of external assistance than such plans in non-CSR schools (41 percent vs. 30 percent) (Exhibit 11).

Exhibit 11

Status of Professional Development in School Reform

	CSR schools	Non-CSR schools
Professional development for *all* teachers is included in school improvement plan	90%	73%*
School provides 10 or more days for professional development	56%	39%*
School receives on site support for reform efforts from external providers	85%	57%*
School evaluation plan includes assessment of the utility of external assistance	41%	30%*

**Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level.*

Exhibit reads: In CSR schools as compared with non-CSR schools, professional development more often was included in the school reform plan (90 percent vs. 73 percent), offered for 10 days or more (56 percent vs. 39 percent), and took the form of on-site assistance from external sources (85 percent vs. 57 percent)

The following **professional development opportunities increased significantly in CSR schools from 2001-02 to 2002-03** (Exhibit A-9):

- Reading or language arts instruction.
- Mathematics instruction.
- Instructional strategies for low-achieving, limited English proficient, special education, or migrant students.
- Ensuring that curriculum and instruction are consistent with state and district content standards.
- Ensuring that curriculum and instruction are consistent with state and district assessments.
- Implementation of a school reform model.
- Monitoring individual students' progress toward learning goals.

- Interpreting reports of student achievement data.

CSR teachers reported slightly fewer professional development opportunities than principals related to instructional strategies for low-achieving, limited English proficient, special education or migrant students (71 percent of teachers as compared with 60 percent for principals). CSR teachers also reported slightly fewer professional development opportunities than principals related to monitoring student progress (70 percent of teachers compared with 59 percent of principals) and interpreting reports of student data (83 percent of teachers compared with 69 percent of principals). Despite these differences, the rates of change reported by CSR teachers for these three types of opportunities from 2001-02 to 2002-03 were similar to those reported by CSR principals.

In addition, teachers and principals in CSR schools reported the availability of different types of professional development opportunities. CSR principals were more likely than CSR teachers to report that teachers coached other teachers (71 percent of principals versus 59 percent of teachers) and made management decisions (62 percent versus 46 percent).

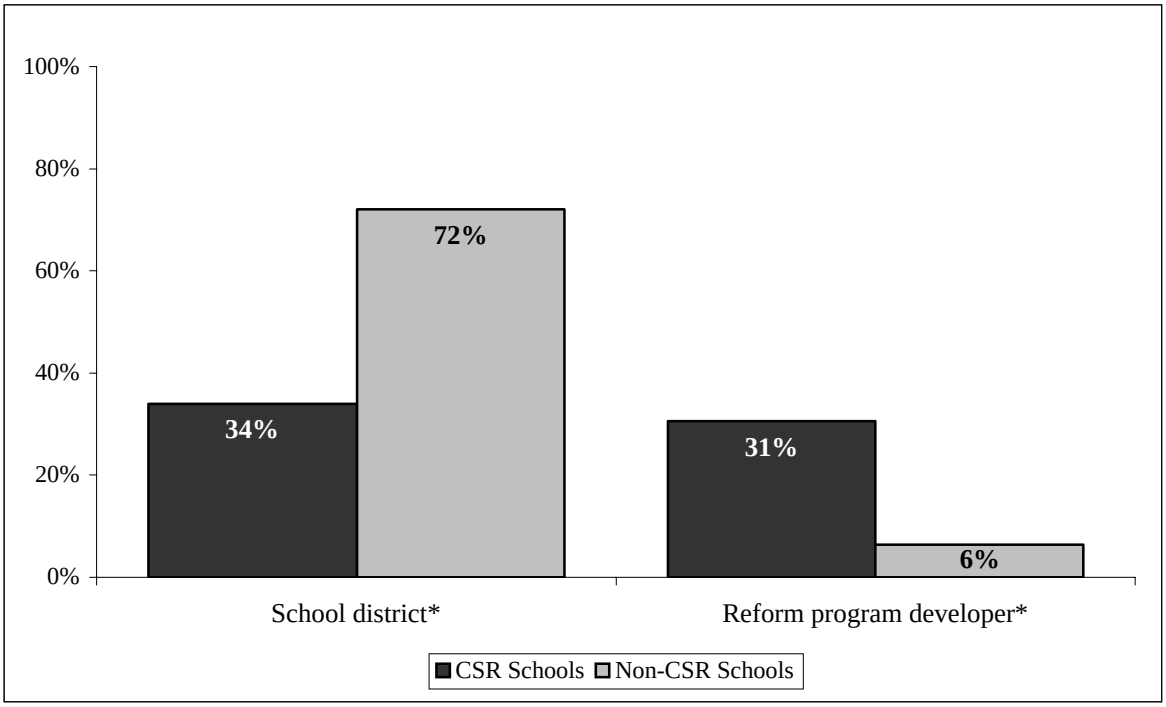
For the most part, differences in professional development opportunities are differences associated with the formal CSR model requirements. In one area, scheduling for common planning time, non-CSR schools reported significantly less opportunities than did CSR schools (31 percent of non-CSR schools principals responded that no common planning time is scheduled vs. 21 percent of CSR schools). The reason for this difference will be explored further in the field-based study.

Support for School Reform

Significant differences existed between CSR and non-CSR schools in the type of support they received. As might be predicted, **CSR schools were far more likely to receive support from a model developer than non-CSR schools** (31 percent vs. 6 percent). However, **non-CSR schools were more likely to report receiving support for school reform efforts from the district than were CSR schools** (72 percent of non-CSR schools and 34 percent of CSR schools) (Exhibit 12). This difference will be explored further in the telephone interviews and case studies.

Exhibit 12

Entity Primarily Responsible for Supporting Reform Efforts at the School



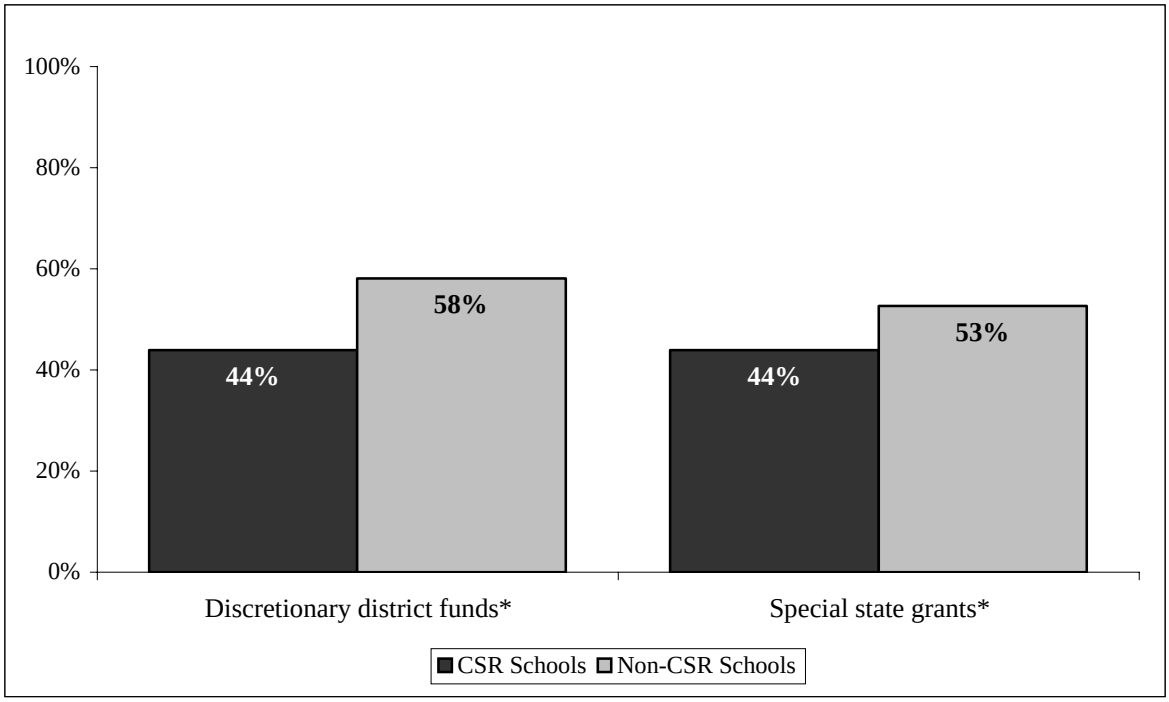
**Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level.*

Exhibit reads: CSR schools were far more likely to identify model developers as the primary supporters of reform at their school (31 percent for CSR schools compared with 6 percent for non-CSR schools). Conversely, non-CSR schools (72 percent) reported more district support for school reform efforts than CSR schools (34 percent).

S**tates and districts were more likely to provide funds for reform to non-CSR schools than to CSR schools**. Discretionary district funds went to 58 percent of non-CSR schools compared with 44 percent of CSR schools. Special state grants were awarded to 53 percent of non-CSR schools compared with 44 percent of CSR schools (Exhibit 13).

Exhibit 13

Sources of Funding That Contribute to Implementation and Operation of School Reform



**Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level.*

Exhibit reads: Schools reported that special state grants and district discretionary funds were more commonly used for reform at non-CSR schools (58 percent for district funds; 53 percent for state funds) than at CSR schools (44 percent for each source of funds).

Further, districts supported different kinds of activities in CSR schools than non-CSR schools in the first year of reform implementation. Districts were more likely to help CSR schools select a school reform model (45 percent in CSR schools compared with 32 percent in non-CSR schools) but were less likely to provide CSR schools with professional development for school reform (72 percent in CSR schools and 86 percent in non-CSR schools) (Exhibit A-10). States also were more likely to help CSR schools select a school reform model (25 percent) than they were to help non-CSR schools select a model (16 percent) (Exhibit A-11).

Both CSR and non-CSR schools reported coordinating funds from a variety of sources to support professional development and align Title I activities, but neither aligned other funds (e.g., bilingual education) or reallocated staff positions.[3]

Instructional Practice

CSR and non-CSR school respondents indicated little difference in instructional practice. Both groups reported that curriculum scope and sequence was determined at the district

[3] Although 22 percent of the non-CSR schools reported receiving federal CSR funds, later follow-up indicated that only five schools were actually recipients of CSR funds. Those schools have been removed from the analysis.

level (78 percent CSR; 83 percent non-CSR). Other loci for determining scope and sequence varied, but not significantly. For example more non-CSR schools reported that the state organized curriculum (52 percent) than did CSR schools (46 percent), and more CSR schools reported individual teachers (34 percent) or schools (51 percent) organized curriculum than did non-CSR schools (27 percent; 47 percent) (Exhibit 14).

Exhibit 14

Primary Organizer of the Scope and Sequence of Curriculum at the School

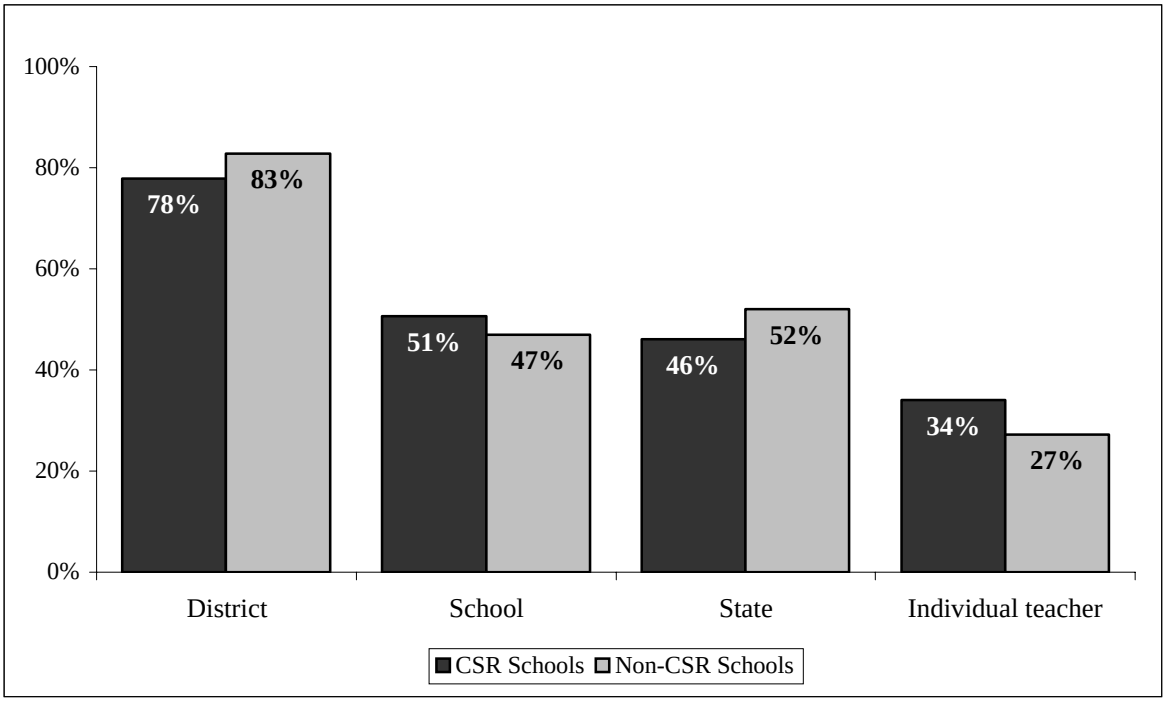


Exhibit reads: The district was primarily responsible for determining curriculum scope and sequence at CSR schools (78 percent) and non-CSR schools (83 percent). More non-CSR schools reported that the state organized curriculum while CSR schools were slightly more likely to cite individual teachers or schools as controlling curriculum and instruction.

Further, about the same percentages of CSR and non-CSR schools reported participating in grade-level teams (86 percent of CSR respondents vs. 84 percent of non-CSR school respondents) or in content area teams across grades (71 percent, CSR vs. 75 percent non-CSR).

As implementation continues, changes may be observed with regard to scope and sequence, but little change in responses related to teaming is expected, given the high percentages that currently exist. Additional information will come from the field-based studies.

The Role of Parents

CSR and non-CSR schools did not differ in how parents were involved in reform. Both communicated with parents and encouraged parent involvement in similar ways. They were also similar in their assessment of the ways parents were engaged with the school.

Both groups communicated with parents most frequently through telephone calls (95 percent for CSR schools; 94 percent for non-CSR schools), regular newsletters (83 percent CSR and 86 percent non-CSR) and in the language other than English spoken at home (45 percent, CSR; 46 percent, non-CSR). However more CSR schools reported having a parent coordinator (43 percent) than did non-CSR schools (36 percent) although the differences were not significant. (Exhibit 15).

Exhibit 15

Methods of Formal Communication from Schools to Parents

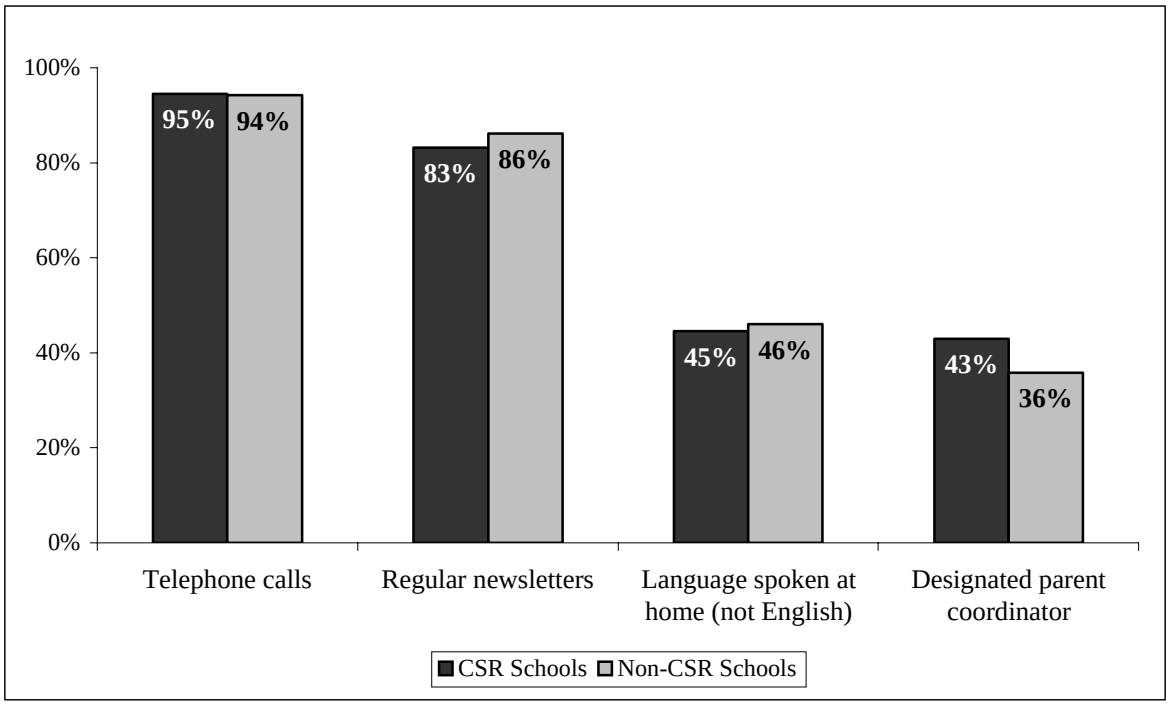


Exhibit reads: CSR and non-CSR schools communicated with parents most frequently through telephone calls and newsletters. Slightly more CSR schools reported having a parent coordinator (43 percent) than non-CSR schools (36 percent).

The schools encouraged parental involvement in governance with regard to fundraising (79 percent for CSR schools vs. 86 percent for non-CSR schools), defining the school mission and goals (75 percent CSR schools vs. 77 percent, non-CSR schools) and evaluating school performance (67 percent CSR schools vs. 68 percent non-CSR schools) (Exhibit 16). Parents were not involved in choosing instructional materials, hiring teachers and staff, or developing the calendar in either type of school.

Exhibit 16

Ways Parents Are Engaged and Involved at School

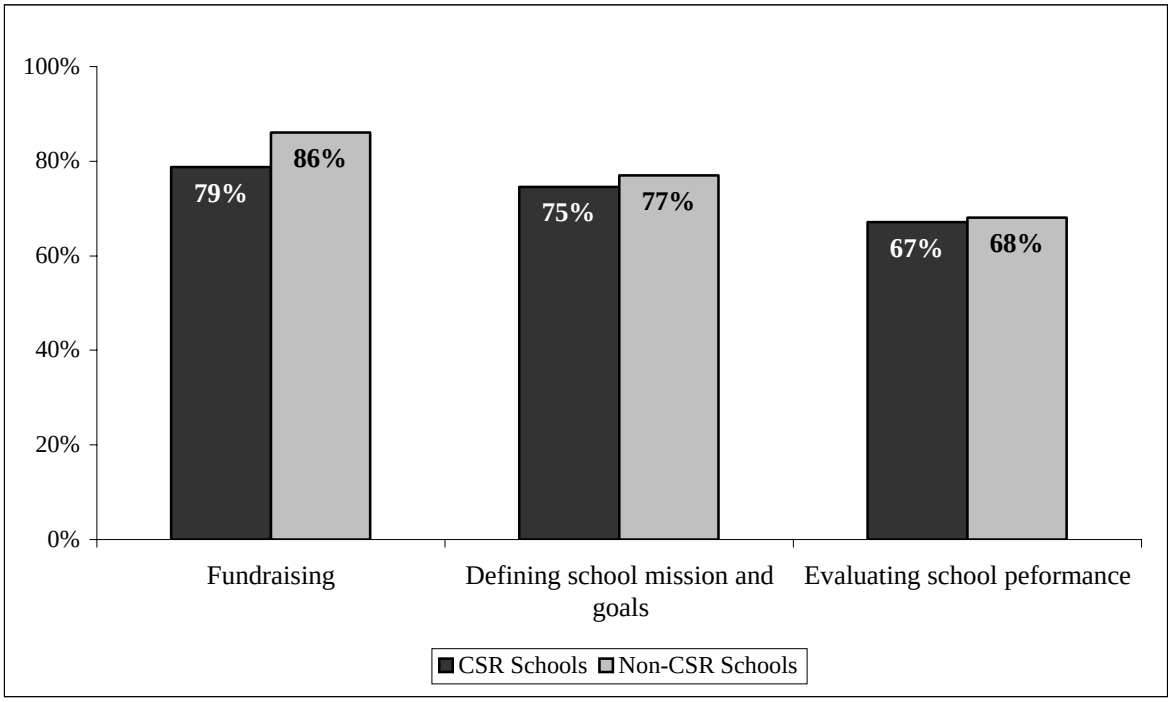


Exhibit reads: Most commonly, schools reported parent involvement in fundraising activities. Three quarters of the schools solicited parent input when defining the school mission. Fewer schools reported parent involvement in evaluating school performance.

Types of School Reform Models or Strategies Being Implemented

The distribution of reform models in the CSR and non-CSR samples was determined by examining the responses to the survey item, "Does the primary reform effort at your school have a name? If so, write the name here." **The higher number of named reforms in CSR sample schools suggests that CSR schools are adopting externally developed models more than non-CSR schools** (Exhibit 17). Of the 85 percent of CSR schools that responded their primary reform was named, 80 percent of CSR principals named models that were focused on the entire school. In contrast, of the 49 percent of non-CSR schools that had a named reform, 78 percent of principals indicated a whole-school model. The remainder in each group was subject specific, such as literacy reforms.

Exhibit 17

Schools, by Type, with Primary Reform Efforts Identified by Name

	CSR Schools	Non-CSR Schools
Elementary	87%	52%
Middle	81%	45%
High	87%	42%
Weighted Average	85%	49%

Exhibit reads: On average, 85 percent of CSR schools identified their primary reform effort with a specific name, suggesting the presence of an externally developed model, compared with half of the non-CSR schools. CSR schools at each grade level were equally likely to identify their reform effort with a specific name.

CSR schools implemented a greater diversity of reforms than did non-CSR schools. CSR schools named 38 different reforms and non-CSR schools 28 (excluding generic names such as "school improvement program"). **In CSR schools, the most frequently named models were the products of private developers.** However, in non-CSR schools, other than Success for All, regional school accreditation and state programs were the most frequently mentioned (Exhibit 18).

Exhibit 18

Number and Type of Named Primary Reform Efforts in Use at Schools

	CSR Schools	Non-CSR Schools
Number of Whole School Reforms Named	38	28
Most Frequently Named Models	Success for All Renaissance Co-nect America's Choice Direct Instruction	Success for All State Regional

Exhibit reads: CSR schools identified a more diverse list of reforms in use at their schools. Further, the most frequently named models in CSR schools were the products of private developers, as compared with non-CSR schools.

CSR and Developing Capacity for Reform

Data that focus on differences between the first year of CSR (2002-03) and the prior year (2001-02) assess whether CSR increases schools' capacity for reform. As noted earlier, CSR schools in the sample showed lower student achievement and higher poverty than non-CSR schools. They were also more likely to have been identified or sanctioned as low performing according to the criteria used in their state. Consequently, although changes in practice related to capacity for reform are limited, they are important because CSR schools must show greater improvement than non-CSR schools to provide students with opportunity to learn high standards.

Newmann et al. (2001) state that the three following conditions are important in schools' capacity to ensure the coherence and cohesiveness of reform.

- A common framework to guide curriculum, instruction, assessment, and the learning climate.
- Staff working conditions to support implementation of the framework, including professional development for staff.
- School allocation of resources to support implementation.

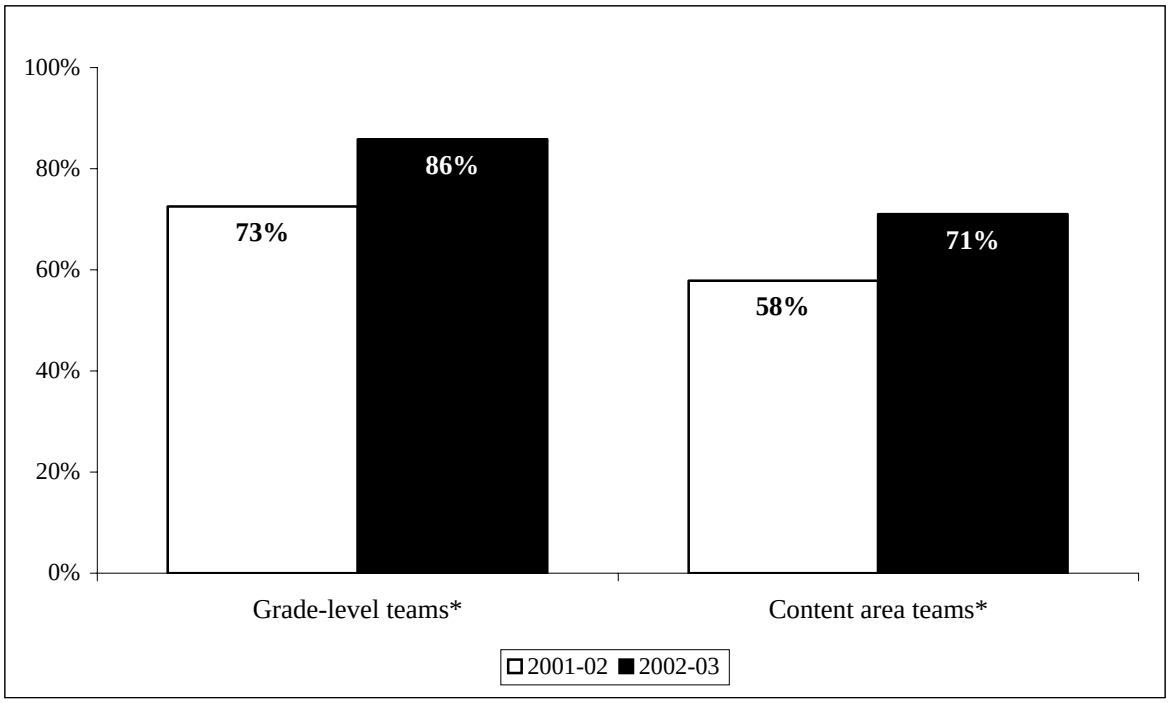
Most CSR schools are working toward a common framework. The framework is shaped by the model adopted as well as state and district performance standards. The existence of a framework in 2002-03 represents a major change from the previous year. **A higher percentage of CSR principals reported their schools had a comprehensive written plan in 2002-03 (93 percent) as compared with the previous year (75 percent)**, indicating some influence of CSR. In contrast, principals in non-CSR schools reported little change (89 percent had comprehensive written plans in 2002-03, compared with 86 percent in 2001-02). In addition, **CSR schools in the sample were significantly more likely to report engaging in whole school reform in 2002-03 (76 percent) than in 2001-02 (55 percent).** As indicated above, they were more likely to report implementing a single reform effort, increasing coherence.

Although CSR schools reported little difference in how the instructional staff was organized and fewer cross-subject area or within-grade teams than the non-CSR schools, teachers in CSR schools did report more opportunities for professional development. Teacher participation in grade-level or content area teams increased significantly in 2002-03, compared with the previous year (Exhibit 19). In addition, CSR teachers reported receiving more days of professional development in 2002-03 than the year prior, and the training was more focused on issues related to reform (Exhibit 20).

Exhibit 19

Teacher Enhancement Opportunities Available

before and after Reform Implementation

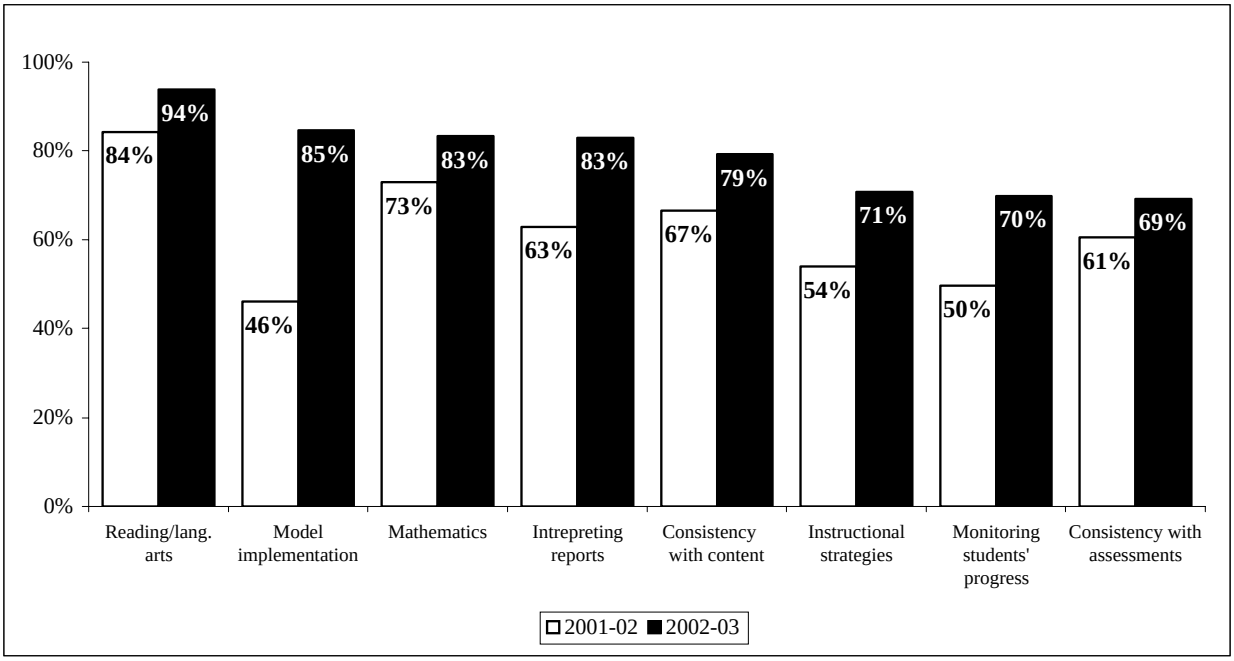


**Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level.*

Exhibit reads: Compared with pre-implementation levels, teachers in CSR schools reported more opportunities to work on grade-level teams (86 percent vs. 73 percent the previous year) and content area teams (71 percent vs. 58 percent) during the first year of CSR.

Exhibit 20

Types of Professional Development in Which Teachers Participated in during the First Year of Reform Implementation (2002-03) Compared with the Previous Year



**Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level for all items.*

Exhibit reads: CSR teachers were much more likely to receive training on model implementation (85 percent), monitoring students' progress (70 percent), and interpreting reports (83 percent) in 2002-03, compared with 2001-02 (the year prior to CSR implementation).

On the other hand, the CSR schools were not coordinating resources to any greater extent than non-CSR schools in support of reform efforts at the school (28 percent compared with 35 percent). CSR schools were using the federal CSR funds to support the reform, which indicates that capacity to continue reform may end with the end of the CSR grant. The importance of coordinated resources will be assessed as the evaluation continues

At the end of a year of implementation, CSR has increased participating schools' capacity to reform to some extent on two key dimensions, developing comprehensive written plans and increasing team meetings. It has yet to produce changes in how schools coordinate resources.

The Nature of Comprehensive School Reform

This report addresses the question: "What does comprehensive school reform look like at the end of the first year of implementation?" This section summarizes findings in response to that question. In addition, CSR is intended to increase schools' capacities to reform. This section also summarizes findings relevant to reform capacity.

SUMMARY OF CSR IMPLEMENTATION

CSR comprises 11 components whose existence and interaction may improve schools. Respondents to the survey indicated that both CSR and non-CSR schools were implementing a number of the components. However, CSR schools were more likely than non-CSR schools to implement components most associated with adopting a model. Consequently, the presence of some similar components in CSR and non-CSR schools may not indicate equal progress toward reform nor lead to equal outcomes for students. The differences in the components that are implemented in CSR and non-CSR schools may well encompass different interactions, which, in turn affect the extent to which schools are coherent and cohesive, enabling them to provide students with focused and challenging opportunities to learn to high standards.

CSR schools, as compared with non-CSR school, were more likely to implement the following components:

- Adopt externally developed methods and strategies that have been replicated. They did so by:
  - Identifying a specific reform model (85 percent compared with 49 percent).
  - Using evidence from research that the reform model chosen improves student achievement (42 percent compared with 26 percent).
- Provide more continuous professional development. They did so by:
  - Including professional development activities for *all* teachers (90 percent compared with 73 percent).
  - Allocating over 10 days to teacher professional development (56 percent compared with 39 percent).
- Include measurable goals for student performance associated with the reform model (57 percent compared with 41 percent).
- Reflect support from staff by including a formal vote by teachers for the reform model (82 percent compared with 55 percent).
- Provide support for staff by receiving on-site consulting relevant to the reform (85 percent compared with 57 percent).
- Evaluate the reform. They did so by:
  - Including the requirements of the reform model in the scope and content of evaluation (66 percent compared with 42 percent).

- Assessing the utility of external assistance (41 percent compared with 30 percent).

To some extent, the differences are associated with the adoption of models by the CSR-funded schools. At this point of early implementation, the evaluation cannot assess whether some models lead to greater implementation and outcomes than others. However, the act of selecting a model has some immediate outcomes. For example, most models require faculty votes as indications of buy-in. The vote itself may create the conditions for coherent implementation, and when accompanied by on-site assistance (provided by the model developer), strengthen the probability of full implementation. Further, models frequently include performance goals, so the CSR schools are more likely to have reform-specific performance goals. Model developers also require professional development, and even when they do not require it, offer model-focused opportunities, so the higher number of days for professional development can also be associated with adoption of a model.

In sum, both CSR and non-CSR schools exhibited many aspects of comprehensive reform. However, CSR schools were more likely to adopt externally developed models. Other differences between the two types of schools were related to model adoption.

The Influence of State and District Policies on the Implementation of Comprehensive Reform Programs

State and local policies influence CSR and non-CSR schools in similar ways, except with regard to selecting the reform model. Reform plans in both types of schools are highly influenced by state or district content and performance standards (90 percent of CSR schools and 91 percent of non-CSR schools on content standards; 87 percent of CSR schools and 91 percent of non-CSR schools on performance standards) (Exhibit 21). Similarly, state content standards and testing requirements have the greatest influence on performance goals at both CSR and non-CSR schools. Further, districts, rather than states or individual teachers, have the most influence on curriculum scope and sequence in both CSR and non-CSR schools (51 percent in CSR schools and 47 percent in non-CSR schools).

Exhibit 21

Influence of State and Local Policies on School Improvement Plans

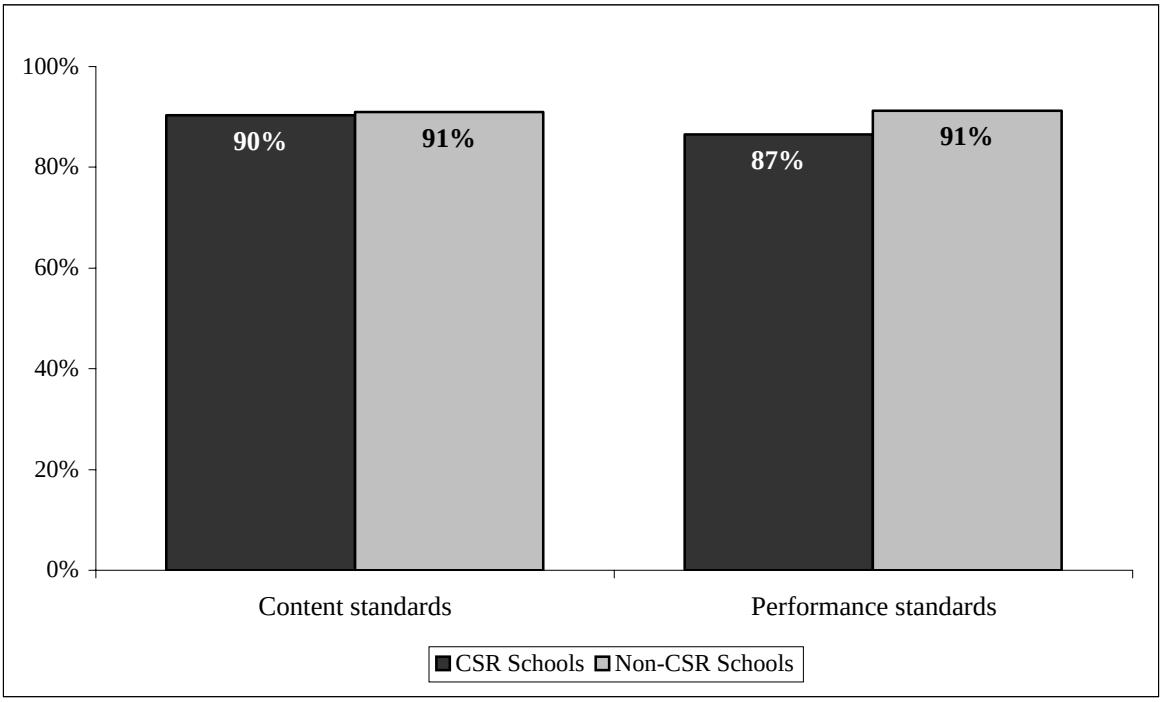


Exhibit reads: Most principals in CSR and non-CSR schools report that content and performance standards influence school improvement plans.

Both groups of schools report control over budgets and personnel decisions similarly (82 percent for CSR and 75 percent for non-CSR with budgetary control; 78 percent for CSR and 80 percent for non-CSR regarding personnel decisions) (Exhibit 22).

Exhibit 22

Control of Budget and Personnel in CSR and Non-CSR Schools

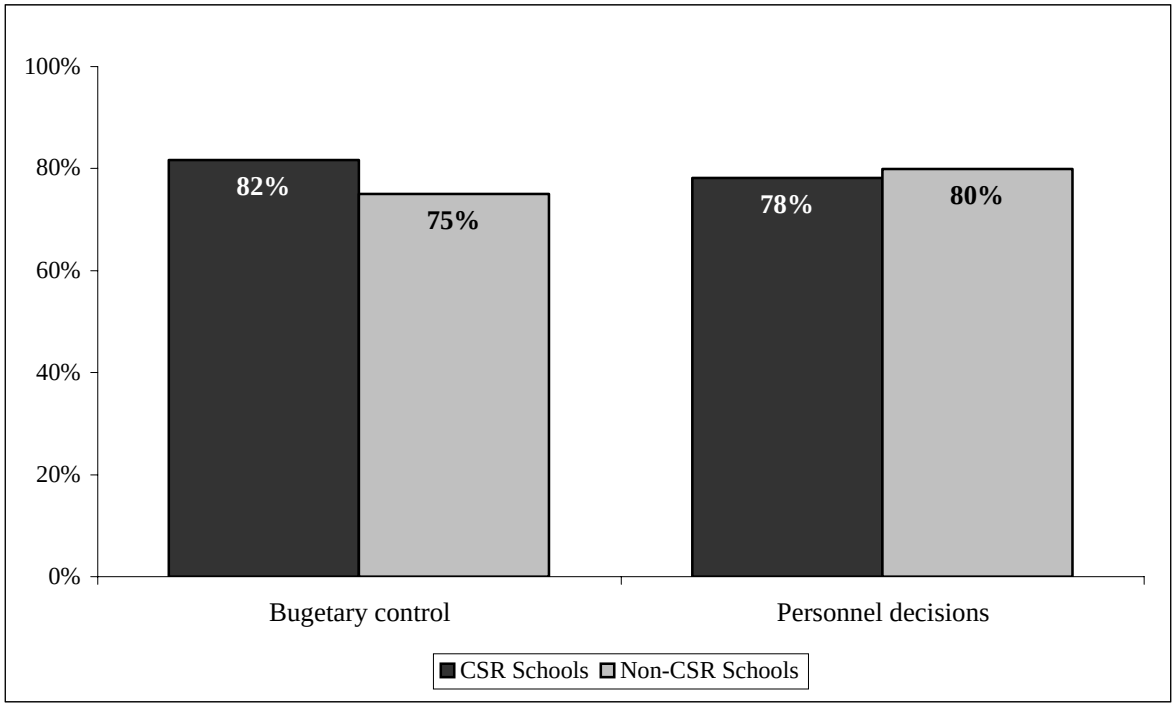
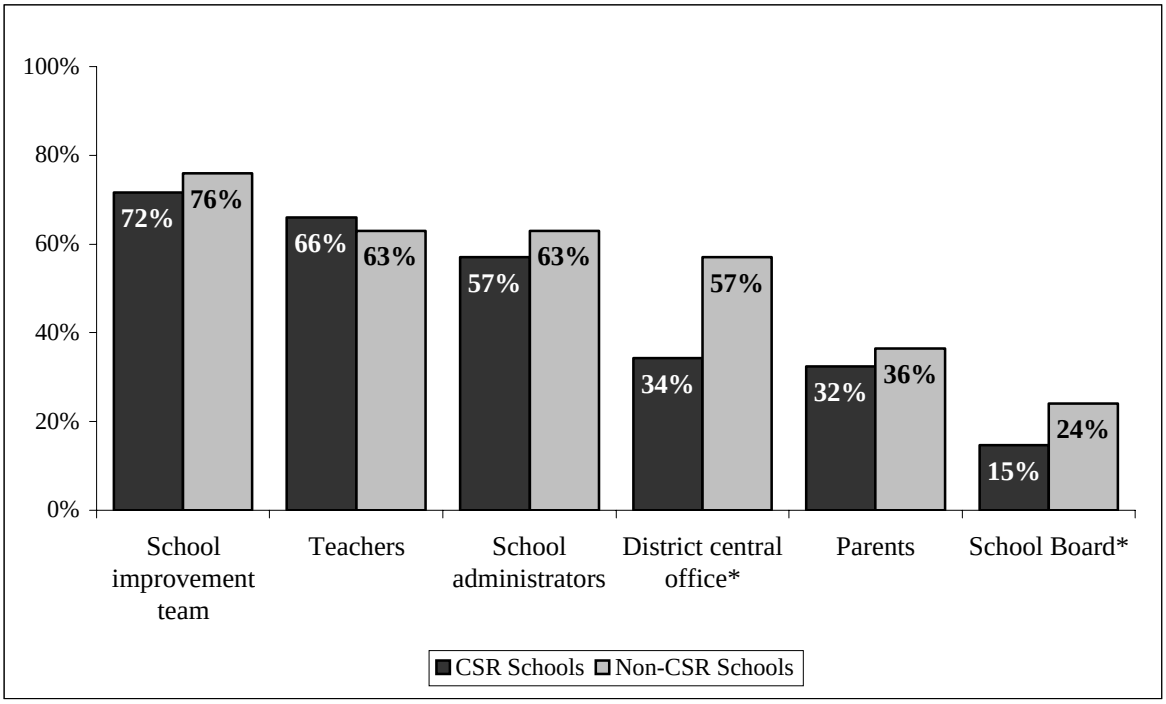


Exhibit reads: The majority of CSR and non-CSR schools report that budgetary and personnel decisions are controlled at the school level.

Teachers and school administrators were involved in selecting the reform model or approach being implemented, both at CSR schools and non-CSR schools. However, the school board and the district central office played a more significant role in selecting reform at non-CSR schools than at CSR schools, indicating more "top-down" requirements for changes in practice. One third of CSR schools reported that the district central office was one of several entities responsible for selecting the reform, compared with 57 percent of non-CSR schools. Non-CSR schools also reported that school board members were involved in the decision at a higher rate than did CSR schools (24 percent for non-CSR schools compared with 15 percent of CSR schools) (Exhibit 23). Further, state or district mandates were more likely to contribute to the selection of reform at non-CSR schools (60 percent) than at CSR schools (31 percent).

Exhibit 23

Entities Involved in Selecting a Reform Model or Approach at the School



**Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level.*

Exhibit reads: School staff were involved in selecting a reform model or approach at both CSR and non-CSR schools. However, the district central office (57 percent) and school boards (24 percent) had a greater role at non-CSR schools than at CSR schools (34 percent; 15 percent).

IV. Summary

This final chapter summarizes findings related to school reform implementation. The following section presents policy implications.

Summary of Findings

CSR funds have been targeted to high-need schools as intended. Participating schools tend to have high poverty rates and high concentrations of minority students, and have frequently been identified as low-performing according to state criteria.

Both CSR and non-CSR school personnel view themselves as engaged in activities associated with school reform. Further, activities include the majority of the 11 components identified in NCLB. However, CSR schools are more intensively implementing components most associated with adopting a research-based model. They were more likely to:

- Adopt externally developed methods and strategies that have been replicated.
- Provide more continuous professional development.
- Include measurable goals for student performance associated with the reform model.
- Reflect support from staff by including a formal vote by teachers for the reform model.
- Provide support for staff by receiving on-site consulting relevant to the reform.
- Evaluate the reform.

Consequently, the Comprehensive School Reform program is, at the early stage of implementation in the schools in the sample, affecting how they address low performance. While CSR and non-CSR schools are implementing many components of reform, CSR influences how schools approach reform. CSR schools are likely to adopt a single, externally developed reform model. However, they are not more likely to integrate budgets than are other schools, which may have longer-term consequences for the reform effort. The evaluation will seek to determine whether the differences between CSR and non-CSR school reform affects implementation and outcomes over time.

Implications

The first year of the evaluation has yielded information with implications for federal policy. The implications relate to two key findings:

- Although both CSR and non-CSR schools are engaged in reform, reform in CSR schools includes adoption of models and other activities closely associated with research-based models.

- CSR funds are strongly targeted to high-poverty schools and low-performing schools, and schools receiving CSR funds are lower performing than are other schools with similar demographic characteristics.

Taken together, the findings raise interesting questions. The first is whether the use of CSR funds accelerates reform in the lowest performing schools. States and districts seem to have targeted CSR funds to those schools that have the greatest need to change practices in order to support high achievement for all students. With CSR funds, the schools were more likely to adopt models, focus professional development on reform, and track student performance than were non-CSR schools. Both CSR and non-CSR schools were engaged in other reform activities. In subsequent years, the evaluation will provide information about whether CSR schools implement more reform components more thoroughly than do the non-CSR schools. If they do, CSR can be seen as adding value to improvement by providing a mechanism that focuses efforts and enables school staff members to organize themselves in ways that offer greater educational opportunities for students. Perhaps CSR helps schools jump-start improvement.

Second, data from the first year of this evaluation indicate that all schools in the sample are engaged in many aspects of what the legislation defines as “comprehensive school reform.” Consequently, the study has implications about the nature of reform in general. Most low-performing schools in the non-CSR group are making efforts to improve. Questions then arise as to whether the efforts are associated with improved outcomes: Do schools succeed in reform without models to organize them? Are models only important in the lowest performing schools?

Appendix A: Selected Data Tabulations

Exhibit A-1
Baseline Student Achievement Scores

Averaged Baseline Student Achievement Z-Scores**

MATH				*READING*			
	Elem.	Middle	High		Elem.	Middle	High
2002 CSR Cohort	-0.95	-0.86	-0.68	2002 CSR Cohort	-0.92	-0.89	-0.69
SW Title I	-0.50	-0.46	-0.66	SW Title I	-0.54	-0.49	-0.72
Title I	-0.24	-0.19	-0.24	Title I	-0.26	-0.21	-0.25
All schools	0.00	0.00	0.00	All schools	0.00	0.00	0.00

Distribution of 2002 CSR Cohort Average Z-Scores by Poverty Level

MATH				*READING*			
	Elem.	Middle	High		Elem.	Middle	High
75-100%	-1.30	-1.22	-1.10	75-100%	-1.30	-1.23	-1.05
50-74	-0.59	-0.60	-0.88	50-74	-0.54	-0.71	-0.99
25-49	-0.27	-0.33	-0.51	25-49	-0.22	-0.29	-0.41
0-24	-0.62	-0.32	-0.25	0-24	-0.67	-0.07	-0.38

Distribution of 2002 CSR Cohort Average Z-Scores by Locale

MATH				*READING*			
	Elem.	Middle	High		Elem.	Middle	High
Urban (1&2)	-1.31	-1.22	-1.09	Urban (1&2)	-1.29	-1.22	-1.11
Suburb. (3&4)	-0.83	-0.84	-0.49	Suburb. (3&4)	-0.84	-0.88	-0.57
Town (5&6)	-0.37	-0.36	-0.81	Town (5&6)	-0.38	-0.36	-0.58
Rural (7&8)	-0.28	-0.27	-0.25	Rural (7&8)	-0.34	-0.32	-0.24

**Data from some states were not available from the 2002 school year. See achievement indicators table for details.

Exhibit reads: CSR schools had lower achievement scores in math and reading than did Title I schoolwides, Title I schools, or all schools. Within the 2002 CSR cohort, schools with high poverty rates and urban locales scored lowest on reading and math achievement tests

Exhibit A-2

CSR and Non-CSR Schools Reporting Formal Comprehensive School Improvement Plans

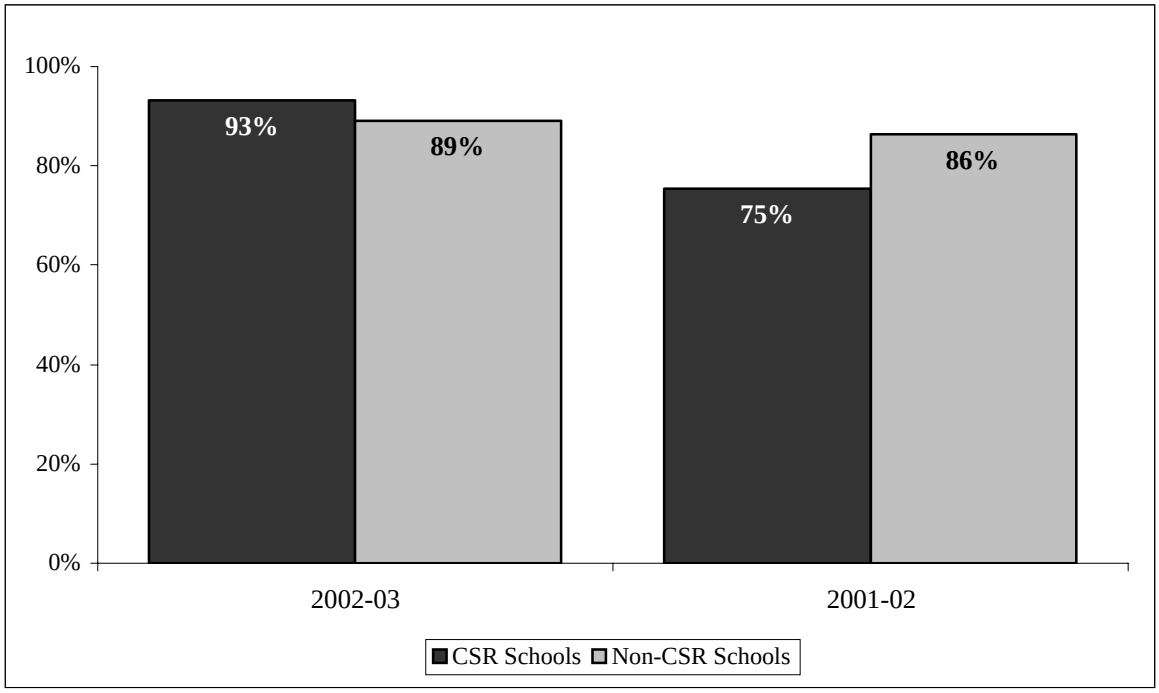
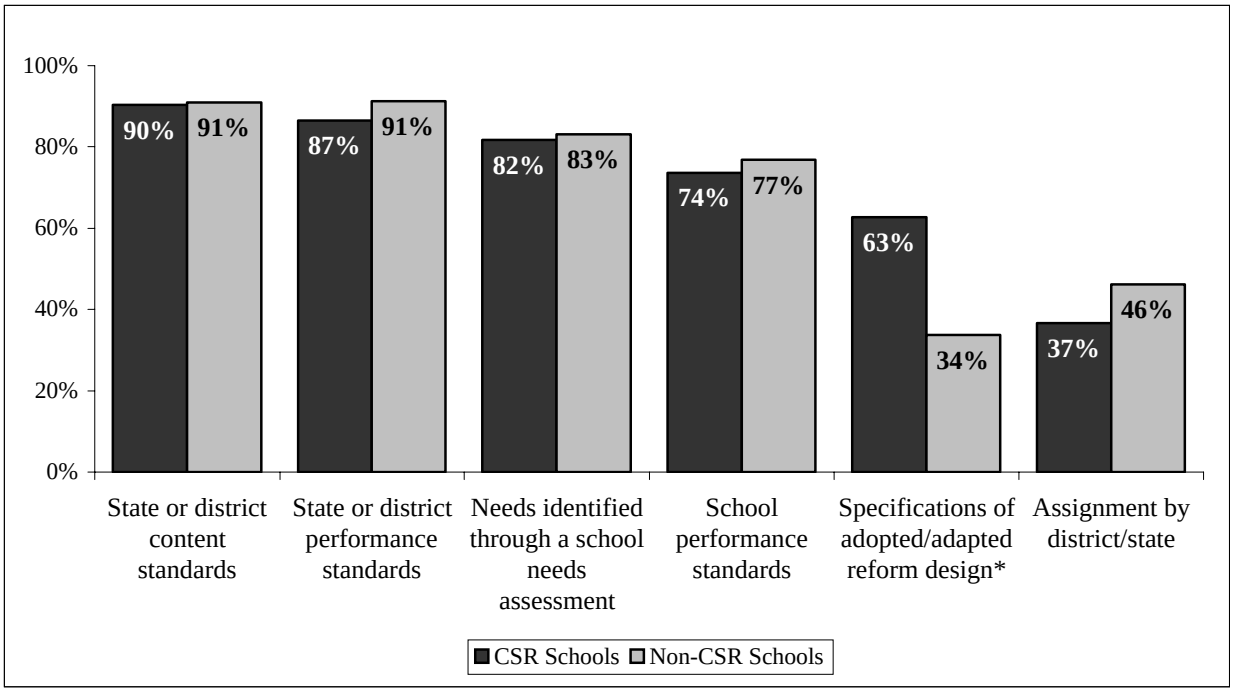


Exhibit reads: A higher percentage of CSR schools reported having formal school improvement plans in 2002-03 (the first year of CSR implementation) as compared with the year prior to CSR implementation (93 percent compared with 75 percent). The number of non-CSR schools reporting formal school improvement plans over that time increased marginally (89 percent compared with 86 percent).

Exhibit A-3

Factors Influencing the Content of the School Improvement Plan



**Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level.*

Exhibit reads: CSR and non-CSR schools were equally likely to cite state and district content standards as the major influence on their school improvement plan (90 percent; 91 percent). CSR schools were significantly more likely to cite the specifications of a reform design as influencing their school improvement plan (63 percent as compared with 34 percent).

Exhibit A-4

Source of Reform Plans at CSR and Non-CSR Schools

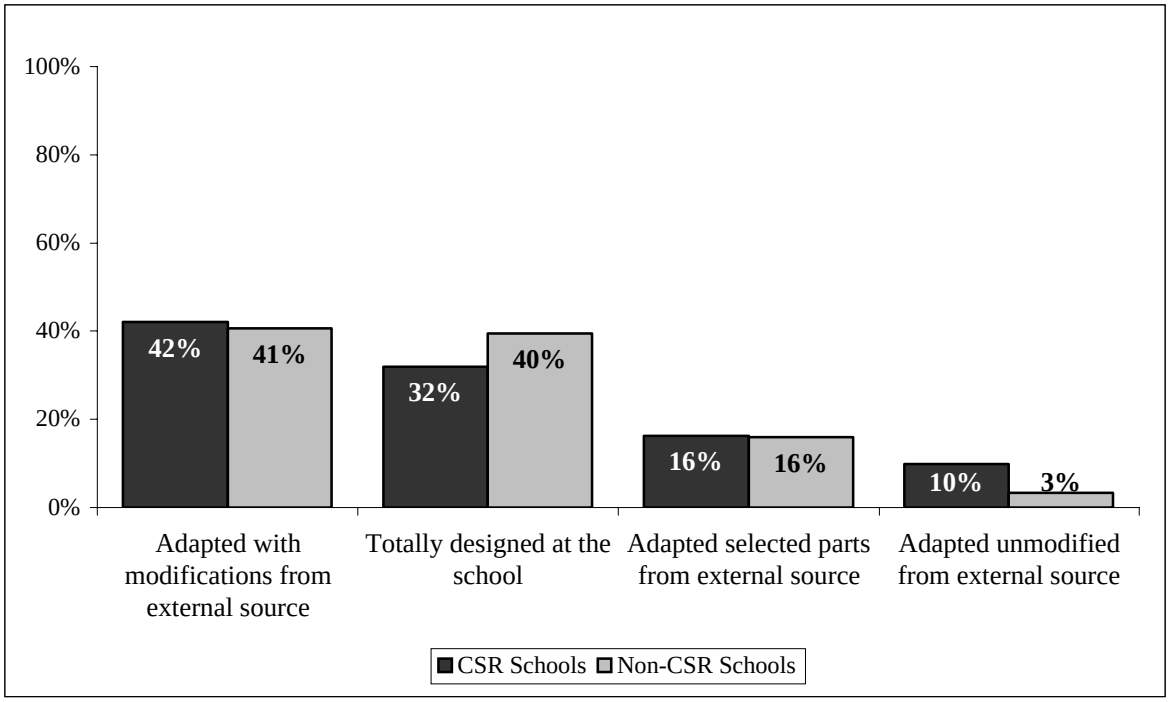
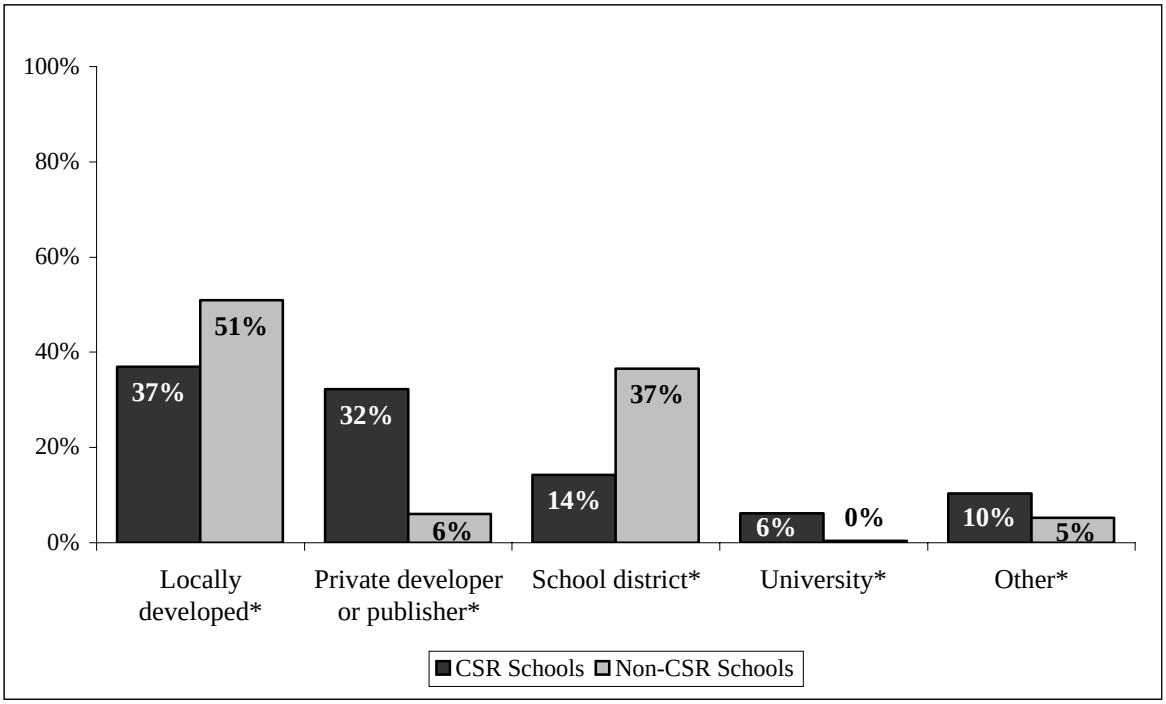


Exhibit reads: CSR schools and non-CSR schools were equally likely to report that their reform efforts were "adapted with modifications from an external source" (42 percent and 41 percent). Non-CSR schools were slightly more likely than CSR schools to be implementing a reform "totally designed at the school."

Exhibit A-5

The Primary Designer for the Reform at Your School



**Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level for all items.*

Exhibit reads: Schools receiving CSR funds were more likely that non-CSR schools to adopt a reform designed by a private developer or publisher (32 percent compared with 6 percent). Nearly 90 percent of non-CSR schools reported implementing reforms that were designed locally (51 percent) or by the district (37 percent), compared with just over half of CSR schools reporting the same.

Exhibit A-6

Academic Subjects Included in School Goals or Benchmarks

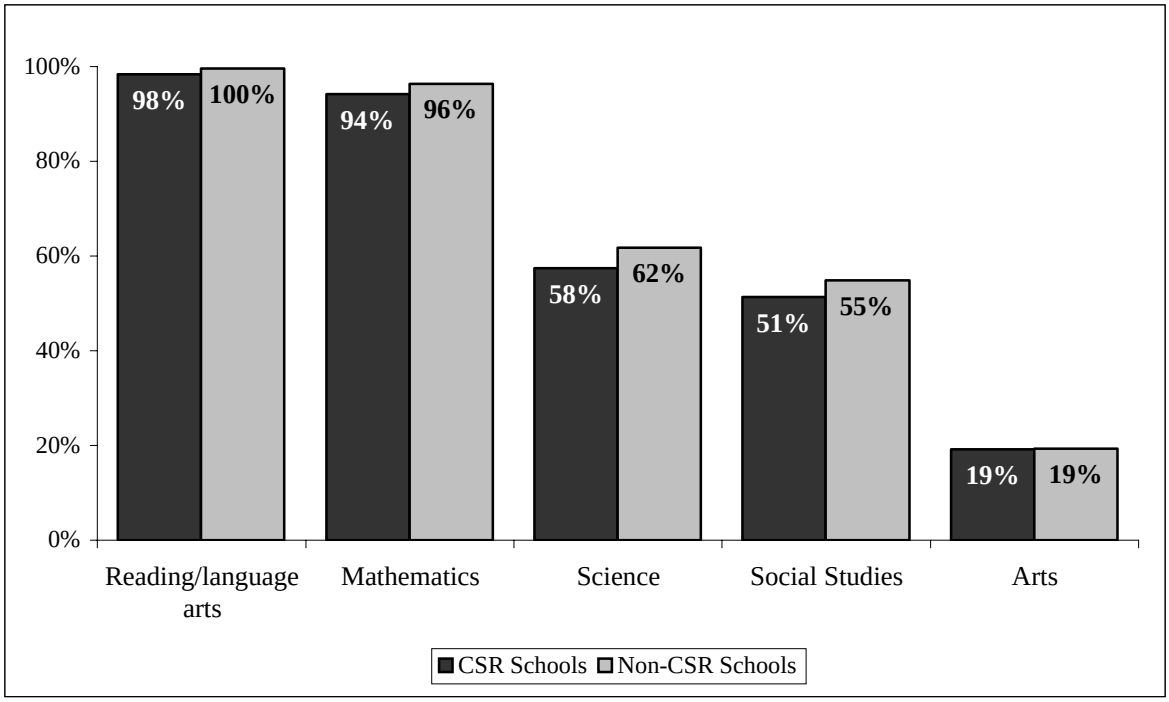


Exhibit reads: Almost all CSR and Non-CSR schools report performance goals in reading or language arts and mathematics.

Exhibit A-7

Types of School Performance Goals for Students at CSR and Non-CSR Schools

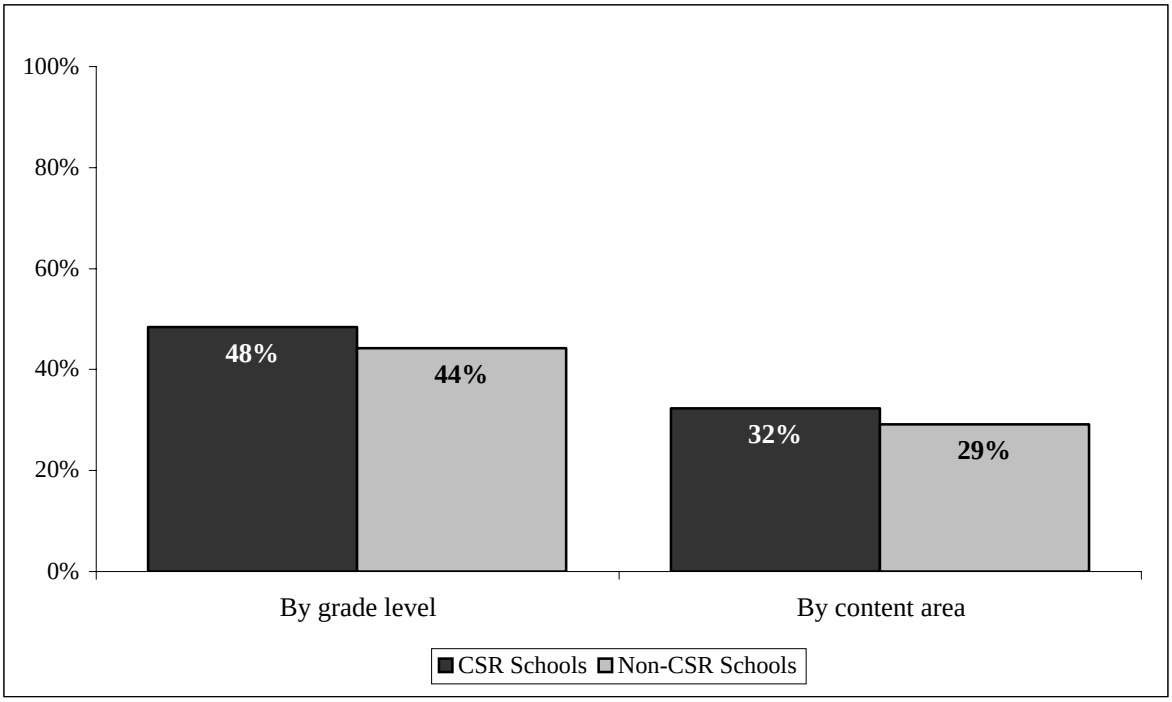
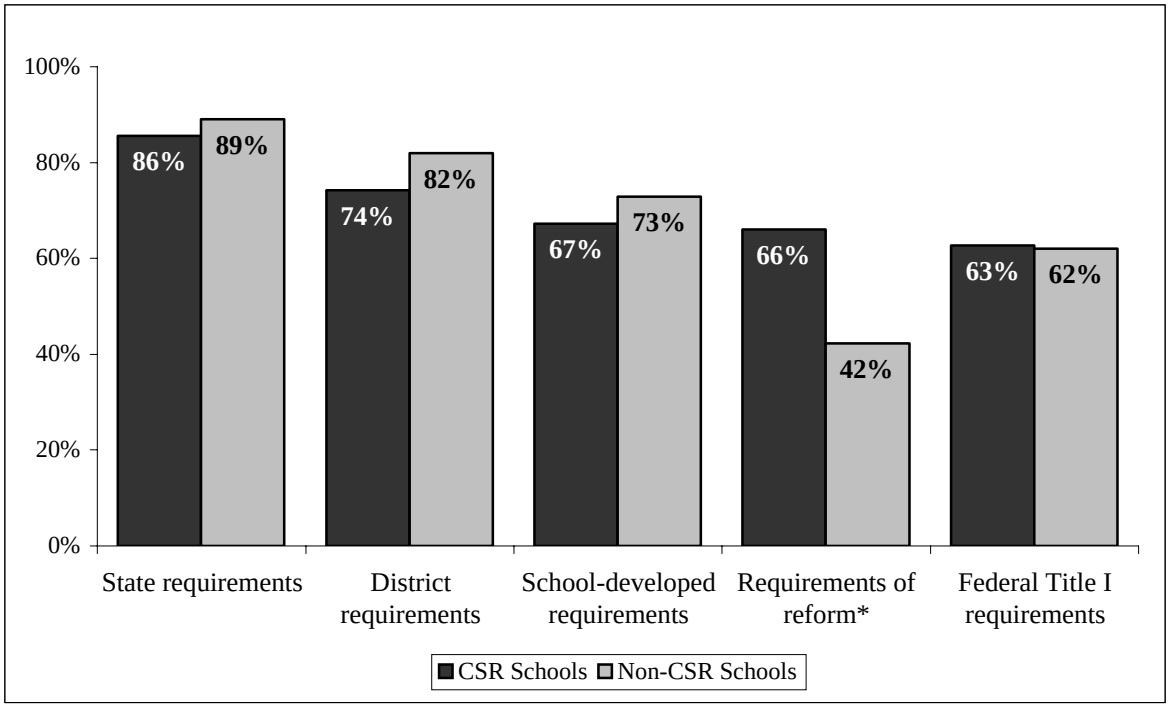


Exhibit reads: Less than half of CSR or non-CSR schools have annual performance goals by either grade level or content area.

Exhibit A-8

Factors Influencing the Evaluation of School Performance Goals



**Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level.*

Exhibit reads: A significant difference existed in the consideration of the requirements of reform, with 66 percent of CSR schools reporting that they include such requirements in their evaluation as compared with 42 percent of non-CSR schools.

Exhibit A-9

Professional Development Opportunities Available to Teachers in the First Year of CSR Reform (2002-03) Compared with the Previous Year

	2001-02	*2002-03*
Reading/language arts instruction	84%	94%
Mathematics instruction	73%	83%
Instructional strategies for low-achieving, limited English proficient, special education, and/or migrant students	54%	71%
Ensuring that curriculum and instruction are consistent with state and/or district content standards	67%	79%
Ensuring that curriculum and instruction are consistent with state and/or district assessments	61%	69%
Implementation of a school reform model	46%	85%
Monitoring individual students' progress toward learning goals	50%	70%
Interpreting reports of student achievement data	63%	83%

Exhibit reads: Professional development opportunities increased significantly at CSR schools during the first year of CSR implementation. Professional development around reading or language arts and mathematics instruction was most frequent.

Exhibit A-10

Type of Support Available through the *District* for Reform Efforts

	CSR	*non-CSR*
Administering a needs assessment	45%	47%
Providing additional school staff to support school reform	41%	43%
Selecting a school reform model	45%	32%*
Writing grants to support school reform	64%	56%
Providing professional development for school reform	72%	86%*
Release time for teachers	57%	66%
None, the district does not supply additional support	6%	2%*

**Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level.*

Exhibit reads: School districts were more likely to assist CSR schools in selecting school reform models than non-CSR schools (45 percent compared with 32 percent). In non-CSR schools, districts were more likely to provide professional development for school reform (86 percent vs. 72 percent in CSR schools).

Exhibit A-11

Type of Support Available through the *State* for Reform Efforts

	CSR	***non-CSR***
Administering a needs assessment	22%	21%
Selecting a school reform model	25%	16%*
Writing grants to support school reform	27%	35%
Providing professional development for school reform	51%	49%
Release time for teachers	13%	18%
None, the state does not supply additional support	26%	27%

**Difference is statistically significant at the .01 level.*

Exhibit reads: Support from states was significantly higher for selecting a reform model in CSR schools (25 percent) vs. non-CSR schools (16 percent) otherwise the level of state support for CSR and non-CSR schools is not significantly different. Note, nearly half the schools reported that states also provided professional development to support reform in both CSR and non-CSR schools.

Appendix B: Technical Appendix

Sample and Comparison School Selection for LACIO

The evaluation team sampled Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) schools in two stages. In the first stage, researchers selected a large number of schools randomly from the universe of schools that received CSR funding in 2002 and selected matched comparison schools for each sample school. Schools for the field-based study were selected in the second stage. From a random sub-sample of schools researchers deliberately selected schools to ensure that the sample was distributed evenly geographically and by school level.

Selection of School Survey Sample

The evaluation team ensured that the diversity in the population of schools was maintained in the sample by randomly selecting a large enough number of CSR schools to complete surveys. The sample of 400 schools is about 36 percent of the universe of approximately 1,100 schools reported to receive CSR funds for calendar year 2002.

Researchers obtained the most complete list of CSR schools from the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL). SEDL maintains this database under contract to the U.S. Department of Education. The Department of Education requires states to report their awardees to SEDL; however, the database did not include all states in the year 2002 for several reasons. Although SEDL continuously collects data, at any given time the data may be incomplete due to delinquent reporting by state education agencies. In addition, many states only award CSR funds to schools biennially or irregularly. As a result, the universe for calendar year 2002 comprised 38 states and 1,096 schools out of an estimated potential number of 2,000 awards.

Using random sampling only, researchers chose schools that were representative of the population without stratification for the survey sample. The study does not meet the requirements for stratification because there are no subpopulations (schools) that are either domains of the study or require different study procedures (Kish 1995). However, in order to represent the diversity of policy environments where CSR is being applied, researchers took some school characteristics into account to check the representativeness of the sample. As shown later in this section, the distributions of the study sample across locale and school level were comparable to the distributions of the CSR universe.

During the preparation of this report, the Department of Education allocated additional funds to study 15 states that were not included in the original random sample. Of the initial 38 states in the 2002 CSR universe, three states were left out as a by-product of the random selection process. Five additional states reported data to SEDL after the initial sample selection. The remaining seven states did not make any awards in 2002 but have begun to report 2003 data to SEDL. Researchers selected an additional 100 schools from these missing states for two reasons. First, in order to be representative of all states, the sample should include schools from all states. Also, in order to measure the value added by CSR over Title I schoolwides, a larger

comparison group of Title I schoolwides was required. Thus in the second sample, the choice of comparison schools was limited to those classified as Title I schoolwides in 2002. Survey data from this sample will be included in the next annual report.

Selection of Comparison Schools

Many studies show that school-level student performance is influenced by school background characteristics such as student socioeconomic status and ethnicity. In fact, within each state, by regressing only the percentage of students receiving free and reduced-price lunches and the percentage of nonwhite students on a composite of reading and mathematics performance, 15-80 percent of the variation in student performance can be explained. In order to make a reasonable comparison between the CSR schools and other schools, researchers selected comparison schools to have matching background characteristics.

Researchers used a two-step process to select potential matches for comparison with CSR schools in this study. First, the team created a school equivalency index for all schools in each state (where data were available) and then calculated a proximity score between each pair of schools within a state. Matching schools were selected that had the closest proximity on the index to CSR schools within the same district.

A regression-based approach to weighting and combining background characteristics was used to construct the index of school similarity for each state. This method is a simplified version of the California School Characteristics Index (Technical Design Group of the Advisory Committee for the Public Schools Accountability Act of 1999). Using the *National School-Level State Assessment Score Database* developed by the American Institutes of Research, the team regressed measures of student academic performance on measures of schoolwide participation in federally subsidized free or reduced-price lunch programs and on schoolwide counts of student ethnicity. The estimated coefficients led to a composite of background characteristics for each school. In short, each background characteristic was weighted by the amount that it contributed to student performance.

The variety of reporting formats used by states necessitated construction of a separate index for each state. For example, some states reported percentile rank while others reported percent above cut-points (usually quartiles or proficiency standards). The index reflected whatever measure was available, limiting comparisons among schools to within states. States also varied in the grades and subjects tested. The constructed indices for elementary, middle, and high school levels used scores from the third, seventh, and eleventh grade preferentially. If scores for these grades were not available, the closest available grade was used. The most consistently reported subject scores across states were results of reading assessments. With few exceptions, the reading scores were used to construct indices. The most current set of scores was from the 1999-2000 or 2000-01 school years in most states. Exhibit B-1 summarizes the performance indicators used for each state, as well as the strength of the association between the predictor variables and performance.

Exhibit B-1

Summary of Performance Indicators by State

State	Year tested	Subject	Type of measure*	Elementary R^2	Middle R^2	High R^2
Arizona	2000	Reading	PR	0.54	0.55	0.42 (10th)
Arkansas	2000	Total	PR	0.49 (5th)	-	-
California	2001	Reading	PR	0.76	0.53	0.37
Colorado	2000	Reading	CT	0.72	0.82	-
Delaware	2000	Reading	PR	-	-	-
Florida	2001	Reading	CT	0.67 (4th)	0.36 (8th)	0.24 (10th)
Georgia	2000	Reading	PR	0.56	0.41 (8th)	-
Hawaii	1999	Reading	CT	0.44	-	-
Iowa	-	-	-	-	-	-
Idaho	2001	Reading	PR	-	0.21	0.18 (10th)
Indiana	2000	Reading	PR	0.47	-	-
Kentucky	-	-	-	-	-	-
Louisiana	2000	Total	PR	0.63	0.56	0.55 (9th)
Massachusetts	2001	Reading	CT	0.10 (4th)	-	-
Maryland	2000	Reading	CT	0.50	0.49 (8th)	-
Maine	-	-	-	-	-	-
Michigan	2000	Reading	CT	0.21 (4th)	0.20	-
Minnesota	2000	Reading	CT	0.28	-	-
Mississippi	2000	Reading	PR	0.56	0.58	-
Missouri	2000	Language	CT	0.34	0.34	-
North Carolina	2000	Reading	PR	0.48	0.48	-
North Dakota	-					
New Hampshire	2000	Reading	CT	0.09	-	-
Nevada	1998	Reading	CT	0.48 (4th)	-	-
New York	2001	Reading	CT	0.67 (4th)	0.52 (8th)	-
Ohio	2000	Reading	CT	0.61 (4th)	0.62 (6th)	-
Oregon	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pennsylvania	1999	Reading	CT	0.69 (5th)	-	-
South Carolina	2000	Reading	CT	0.57	-	-
Tennessee	-	-	-	-	-	-
Utah	2000	Reading	PR	0.54	0.48 (8th)	0.50
Virginia	2001	Reading	PR	0.58 (4th)	-	0.45 (9th)
Washington	2001	Reading	PR	-	-	-
Wisconsin	2000	Reading	PR	0.46 (4th)	0.42 (8th)	-

*PR—percentile rank, CT—cut

** R^2—for 3rd, 7th and 11th grade scores regressed on percent of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches and minority status unless otherwise noted

After eliminating schools that previously participated in CSR, the team selected potential matches for each first-year CSR school based upon a minimum distance criterion. This method was used in the majority of cases. However alternative methods were used in two circumstances. First, in some districts (or states) either demographic or performance data were not available. Second, a suitable comparison school was not available within the same district because the

district was too small or all other comparable schools had previously participated in CSR. Each of these contingencies is outlined below.

In some cases, not enough data were available to construct a school equivalency index. Where states or districts do not report participation in the free or reduced-price lunch program or ethnicity, schools were ranked within districts using only achievement scores. Examples of states where these data are not available are Tennessee and Washington. Achievement data were missing for some schools or districts. This was often the case in high schools where the SAT takes the place of district-administered standardized tests. The proximity scores in these cases were based on an unweighted composite of the number of students qualifying for free or reduced-price lunches and ethnicity. Finally, in cases where neither achievement nor demographic data were available, comparison schools were matched by school grade span, size, and locale.

In districts where a comparison school could not be selected, the team searched for a suitable comparison in an adjacent district of similar locale. Because the school equivalency index included all public schools in the state, the proximity of any school within the state could be calculated. The same criteria were used for selection across districts where data were available. In cases where data were not available, the team used the same procedures that applied to selecting comparison schools within districts. Of the 400 sample schools, 319 comparison schools were within the same district and 81 were from a different district.

Composition of the CSR Sample and Non-CSR Sample

LACIO focuses on questions of implementation and outcomes, linking school reform activities in diverse settings to student achievement. To achieve the goals of the study, researchers compared achievement in the universe of CSR schools with a random sample of schools receiving CSR funding and a comparable group of non-CSR schools. The baseline establishes the representativeness of the sample and the validity of the comparison group. In brief, findings indicate the sample was similar to all CSR schools and the comparison schools on school level and locale. And, although the universe and sample were similar in level of poverty, the comparison schools were less likely to serve the highest poverty students. The universe of CSR schools had lower initial achievement than the sample schools, which had lower achievement than the comparison schools. This section presents the baseline data and then offers some possible explanations for the differences.

Both CSR and comparison schools included in the sample were similar to the universe of CSR schools on level of school and locale. For example, 62 percent of the universe, 67 percent of the sample, and 67 percent of comparison schools are elementary schools (Exhibit B-2). Further, 46 percent of the universe, 46 percent of the sample, and 45 percent of the comparison schools are urban, with similar comparability for rural schools (19 percent, 22 percent, and 22 percent) (Exhibit B-3).

Exhibit B-2

Type of School within All 2002 CSR Schools, CSR Sample, and Non-CSR Comparison Sample

	CSR Universe	CSR Sample	Comparison
Elementary	62%	67%	67%
Middle	20%	15%	15%
High	14%	15%	15%
Other	4%	3%	3%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Exhibit reads: Type of school in the CSR sample is representative of 2002 CSR universe and type of school in the comparison group is exactly matched to the sample.

Exhibit B-3

Location of All 2002 CSR Schools, CSR Sample, and Non-CSR Comparison Sample

	CSR Universe	CSR Sample	Comparison
Urban	46%	46%	45%
Suburban	23%	20%	23%
Town	13%	12%	10%
Rural	19%	22%	22%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Exhibit reads: Distribution of CSR sample and comparison school by locale are representative of CSR universe.

Differences exist between the CSR universe, the sample schools, and the comparison schools with regard to the poverty levels of the students they serve. Although the universe and sample of CSR schools serve similar percentages of high-poverty students (78 percent of the universe and 75 percent of the sample are schools with over 50 percent of students in poverty), the comparison schools are less likely to be high poverty (66 percent have over 50 percent of students in poverty) (Exhibit B-4).

Exhibit B-4

Percentage of Students in Poverty at 2002 CSR Schools, CSR Sample and Non-CSR Comparison Sample

	CSR Universe	CSR Sample	Comparison
75–100%	45	41	37
50–74%	33	34	29
24–49%	18	22	26
0–24%	4	3	8
Total	100	100	100

Exhibit reads: While distributions of the samples and CSR universe are similar, comparison schools were less likely to be in the highest poverty quartile.

In order to determine baseline student performance, the team calculated z-scores for each CSR and comparison school. Exhibit B-5 indicates performance at baseline for the universe of CSR schools, the sample schools, and the comparisons schools. The CSR sample performed better than the universe of CSR schools, and the comparison group performed better than the sample at all grade levels in both reading and mathematics.

Exhibit B-5

Average School-Level Z-Scores (Math and Reading)

Math	CSR Universe	CSR Sample	Comparison
Elementary	-0.95	-0.72	-0.39
Middle	-0.86	-0.82	-0.38
High	-0.68	-0.51	-0.35
Reading			
Elementary	-0.92	-0.77	-0.47
Middle	-0.89	-0.84	-0.40
High	-0.69	-0.52	-0.36

Exhibit reads: CSR universe schools had lower average baseline performance levels than sample and comparison schools in math and reading.

The characteristics of the comparison schools chosen for the study are similar, but not exactly like the sample of CSR schools. Overall, the school level and locale of comparison

schools were matched closely; however, the preference for choosing comparison schools within the districts of the sample schools created pairs that were not ideally matched. In some districts, the availability of comparison schools was limited because all other CSR-eligible schools had already received funding, removing them from the selection pool, or the district was too small to have more than one school at the appropriate level.

The comparison group for LACIO is composed of schools that have *never* received CSR funding. Their higher initial scores may reflect targeting of CSR funds to schools with greater need. Although, matched on prior achievement as well as demographic variables, the pool of available comparison schools was limited because over time the pool of potential comparison sites has become smaller, leaving schools that exhibit higher (although not very high) achievement levels. Interviews of state and district officials will explore the validity of that explanation.

Replacement of Survey Sample and Comparison Schools

Not every school in the initial sample of 400 CSR and 400 comparison schools agreed to participate in the evaluation. When school principals (or their districts) would not consent to receive surveys, they were defined as "refusing to participate." Note that this definition excludes schools that received surveys yet failed to return the forms. Members of the second group were not dropped from the sample and were treated as nonresponders (see response rate section below).

Two methods were used to replace nonparticipating schools. When comparison schools refused to participate, another comparison for the sample school was chosen based on the same criteria as the initial selection process. However, if a CSR sample school refused to participate, both the CSR school and matching school were removed. The new pair was chosen from the same locale, school level, and state to avoid biasing the sample in any systematic manner.

Selection of Schools for Field-based Study

With such a small number of schools in the field-based study, the sample is representative neither of the geographic distribution nor distribution of school levels in the universe of CSR schools. From the larger sample of 400 CSR and comparison school pairs, the team randomly selected 25 potential pairs, and narrowed the subsample further by deliberately selecting 15 schools within the initial 25. The selection was necessary to ensure that the subsample would include enough geographic diversity and diversity of school levels to maximize the variety of policy environments available for study within the constraints of the design. The remaining list of 10 randomly selected schools was retained in the event that a field-based study school or district did not agree to be part of the evaluation.

Researchers took an additional precaution by selecting field-based study CSR and comparison pairs that resided in the same district. This precaution was necessary for two reasons. Unlike the large-scale sample, where policy comparisons occur over the entire sample, in the field-based study the only way to observe the differential effect of district policies is to make

comparisons within a single district. Also, visiting a single district for each pair minimizes the data collection burden for both the evaluators and respondents.

Selection of District Interview Sample

The evaluation also includes school districts as part of the large-scale and field-based studies. The team will conduct telephone interviews with each of the 15 field-based study districts as well as 50 additional districts across the country. From the current sample covering 34 states, at least one district was selected to participate per state. Districts with CSR schools included in the large-scale school survey were pooled within each state. Then random selections were made state-by-state from the districts in the pool.

Administration of Principal and Teacher Surveys

The survey instrument uses items that are evidence-based and measure behaviors, rather than attitudes and expectations. The use of these types of items in the survey represents our desire to measure respondents' actual behaviors rather than attitudes or beliefs.

Items asking about schools' actual behaviors and conditions maximize the validity of survey data. Such items may be compared with the traditional design of survey items, which emphasize subjective ratings and responses from individual respondents' and are vulnerable to merely soliciting "socially desirable" responses. When activity or behavioral items are used—e.g., "Which academic subjects are covered by goals or benchmarks for student achievement?"—in principle, the item is more amenable to external corroboration, and respondents are less likely to make a response other than by giving their most accurate one. Although the entire survey still consists of self-reported data, the use of such behavioral items increases the quality of the data (Fowler 1993).

The research questions central to the evaluation drove the selection of survey items. Because the research questions focus on identifiable actions of schools and their impact as the result of CSR program implementation, the survey administered to participants in this evaluation is focused strictly on behaviors. In essence, the survey tracks behaviors that result from the implementation of CSR rather than attitudes about its implementation.

Expert Review and Field Testing

All data collection instruments were reviewed before being used in the field. Instruments and procedures were shared with members of the Technical Working Group, who brought their expertise as researchers and practitioners to their review of the design of the items, the burden on respondents, and the implications for data analysis. In addition to such review, the evaluation team pilot tested all data collection instruments, including all interview and observation protocols and surveys. During these tests, which were administered to no more than nine respondents, the team assessed item comprehension, the effectiveness of the proposed strategies for gaining cooperation, and the length of time for respondents to answer questions in the instruments.

Survey Data Collection

Data collection for the principal and teacher surveys took place in three stages: obtaining consent, distributing and collecting surveys, and follow-up. Data collection began with contacting the districts to inform them of the evaluation and solicit support. Most districts decided to administer the surveys through the superintendent's office or CSR contact person. This had both a positive and a negative effect. On the positive side, the district contact lent support to the research effort (in some cases, districts attached approval forms or letters of encouragement). However, it also increased the time between survey administration and response.

Over the course of the data collection, schools from several districts were eliminated from the sample. Some districts refused to participate because of previous commitments to other projects. In other districts, target schools were in the process of shutting down or restructuring. Schools in these categories (9 sample and 16 comparison) were replaced during the study.

Surveys were distributed to schools in three waves as consent was obtained from districts and schools. Follow-up began one week after mailing surveys in the form of a reminder postcard. After two weeks and every week thereafter, schools were contacted by phone until survey forms were received. Schools required an average of three to four phone call reminders before returning survey forms.

In some cases, the last wave of mailing coincided with a variety of end-of-school activities. In other cases, districts delayed data collection until the start of school in fall 2003. For example, New York City officials initially agreed to participate in spring 2002 but then reversed their decision because a statewide research effort was underway. District officials agreed to allow us to administer the surveys in September. Administration and follow-up with New York City and other nonresponding districts (24 sample and 24 comparison schools) were concentrated in September. Duerr Research has continued follow-up, and groups of completed surveys continue to arrive at WestEd.

Response Rate

The data in this report are drawn from the survey forms returned to WestEd before July 30, 2003. The 239 pairs of schools that have responded so far represent 60 percent of the original target of 400 pairs of CSR and comparison schools. Survey forms have come in from 318 of 367 CSR schools surveyed so far (87 percent response rate), and 279 of 360 non-CSR comparison schools (78 percent response rate). However, the response rate is likely to increase as follow-up efforts continue, especially in the delayed and replacement schools. To ensure that we receive the necessary number of surveys, follow-up efforts will intensify. The evaluators are confident that the 88 percent response rate required will be achieved in order to get adequate power for the more complex statistical models that will be included in the second annual report of both sample and comparison schools (0.88*0.88*400=310).

The preliminary analyses included in the report will be supplemented by a final analysis when data from all possible cases have been entered and processed. Further, the evaluators will

(once all data collection has been completed) conduct an analysis of nonrespondents to determine the extent to which the final sample is biased. This analysis will also appear in the second annual report.

Analysis Methods—Year One

The analysis methods used in this report are mainly descriptive with simple bivariate associations used when necessary. A more complex analysis including an estimation of student achievement outcomes will appear in the second annual report. The reason for this delay is the lag in availability of student achievement data corresponding to the first year of implementation for the 2002 cohort.

Four sources of data were used to produce the descriptions in this report. The first source is the CSR Awards Database maintained by the Southwest Regional Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL). Lists of CSR schools are aggregated here from all U.S. states and territories. Second, the National Center for Education Statistics *Common Core of Data* was the source for school characteristics for CSR and comparison schools. The third source is the *National School-Level Assessment Database* maintained by the American Institutes for Research. Results of statewide standardized achievement tests are aggregated here. The final source of data for this report is the results from the administration of the LACIO Principal and Teacher Surveys.

Summaries of school characteristics using the SEDL and NCES databases consisted of straightforward cross-tabulations. Schools were included in this analysis only if the NCES database indicated that the school was operational.

Student Achievement Data

Summaries of student achievement data across states were calculated in three steps. First, a single grade level was selected to represent the performance of a school. Often this selection was made simpler by the availability of only one grade level. Elementary schools were preferentially represented by grade 3, but if this grade was not available, grade 4 or grade 5 was selected. Grade 7 was used preferentially for middle schools, followed by grade 8. Grade 11 was preferred over grade 10 for high school when possible. In some cases, only an aggregate of all grades in a school was available to use.

Second, because scores were reported in three different formats across states, the most desirable format for each state was selected. Scaled scores were used, when available, because of their ratio properties. Normal curve equivalent (NCE) scores, or percentile ranks converted to NCE, were used when scaled scores were not available because they have some interval properties. However, about half of the states only reported the percentage above cut scores or quartiles. In these cases, the distribution of each cut (often three were reported) was examined in order to choose the one that was closest to a normal distribution. The mean value had to be at least two standard deviations from the upper or lower limit of the scale.

In the third step, the values for the selected grade level or scale were converted to z-scores and aggregated across states by category. This method was used in the first-year report in the

interests of simplicity. However, in future reports, student achievement from different tests and different reporting formats will be aggregated using meta-analytic techniques.

Survey Data

Survey data from teachers and principals was first tabulated for all responses on the forms. Because each school was mailed three teacher surveys, an intervening step was performed. Before tabulation, the modal response for teachers within each school was determined. This aggregate response was used in further analyses.

Items on both forms were associated to check for validity. Almost all items were determined to be statistically significantly at the .01 level using the chi-square test, and phi was calculated for each item. In items with polytomous response variables, gamma was calculated to determine the magnitude of association. For items with continuous response variables, simple correlations were used. The size of the associations ranged from medium to large. Because of the large association between the teacher and principal responses, only the principal responses are reported here as the measure of school reform. However, on a small number of items minor disagreements between principals and teachers existed. On those items, the responses for both teachers and principals are both noted. These differences will be explored in subsequent reports.

Two types of comparisons were performed on survey items. When the responses of CSR principals are compared with non-CSR principals, a simple chi-squared test was used. However, when the responses of CSR principals from items asking information about last year are compared with responses about this year, a McNemar chi-square was used to test the symmetry of rows.

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