Priority Schools have existed for four years.

They experience challenges in:

- Student achievement, gap closure, growth and graduation rates
- Building and district leadership, effective classroom instruction, building a culture and climate geared to success, and school governance
The Department Team supporting these schools involves the following offices:

- Evaluation, Strategic Research and Accountability
- School Reform
- Education Improvement and Innovation
- Field Services
- Other offices as particular needs arise

CEPI is instrumental in the data support
METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

- Top to Bottom (TTB) Components
  - Student achievement level
  - Individual student progress or schoolwide improvement
  - Size of the within-school achievement gap
  - Graduation rate and improvement in graduation rate (high school only)
Identification of Priority Schools
- Bottom 5% on the TTB list
- Grad rate less than 60% for three years running

Identification versus Intervention
- Intervention for at least four years
- Re-identification every year
High School Reading

Improvement vs. Achievement

MICHIGAN Department of Education
High School Reading

20% proficiency rate
- 21 proficient
- 84 not proficient
4.8% annual decline in proficiency
35% proficiency rate
- 88 proficient
- 158 not proficient
1.5% annual increase in proficiency
High School Reading

55% proficiency rate
- 64 proficient
- 52 not proficient
6.5% annual increase in proficiency
High School Reading

Achievement Gap vs. Achievement

Same Priority School as Before
Same Priority School as Before
- 20% proficiency rate
- Achievement gap a little less than 2 standard deviations smaller than the state average
Same Mid-Level Comparison School as Before
• 35% proficiency rate
• Achievement gap a little larger than the state average
Same High-Level Comparison School as Before
• 55% proficiency rate
• Achievement gap a little more than 1 standard deviation larger than the state average
High School Graduation

Improve Trend

Graduation Rate

Same Priority School as Before
Same Priority School as Before
- 64% graduation rate
- 4% annual improvement in graduation rate
Same Mid-Level Comparison School as Before
- 79% graduation rate
- 1% annual improvement in graduation rate
Same High-Level Comparison School as Before
- 95% graduation rate
- 2% annual improvement in graduation rate
OBSErvations from MDE monitors

- School Culture & Climate Issues
  - High Teacher Absences
  - Acrimony among adults/“Toxic” culture
  - Majority of schools with building mechanical failures
  - Police/security offices/metal detectors at building entrance in majority of buildings in larger cities
  - High Suspension rates (particularly with African American youth)
  - Numerous students in hallways during instructional time
**OBSERVATIONS FROM MDE MONITORS**

- **Instructional Issues**
  - Prevalent didactic, teacher-led instructional models
  - Low-level learning tasks
  - High numbers of substitute teachers
  - Teacher lack subject-matter expertise and pedagogical skill
  - Failure to use data to drive instruction
Leadership Issues

- Rotating building/district leadership (many with 2-3 different leaders in two years)
- Lack skills to work in a turnaround environment
- Failure to provide instructional leadership
- Continue to invest in programs/initiatives that have not proven effective
- Multiple initiatives with little focus (one school with 39 different initiatives)
OBSERVATIONS FROM MDE MONITORS

- Governance Issues
  - Lack of autonomy given to Principals
  - Many have financial deficits
  - Little differentiation in support from central office
  - “Broken” System—lacks focus on reform plan
OBSERVATIONS FROM MDE MONITORS

- No clear process for analyzing data and pinpointing the “real” problems that created low test scores.
- “Over-identifying” our goals; too many initiatives, not enough focus.
- Need to focus on curriculum development activities
  - “You guys are doing an excellent job of teaching the wrong things!”
- Lack a culture of achievement in our building; focused on care and compassion, not on student achievement
- We need to set the needs of the school and the community above the needs of adults
PRIORITY SCHOOL SUPPORT PROVIDER NETWORK

MDE

MI EXCEL

MSU

ISDs

MVU

SRO

AdvancED
SUPPORTS FOR TEACHERS

- **Purpose**
  - Provide descriptive data about current classroom practice to inform reflective dialogue to evaluate potential changes in instruction

- **Support is**
  - In classroom with School improvement facilitators
  - During grade level meetings
  - Available through networking meetings with experts
  - On-line tools and surveys
Purpose

- To build the capacity of school leaders to select powerful reform strategies, monitor and evaluate effectiveness of strategies, and take rapid action for course correction

Support is

- An on-site collaboration between school leadership team, ISD school improvement facilitator, and MSU intervention specialist to conduct diagnostic dialogues

- Frequent on-site coaching conversations between monitors and school leadership team
SUPPORTS FOR DISTRICT LEADERS

Purpose

- Identify misalignments in district systems that are barriers to rapid changes at the building level.

Support is

- Facilitated building/district conversation about how to customize supports that meet the specific needs of the priority school’s rapid change agenda

- Provided by MSU intervention specialist and SRO monitors
MDE and CEPI partnered with the Harvard SDP beginning in 2013:

- Two Data Fellows and one Agency Fellow
- Two year partnership
- Designed to increase SEA capacity to leverage data and research for action

Increase MDE’s dedicated capacity to enact our Strategic Research and Evaluation Initiative goals

- Rapid response research to inform policy and decision-making; actionable information
- Longer-term research to address our priority policy areas
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