

RCSD New Schools Evaluation: Year One

October, 2011

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Rochester City School District

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SUMMARY

CGR was engaged by the Rochester City School District to conduct a first-year implementation evaluation of five new secondary schools opened as part of the district's Portfolio Plan. The Portfolio Plan calls for phasing out schools that are unsuccessful and developing new options for students. In 2010-11, the district opened Early College International High School, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) High School, Robert Brown High School of Construction and Design, Vanguard Collegiate High School, and Integrated Arts and Technology High School.

An implementation evaluation considers questions of how well a program is being implemented in addition to examining evidence of effectiveness. This study incorporates both qualitative and quantitative information, including student and staff surveys and interviews, site visits and classroom observations, and analysis of data on student characteristics and learning outcomes.

School Demographics

Students enrolling in the new schools were by and large similar to the overall district population. Although there were some differences among the schools, nearly 90% of new school students overall were poor enough to qualify for free or reduced-price lunches, 67% were African-American and 22% were Hispanic. Test scores and other measures of student engagement and behavior in the year prior to entering the new schools were similar to the general student population.

First Year Expectations

When we consider the performance of each of the schools in its first year, the question of expectations is important. Each school received extra resources compared to other district schools, ranging from less than \$500,000 to more than \$1 million. Some principals had more time to carefully plan the school and recruit students and staff than others. Some schools had more students placed in the school by the district, as opposed to students who selected the school. Finally, the logistical hurdles of beginning a new school, developing a shared vision among staff, and establishing clear expectations for students are considerable.

Given all of these factors, it may not be reasonable to expect significantly higher performance than the overall district. The first year evaluation should provide insight into trends and identify areas of concern that might limit continued performance improvement.

Findings in Brief

Analysis of district data shows the new schools achieved some higher outcomes than the district as a whole, but mixed performance on state exams. Attendance was higher at all of the new schools, and in the four schools with 9th graders, GPAs were higher and a bigger share of students earned at least 5 high school credits (an indicator of progress toward graduation). However, state test results were mixed: In 12 comparisons of school passing rates with district performance, the new schools performed above the district in 6 and at or below the district in 6. Also, student suspensions were higher than the district level in 3 of the 5 schools.

On the more qualitative questions of how well each school is doing with key tasks such as establishing high expectations, providing quality instruction and creating a productive climate, the new schools are each making progress and each have some work to do. One major achievement is that each of the schools has generally established a positive, enthusiastic, committed attitude among staff members. Staff members feel they are part of something special and are proud that the climate at their schools is better than where they previously worked. At many of the schools, staff members discussed their observation that student attendance is higher and that students *want* to be in school, even if student achievement and behavior may not be as good as it needs to be.

The new schools are all working toward establishing future-oriented, high expectations. College is a focus for many of them. In this and in the quality of instruction, CGR observed a range of progress at and within the new schools. In our visits, we saw several top-notch classes where students were engaged, content was rich and instruction was high-quality. We also saw classes where students were not working, where behavior was minimally compliant or non-compliant and where lessons were low-level.

The new schools by and large have established good working relationships with their outside partners, and many have also created promising structures for delivering academic support either within or outside of the school day and for providing meaningful professional development for staff members.

Looking Ahead

Overall, the new schools are off to a promising start, but careful attention needs to be paid as the schools expand and mature. Ensuring that all students have access to rigorous content, that classroom instruction is engaging, and that academic support is effective are all critical. Several of the schools also need to get a better handle on student behavior, certainly a difficult challenge. The adoption of more consistent expectations and consequences at some of the schools should make a positive difference.

As part of this evaluation, each school was given an in-depth assessment of its student and staff survey data and CGR's analysis. School leaders were receptive to using this baseline to help shape their Year Two plans.

Given the district's history of opening and now closing schools that were begun with similar hopes, the district should maintain a strong focus on supporting and monitoring the new schools through the second year, including another evaluation, whether that is conducted internally or by an external source.

Acknowledgements

This implementation evaluation could not have been conducted without the willing participation of the principals and staff members of each of the schools. We have great respect for the passion they bring to this work, and we appreciate their time and candor. We would also like to thank the students who took our survey and shared their opinions with us, as well as the many district leaders and Central Office departments that provided us with information and perspectives, including Chief of Staff Mary Doyle and the Offices of Accountability and Student Placement.

Staff Team

Kirstin Pryor and Erika Rosenberg researched and wrote this report, with assistance from Julia Bergdorf, Ana Liss and Michael Silva.

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INTRODUCTION

CGR was engaged by the Rochester City School District to conduct a first-year implementation evaluation of five new secondary schools opened as part of the district's Portfolio Plan. The Portfolio Plan is one of RCSD's key strategies and an attempt to ensure that students and parents have a portfolio of high-quality schools from which to choose. As such, it involves phasing out schools that are unsuccessful and developing new options for students.

The five new schools opened in 2010-11 were Early College International High School, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) High School, Robert Brown High School of Construction and Design, Vanguard Collegiate High School, and Integrated Arts and Technology High School.

This report is: intended to be a tool for school and district leadership and staff to assist with school improvement, to spark questions and encourage reflection and problem-solving. It also attempts to provide a baseline picture of the schools in year one and to report out to the larger community on the progress and challenges encountered so far. It does so by gathering student outcomes as well as experiences and perceptions of school staff and students and CGR researchers and sharing them in what we hope is a useful and non-threatening way.

This report is not: a comprehensive assessment of school performance. Although we report on school outcomes and practices, there is no clear standard for student achievement for a school's first year of existence, no established bar that we would expect each school to meet. This report is also not meant to foster competition between the new schools, but rather to help each learn from the other.

Methodology

An implementation evaluation considers questions of how well a program is being implemented in addition to examining evidence of effectiveness. This study incorporates both qualitative and quantitative information. CGR interviewed principals, teachers and students at each school, as well as conducting surveys of teachers and students.* (The survey instruments are in the Appendix.) A site visit of approximately a half-day occurred in each school in May or June, including sitting in on at least four classes to get a sense of instruction. The external school partners were also

*Parents were invited to take an online survey or contact the researchers, but the scope of the project did not include an effective parent outreach effort. CGR believes that in the future, a parental survey that complements the staff and student ones should be given through the schools or district.

interviewed. Data were provided by the RCSD on student demographics, attendance, suspensions and academic achievement measures including test scores, grade point averages and credits. Data that would have allowed us to present a profile of teachers in new schools (demographics, years of experience, type of training, certifications, etc.) were requested but not provided. Overall, 276 students at the new schools responded to the student survey, for a 45% response rate, and nearly all teachers participated in the teacher survey.[†]

CGR worked with the Offices of Accountability and School Innovation to design an evaluation plan that can be done internally at the end of each year. The same data could be analyzed, the observation templates used, and the surveys given annually. Our hope is that having a formal framework and a year one baseline will provide a template for the district to closely monitor and support the new schools as they grow.

This report is organized around the themes of academic rigor, personalization and partnerships because those were the hallmarks of the Portfolio Plan as defined by the district when it adopted the strategy. Also, we include selected student quotes from survey responses in the body of the report to showcase their voices – we did not correct grammatical or spelling errors.

BACKGROUND

Portfolio Plan – Big Picture

In adopting a strategy to close low-performing schools and open smaller, focused high schools, Rochester is following the path of several other urban districts nationwide, and repeating a bit of its own history. Several of the schools now being phased out were hoped to be examples of successful, innovative educational models when they opened 7-8 years ago. But academic struggles and a strict accountability system enforced by the state and federal governments instead landed these schools on watch lists and eventually led to the decision to close them down.

[†] The overall margin of error for the student survey was plus or minus 4 percentage points with a confidence level of 90%. Margins of error for the school-level student survey results are as follows: Early College, +/-13 percentage points; Robert Brown, 9.5 points; Vanguard, 8 points; Integrated Arts and STEM, both 7 points. Comparisons were made carefully; however, we do highlight some survey results within the margin of error where the results seem to help illustrate or confirm a theme present across the findings. With nearly all teachers responding to the survey, we do not report a margin of error.

Certainly, district and school officials and the community hope the new experiment with starting schools from scratch will have a different outcome. District leadership has created several structures aimed at this:

- An Office of School Innovation, which provides technical assistance and support during the start-up phase and helps monitor schools in the early years.
- Outside partners working with each school to provide a curricular focus, professional development, student activities, or some combination of services.
- Instituting this outside evaluation of the Year 1 experience at each school.

Studies over the last few years of similar strategies in other cities find favorable impacts in districts with an organized and rigorous approach to creating a portfolio of smaller high schools. Reports in New York City and Chicago found that attendance and graduation rates were somewhat higher, and teacher-student relationships tended to be stronger and more positive. (Note: In these studies, small schools had less than 550 students. Only three of RCSD's new schools would be considered small schools; the two technical schools will be larger once they reach their target enrollment. This reflects the anticipated demand and the resources required to support career and technical education programs.)

Implementation of the Portfolio Plan continues this school year with the phasing out of Jefferson High School, the restructuring of Charlotte from a 7th-12th to a 9th-12th school, and the restructuring of Freddie Thomas from a 9th-12th to a K-8 school, along with other changes. Two new schools were opened: the Leadership Academy for Men at the Charlotte campus (9th-12th grades) and the Rochester International Academy on the Jefferson campus, serving students ages 10 to 21 who are new to the United States.

School Start-up

Opening a new school requires much planning at the district level. Understanding needs and demand, researching partners, and being aware of funding opportunities are all key. Each school emerges from a distinct set of circumstances, on different timelines.

Funding

Early College was launched in December 2009, when the district was awarded almost \$450,000 as part of the NYS Smart Scholars Early College High School grant program, in partnership with SUNY. It was one of 11 schools founded in the first cohort, which has recently expanded to 37 statewide. Smart Scholars was initially funded as a matching grant

from the Gates Foundation. Schools in cohort 1 should receive funding for at least 4 years; early College's Year Two award was roughly \$370,000.

The remaining four schools are all funded through the federal 1003g grants, distributed through states as School Improvement Grants (SIGs). The district was required to propose a plan of action for several schools identified as persistently-low-performing. One of the options is to "turnaround" or essentially create a new school. Two schools at Franklin are phasing out, and "turning around" into Vanguard; another Franklin school will be replaced by Integrated Arts. At Edison, Robert Brown and STEM replace two schools each.

What this means is that each of these schools is eligible for up to \$2 million per year for up to three years. A portion of the funds must be used to support students at the phase-out schools. There are limits on what funds can be used for. In general, they cover professional development, new technology, student enrichment and costs associated with start up; they cannot be used for facilities work, or to replace district staff. In Year One, each school received between \$1.2 and \$1.8 million, again, partially shared with the phase out school they replace.

Questions of sustainability are valid, especially when you consider the size and one-time nature of these grants. Ideally, there will be some savings associated with closing 7 schools and only opening 5, and many of the costs of opening are initial outlays that may not need repeating. To be sure, a portfolio model does require investment; all the more reason to expect success.

Another way in which the start-up process varied across the five schools was that some principals were selected early and had as much as a full school year to plan the schools, while others were named much later, in the spring of 2010, and had far less planning time. As a result, some schools put more effort into recruiting and selecting students. All of the schools employed a process for interviewing and selecting staff members.

Student Recruitment

At the schools with more planning time (especially Early College and Integrated Arts), the principals actively marketed the school through fairs, visits to other schools, etc. Integrated Arts required prospective students and parents to fill out a questionnaire about why they wanted to attend the school and what they hoped to get out of it. The Early College principal interviewed prospective students to assess their commitment to accelerated academics. STEM also engaged in recruitment efforts, sending out letters to all upcoming 9th graders and holding a showcase. The STEM principal reviewed prospective students' records to identify students most likely to succeed.

Recruiting students to a new, unknown school can obviously be a challenge, and most of the schools had excess available seats, some of which were filled by district placements. This raises a number of thorny questions about whether new schools opened under the Portfolio Plan should be treated differently in the placement process than other district schools, questions which we do not attempt to put to rest here. In theory, when students choose a unique school with a defining focus or pathway, the school has a better chance to create a motivating, cohesive culture based on common student interests. However, all schools, in some sense, face the same pressures to succeed and the possibility of closure, restructuring or other sanctions if they fail. These and other considerations create tensions between school preferences and district priorities. In Year Two though, demand for the new schools was higher, as discussed in more detail below, perhaps lessening some of these concerns.

Also, a student's choice of a school is sometimes less about the particular program offered there than one might suppose. In response to an open-ended question in the CGR student survey about why they chose their school, many students cited more generic factors like wanting a better school or a change, the school having more opportunities, or a parent of family member having a preference for the school. Some did say they picked the school for its theme, focus on technology or focus on college. It also appears that some students simply chose a new school on the same campus as their phasing-out school, as Vanguard, Robert Brown and STEM had the highest proportion of students who previously attended a school being phased out (detailed below in the Student Profile section).

Staff Selection

As one would expect, each principal took an active role in trying to build a staff that would be successful. As a rule, the new schools had far more teacher applications than available openings. Several sent applicants a set of open-ended questions, and several employed a group interview process where applicants would simulate collaborative lesson planning as the principal and other interviewers observed. Other schools conducted more traditional interviews but used the conversation to make points about their expectations and gauge applicants' responses, such as letting applicants know they would expect teachers to work harder, to do things differently, to experiment more with instruction, etc.

Spotlight on Schools

<p>Early College</p> <p>Enrolled students in 2010-11: 91 9th graders</p> <p>Focus: Accelerated learning for first generation college students aimed at students earning 20 college credits; global studies infused throughout the curriculum and students' experiences.</p> <p>Major partners: Monroe Community College, Asia Society</p> <p>Highlight: Early College has successfully established high expectations for student achievement and a sense among students and staff members that the school is special.</p> <p>Challenge: Academic achievement will need to improve to meet the school's dual credit goals.</p>	<p>Integrated Arts</p> <p>Enrolled students in 2010-11: 75 7th graders</p> <p>Focus: Project-based learning, technology-infused instruction, character development.</p> <p>Major partner: Expeditionary Learning</p> <p>Highlight: Staff and students share a feeling of pride in their school. Staff members are enthusiastic about what they are building, and students feel cared about and engaged.</p> <p>Challenge: As both class observations and assessment results indicate, additional attention should be paid to increasing the academic focus and ensuring students are offered rich, rigorous content.</p>
<p>Robert Brown</p> <p>Enrolled students in 2010-11: 155 9th graders</p> <p>Focus: The fields of construction and design, with college as well as career/tech path.</p> <p>Major partners: Alfred State University, UNICON</p> <p>Highlight: Robert Brown boosted test scores and grades, employing a targeted approach to academic support, a benchmarking system for tracking mastery of skills, and a focus on English language learners.</p> <p>Challenge: A high suspension rate and class observations show the school needs to work on improving student behavior and ensuring all classes are productive with students engaged in their work.</p>	<p>STEM</p> <p>Enrolled students in 2010-11: 187 9th graders</p> <p>Focus: Science, technology, engineering and mathematics instruction through creation of academies in engineering, information technology and health sciences.</p> <p>Major partner: National Academy Foundation</p> <p>Highlight: STEM made major progress in building coherence among staff members and involving them in meaningful professional development and the creation of the school academies.</p> <p>Challenge: A high suspension rate and class observations reveal a need to set and enforce expectations that students behave appropriately and actively participate in their learning.</p>
<p>Vanguard</p> <p>Enrolled students in 2010-11: 103 9th graders</p> <p>Focus: Putting students on a college track, including through development of academies in forensics, global security and law enforcement.</p> <p>Major partner: College Board</p> <p>Highlight: The school has loyal staff members who feel empowered by the collaborative spirit and optimistic that the school is making progress toward improved student behavior. Both staff and students take pride in their school.</p> <p>Challenge: Vanguard needs to narrow its focus to ensure instruction is rigorous and to develop a more robust and comprehensive approach to creating effective structures, settings, and practices for remediation and acceleration.</p>	

STUDENT PROFILE

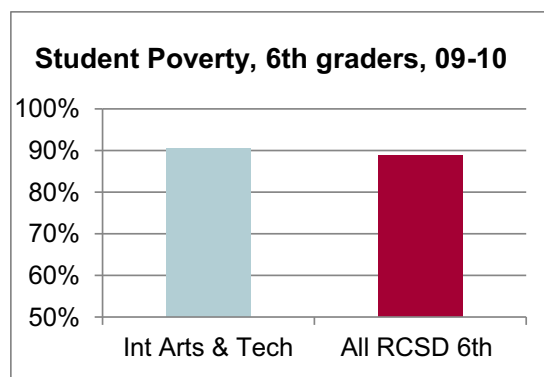
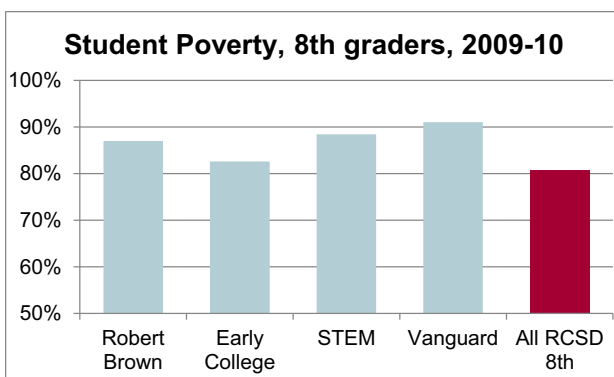
Understanding the profile of students who are in each school is important for a variety of reasons. On a school level, it can help shape recruitment and academic intervention efforts; on a district level, it can provide information about what types of students are seeking different kinds of learning opportunities and the ability to track how equitably students with different learning needs and challenges are distributed across schools. For a community, it provides context for the school's performance.

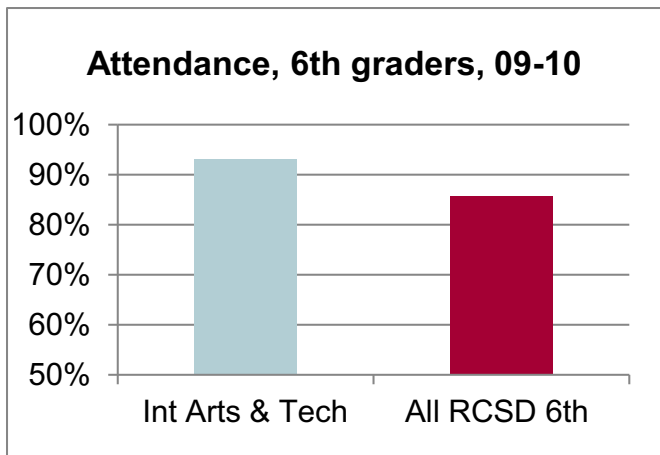
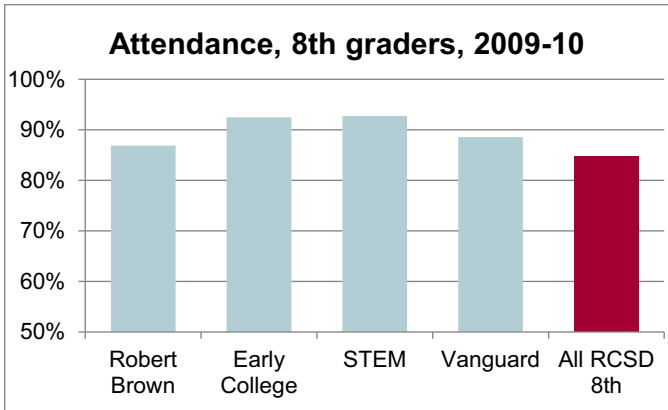
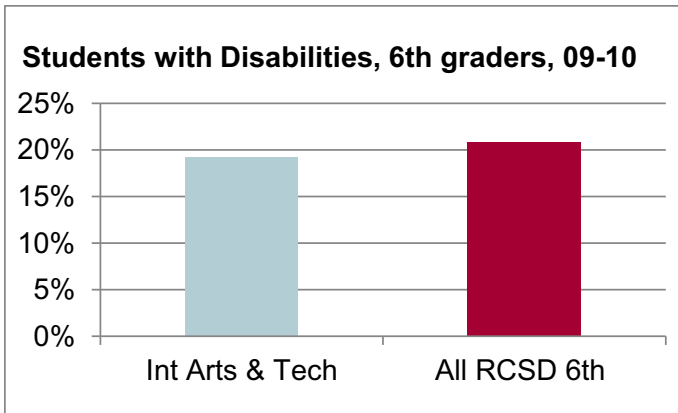
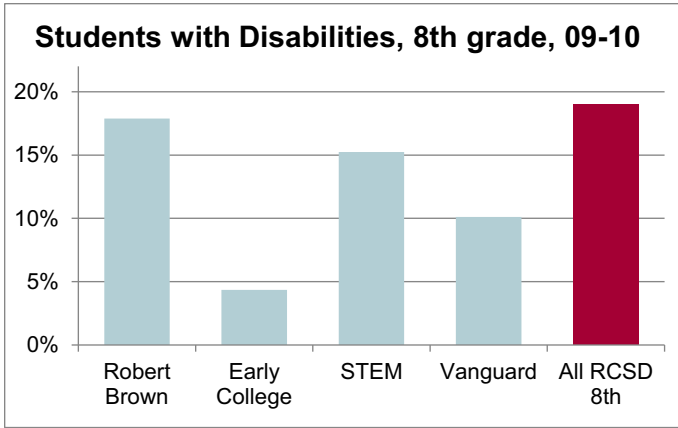
At this point in the life of the new schools, the student profile is based on characteristics of students in the year prior to entering the new school. In other words, the data are for students' 8th grade year; for Integrated Arts, 6th grade. So, for example, the attendance rates presented are the average for students in the new school in the prior year when they attended a variety of other schools.

By and large, the student population enrolled in the new schools as a whole reflects the diversity and challenges of the district's overall population. As shown in the data below, students do not appear to have been "cherry picked" in terms of academics, socioeconomic status or behavior, and there is a distribution of students categorized as English Language Learners or Special Education. There is of course variation across the five schools, and Early College does seem to have a more selective student body, although not on all measures.

Demographics

In most respects, students at the new schools were similar to other 6th and 8th graders across the district. The percentage of students poor enough to qualify for free or reduced-price lunches was somewhat higher for students entering the new schools than for students in the same grade across the district. Three of the new schools had poverty rates several points above the district level – Robert Brown, STEM and Vanguard. (One methodological note: We excluded students coming to the new schools from charter schools or through parental placements from much of





the analysis in this section due to lack of data.)

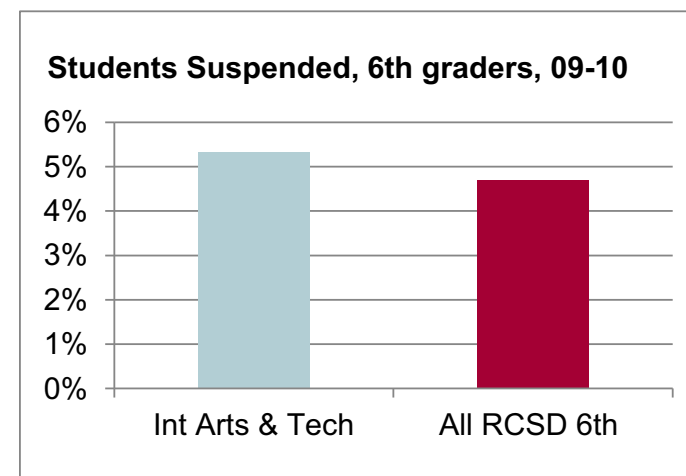
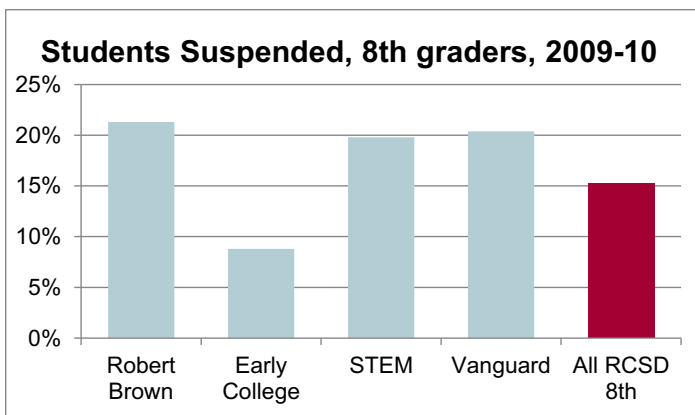
The race and ethnicity of students in new schools was also similar. Roughly 60%-70% of students were African American in both the new schools and across the district, and about a quarter were Hispanic. Somewhat higher proportions of African American students were enrolled at Early College, STEM and Vanguard (ranging from 70%-73%), and Robert Brown had the highest share of Hispanic students (28%). Students with Limited English Proficiency made up about 10% of the population at most new schools and across the district, with somewhat higher numbers at Early College (13%) and Vanguard (17%).

Several of the new schools had a lower proportion of students with disabilities (ranging from 4% to 15%) than the district as a whole. However, both Integrated Arts and Robert Brown were very close to district numbers with 19% and 18% of students classified as disabled in some way.

Academics

Students at the new schools had higher attendance rates but also higher suspension rates than students in the 6th and 8th grades across the district. Average attendance rates ranged from 87% to 93% among new school students, similar to district levels. Suspension rates (the percentage of students ever suspended in the 2009-10 school year) were at or above district levels, with students entering Robert Brown, STEM and Vanguard having especially high prior-year rates of suspension.

Prior-year performance on state tests was generally fairly similar among students entering new schools and the district as a whole. Integrated Arts students passed the 6th grade English and math exams at nearly the same rates as 6th graders across the district. Students entering Early College and STEM passed the 8th grade English exam at higher rates than 8th

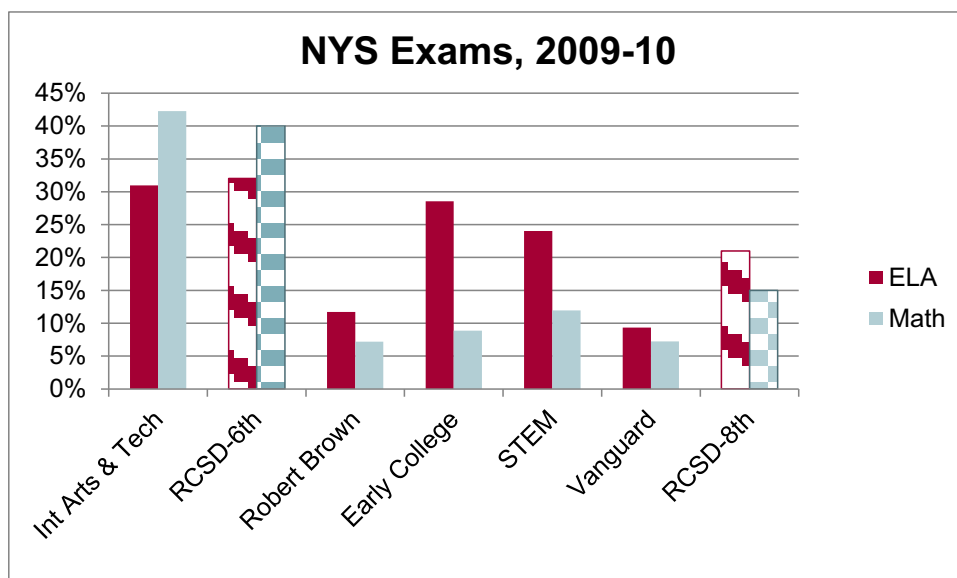


graders across the district (29% and 24%, respectively), but math passing rates were lower among students entering new schools than for 8th graders as a whole. (See chart below.)

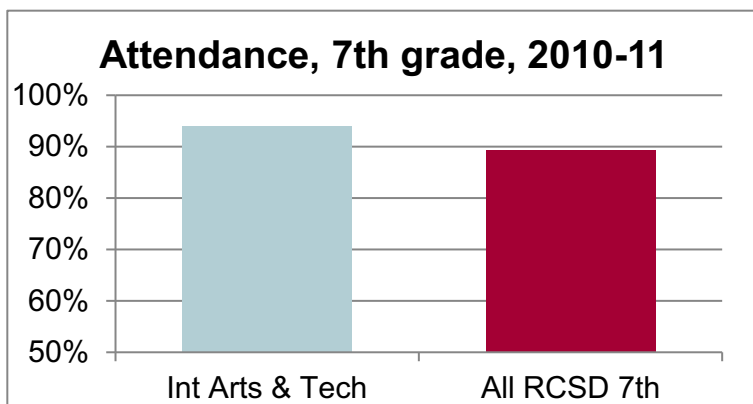
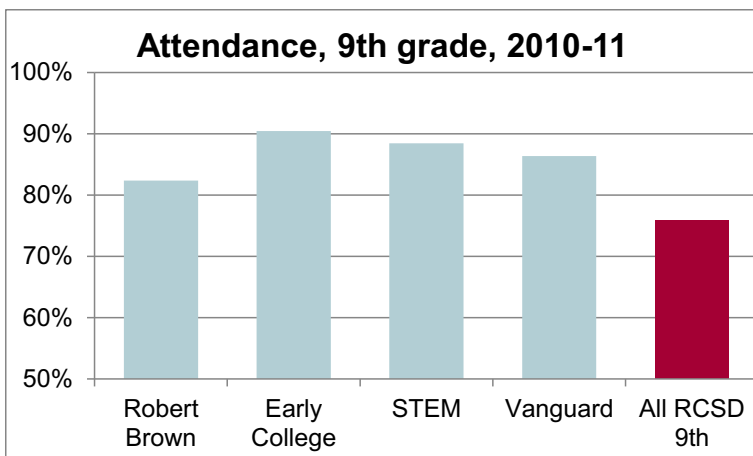
Grade-point averages (available only for 8th graders earning high school credit and reflecting just credit-bearing courses) were generally lower among new school students than 8th graders as a whole. Only Early College students had a higher GPA at 2.2, compared to 1.8 for 8th graders across the district. Vanguard’s average in-coming GPA was 1.5, and Robert Brown and STEM had averages of about 1.4.

Prior Schools

Another difference among the new schools was the concentration at some schools of students coming from charter schools or from schools the RCSD is phasing out due to low performance. Early College had by far the highest share coming from charter schools (27%), while Vanguard had the highest proportion from phase-out schools (48%), followed by Robert Brown (30%) and STEM (27%). Each of these has implications for new schools’ ability to start a fresh culture.



YEAR ONE OUTCOMES

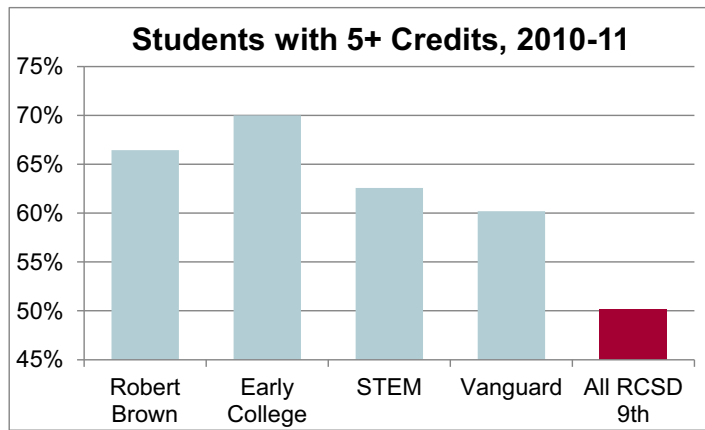
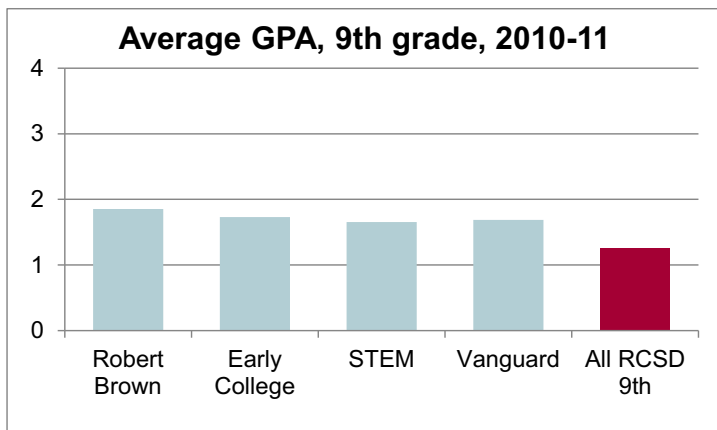


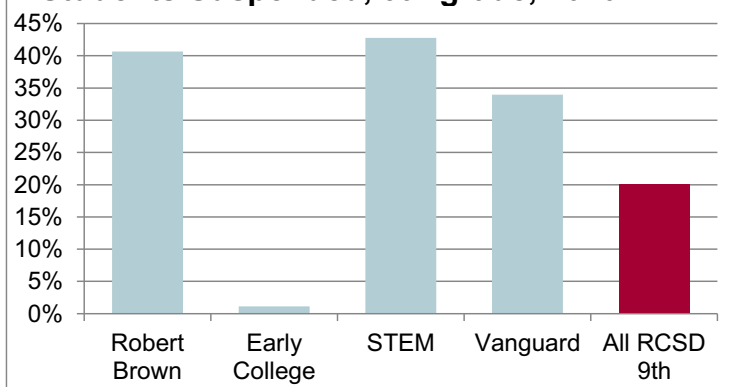
The new schools had some higher outcomes than the overall RCSD student population, but mixed performance on state exams. For all of the outcomes in this section, we compare 7th graders at Integrated Arts with 7th graders across the district and 9th graders in the other four new schools with 9th graders across the district.

- Student attendance was higher at each new school than it was for students in the same grades across the district.
- The new schools had higher average GPAs than 9th graders across the district, though the averages were all under 2.0 (a C average). (GPA and credit information is only available and applicable to the schools with 9th graders.)
- More encouraging, all four new schools with 9th graders had at least

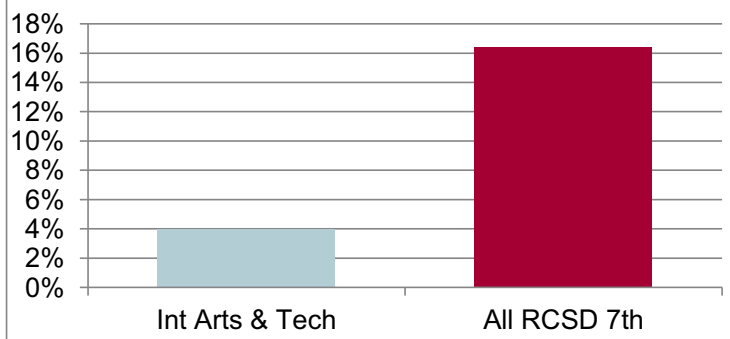
60% of students earning at least five credits toward graduation in their freshman year, an indicator that research has shown is correlated with being on track to graduate high school. They were all above the 50% of 9th graders across the district with at least 5 credits in 2010-11.

- However, for suspensions, three of the five new schools had higher suspension rates (measured as the percentage of students ever suspended during the school year) than students in the same grades across the district. Integrated Arts and Early College had lower suspension rates - and theirs were far lower than the district overall. Robert Brown and



Students Suspended, 9th grade, 2010-11

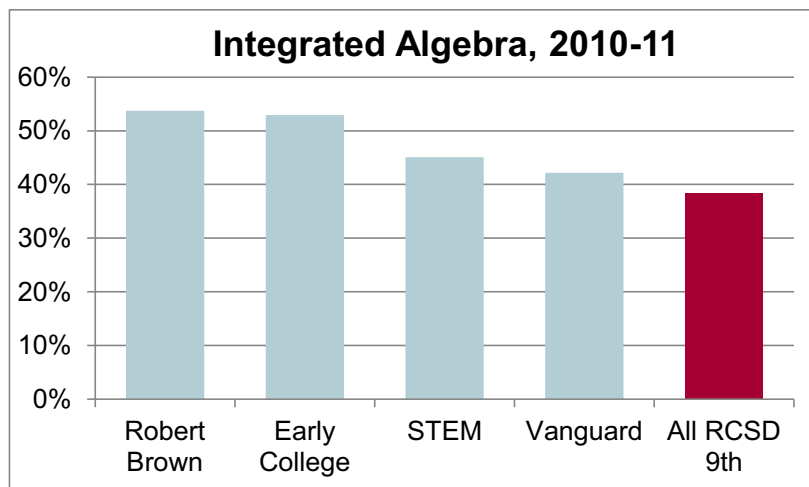
STEM both had suspension rates higher than 40% and Vanguard's suspension rate was 34%.

Students Suspended, 7th grade, 2010-11

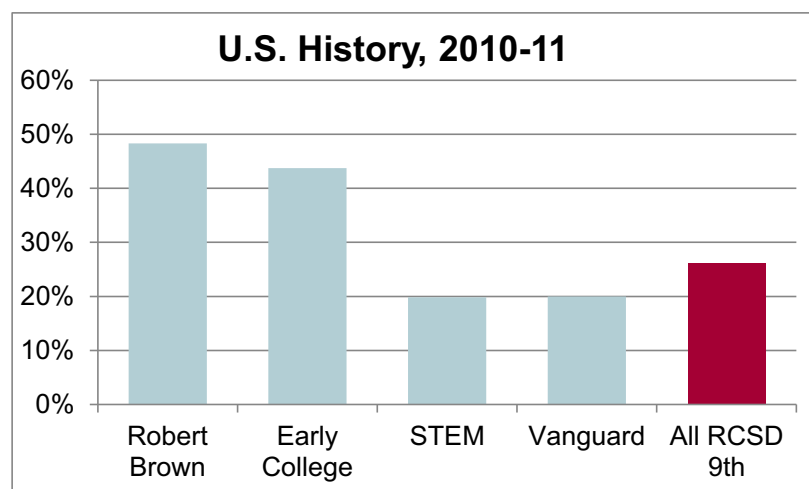
State Exams

Results on state exams were more mixed. **While some of the new schools generally outperformed the district, passing rates overall were not**

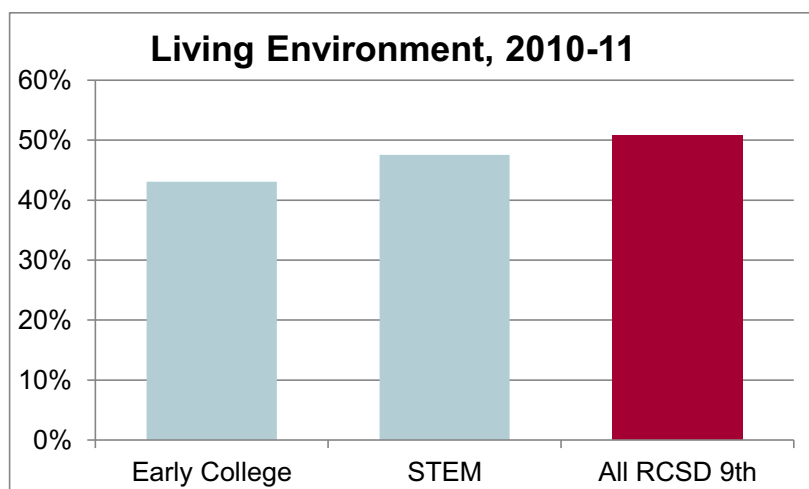
high. Overall, of 12 comparisons between school passing rates and the district, 6 were higher and 6 were at or below the district level.



- On the Regents Integrated Algebra exam, all four new schools with 9th graders outperformed the district, but only Robert Brown and Early College had more than half of students pass.

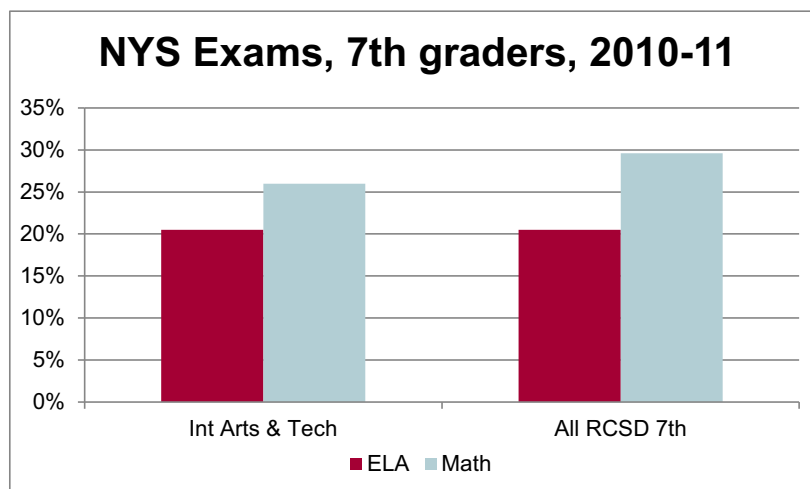


- On the Regents U.S. History exam, over 40% of Robert Brown and Early College students passed, higher than the district passing rate of 26%. But at STEM and Vanguard, just 20% of students passed.



- And on the Regents Living Environment exam, the passing rates for the two new schools where significant numbers of students took the test (STEM and Early College) were below the district level of 51%.

And Integrated Arts fell at or below the district level on the two state exams in English and math for seventh-graders, with less than 30% of students passing either exam.



Second-Year Demand

The demand among students for a spot in the second class of each of the new schools is one indirect measure of how well each school has promoted itself and of how it is perceived among students, parents and the larger community. By this measure, most of the new schools are doing well: All but Vanguard had more students selecting it as one of their top 3 choices than it had seats in the entering class. Integrated Arts was the most in demand, with 264 students listing it 1, 2 or 3, compared to 100 open seats. Early College had 185 students listing it and 100 spots; Robert Brown had 271 students selecting it and 200 seats; STEM had 237 students selecting the school and 200 spots; and Vanguard had 84 student listing it and 125 seats.

ACADEMIC RIGOR

Increasing the rigor of coursework and getting more students to graduate high school and proceed with enough knowledge and skills to succeed in college is job No. 1 for the new schools. In this section, we examine the efforts and progress of new schools in several areas related to academic rigor, from the level of expectations evident to student engagement in learning to professional development for teachers.

As explained in the methodology, we used site visits and interviews as well as survey data. The survey responses reported here are the total responses for all new schools together; however, in some places we do include the range of responses from each new school for the sake of comparison. This is meant not to spur competition but to provide context

and therefore make the survey results more useful in school improvement efforts.

High, future-oriented expectations

Common Features

High expectations are embedded into each of the new school's special focus. Two of the five schools have an explicit focus on college: Early College seeks to graduate students who have already earned 20 college credits, and Vanguard is one of 18 College Board schools in the state focused on academically rigorous teaching, high expectations and college-going aspirations for all students. STEM is a science, technology, engineering and mathematics school beginning academies in information technology, engineering and health sciences. Integrated Arts is an Expeditionary Learning school focused on project-based learning to develop critical thinking, inquiry skills and ownership of learning. Robert Brown is the only career and technical education school in the group, but staff members there too put an emphasis on academic rigor and college as a goal.

Beyond those themes, at most of the schools, the principal and staff members spoke about having a focus on academics, and about the need to raise learning expectations—and the challenges of doing so. Particularly at STEM, Early College and Robert Brown, we heard a focus on increasing rigor. Robert Brown put that into action through a partnership with the University of Rochester around the “Every Classroom, Every Day” assessment and benchmarking system that enables kids and teachers to accomplish mastery of discrete skills.

“The best thing is that we get pushed over our limits to do better even when we don't think we can sometimes.”

All schools have individual and myriad ways of conveying high, future-oriented expectations for students. One habitually refers to students as “scholars;” another empowers students to lead their parent conferences. Some schools have college-focused displays, others display and celebrate student progress toward discrete goals, and some use competition. Some schools intentionally introduce students to career options, and some build in community service and mentoring. At least one school uses a co-teaching model in core courses for English Language Learners, which also sends a message that all students deserve access to rigorous curriculum.

Progress

In sitting in on classes, CGR saw what we felt was a wide range of expectations for students, sometimes even within the same school. At the high end of the spectrum were classes where students were asked to do challenging work requiring higher level skills such as making judgments, supporting arguments, identifying trends, and where students were encouraged to take chances and held accountable for their answers. At the low end, we saw classes where students were allowed not to work, answers were freely given to students if they raised their hands, work was very low-level and little or no responsibility for learning was placed upon students. And there were many classes in between the two extremes.

Our impressions were somewhat at odds with the responses of students and teachers to questions about expectations on the CGR survey. High

Teachers/adults at this school...	% Agreement	
	Students	Teachers
believe that all students can learn difficult work.	82%	92%
have high expectations for our behavior and work.	92%	95%
push students to do our best.	90%	94%
talk about college.	81%	95%

proportions of both students and teachers said that adults in the school have high expectations for behavior and

work, believe all students can learn difficult work, and push students to do their best, though generally more teachers agreed with these statements than students. Student perceptions do vary across schools; for example, the percent of students who agreed that teachers believe all students can learn difficult work ranged from 68% to 94%.

The focus on college seems clear. While we did not hear students or teachers mention college in our class visits, it did come up in interviews or focus groups. On the survey, 81% of students and 95% of teachers agreed that adults at the school talk about college. Furthermore, 74% stated that they are “positive” they will go to college. A lower 56% agreed that most of their peers in the school will attend college.

Almost all students (87%) said they often (every day or most of the time) learn new information or ideas in class – and 97% of teachers agreed. Yet, just 55% of students said they often feel challenged by their classes, ranging from 45% to 74%. One quarter of students said their classes are too hard.

Other student measures shed light into the expectations:

- 86% of students in new schools reported spending less than an hour of homework each night; 47% of these reported less than 30 minutes.
- Equal numbers of students said they work their hardest and work just enough to pass (45% each).

- 71% (ranging from 52% to 83%) said they are satisfied with passing, no matter the grade.

While 86% of teachers said they are satisfied with the academic standards set for students, only 45% are satisfied with students' academic achievement, ranging from 28% to 75%.

Use of Time

One way to communicate and operationalize high expectations for students is through careful use of instructional and planning time. Several of the new schools have adopted and/or experimented with different types of schedules in an attempt to maximize learning opportunities.

Common Structures

All five schools established longer than usual class periods, at least for some courses, usually core subjects. STEM and Robert Brown both had 80-minute periods, Early College had 72-minute periods, Vanguard had 67-minute periods and Integrated Arts had hour-long classes. All five schools also created extended day opportunities, either before or after school, and Saturday review sessions, at least as exam time approached.

Many of the schools made time during the school day for academic intervention, some more formally than others. Robert Brown used third period to offer flexible and targeted instructional supports to students based on needs. All staff was utilized to provide students extra help first in math and English; this then expanded to U.S. History after some students failed the Regents exam. At STEM, there were opportunities for teachers to provide re-teaching, differentiated instruction and other academic interventions in third and fifth periods. Both Integrated Arts and Early College also had sort of a structured study hall time during the student day where students could work online, develop certain skills or complete coursework with teacher support.

“My school is different because the teachers give us time to be able to make up work and get things done and be able to be more advanced than the other city schools in the district.”

Two of the schools (Integrated Arts and Robert Brown) had a rotating schedule so that students wouldn't have the same classes at the same time every day (a plus for any teachers receiving chatty students returning from lunch). These same two schools were able to create schedules that allowed for all content teachers to share the same planning time by sending all students to specials either first or last period.

Attention to small logistic details that can preserve scarce instructional time is critical. CGR observed at least two schools' strategies in action. At STEM, breakfast was served during class, with a routine that did not disrupt the learning activity in the classes we observed. At Integrated Arts, students' passing time was carefully orchestrated, with adults escorting groups to students, in order to minimize lost time in the hallways.

Two schools experimented with accelerating students through required courses. At Early College, many of the 9th graders took English 9 and 10 in their freshman year as semester courses, and some tackled both algebra and geometry. The school was exploring how fast to push students without sacrificing rigor. For example, when students passed the Regents exam with low scores, the school opted to have them retake the course to master more material. Students at Robert Brown also attempted to complete Integrated Algebra in one semester. The pass rate was high, allowing these students to move forward, while other students continued to master the material. STEM also tried different configurations involving double blocks and semester long courses.

Progress

Many of the scheduling structures put in place signal a proactive approach to maximizing instructional time. Beyond that, the limited nature of CGR's visits to schools and classrooms doesn't allow us to say much definitive about how effectively time was used. As with learning expectations, we observed a range: classes that made productive use of time, moving efficiently and purposefully from activity to activity, and those where time seemed to be wasted on low-level tasks, inefficient procedures, "housekeeping", etc. We were impressed with the third period intervention at Robert Brown – students and teachers seemed to be working purposefully; groupings were apparently flexible based on student needs.

In survey responses, 88% of teachers said their school's daily schedule allows them to make effective use of time and provide students with different learning opportunities. Many students perceive that they are in school longer in these new schools—not surprisingly, some see that as a positive; others complain.

Instructional Practice

How content is delivered to students is the art and science of teaching. In theory, the laboratory of a new school offers opportunities to hone in on instructional practice in order to develop what works best with students. Instructional practice is of course a hybrid of many factors—here we consider the content, structure and pace of the lesson, as well as classroom management techniques.

CGR observed almost 30 classes across the five schools. We note that these visits were in late spring, when many classes were focused on Regents review.

We saw a variety of types and quality of lessons. Some were high-level, creative and participatory, allowing students choices in their learning and making some real-world connections. Others were more traditional but still effective, with the teacher in the front of the classroom imparting information but engaging students with strategies such as rapid cold-calling or games that fired up students' competitive natures. Many used technology for parts of the lesson, and some used it to give students immediate feedback on work. About a third of the lessons built toward longer-term products; others had a clear Regents review focus; a very few seemed to have little in the way of focus. In every school, we saw a mix of independent, small group and whole group work.

We also saw a range in terms of whether students or teachers did the bulk of the cognitive work in the class period. On one extreme were the few classes in which teachers directed or lectured for the bulk of the class time, calling on students to insert basic factual or procedural information. In some cases, teachers simply gave away answers—either when students got “stuck” or during a whole class review of bellwork. On the other end were the classes in which students worked independently or with peers to practice skills or create products. Here, teachers were a resource who suggested other resources, asked guiding questions, or challenged students to add more to their first attempt.

“the best thing about our school is that it teaches us how to use our work and relate it to the real world. We learn about actual careers and what thee about. They also try to get us to think about what we want to be when we grow up.”

Classroom management techniques varied; we saw teachers use proximity and wander the room, others who stood or sat up front, and some who sat with students. Some teachers played music or let students socialize within boundaries while working (with varied success). In some rooms, routines were evident and students needed little reminding of how to conduct themselves. On the other hand, there were a few classes in which poor management impeded learning. Teachers had different approaches to redirecting students, and teacher demeanors ranged from low-key, personal banter with students to more authoritarian.

At each school, we saw classes where the bulk of students working on a worthwhile task. Two standout periods observed were at Robert Brown where we felt that “buzz” generated when students are invested in the intellectual work, when they don't even think about *not* working and the room just feels like a place of learning. The teachers in these rooms

acknowledged students’ potential distractions in productive ways that didn’t interrupt learning; when one student started to put his head down, the teacher’s response was, “Remember, when you feel sleepy, say it, then sit up taller and push yourself” as she moved along with the lesson.

Conversely, in a handful of the classrooms CGR visited, instruction seemed minimal or ineffective. In some cases, the lesson was top-notch and student behavior was off-task, and in others the class was very well-managed but there were no cognitive tasks demanded of students. In a few others it appeared that pacing was off—for example, so much time was spent on low-level bellwork that there was not much time allotted for the lesson.

Teachers at this school...	% Agreement	
	Students	Teachers
teach in interesting ways.	77%	92%
make us explain our answers.	92%	94%
give us feedback on our work to help improve it.	91%	97%
give students opportunities for extra help.	93%	98%
connect what we learn to the world outside of school.	79%	95%

In survey responses about teaching practice, students were nearly as positive as teachers themselves, with the vast majority saying teachers at their school teach in interesting ways, connect learning to the outside world, make student explain answers, give feedback and provide extra help. Again, these opinions differed from school to school; the range of students who agreed that their teachers teach in interesting ways was 66% to 92%.

“I would like to see more creativity in adults, teachers and/or others in control.”

These themes emerged in the student survey as well. When students were asked to write in comments identifying the best thing about their school, somewhere between half and two-thirds of them mentioned teachers and the types of learning activities they do. Specifically, they discuss teachers’ willingness to “push” students, their commitment to help students understand/learn, and the ways they make learning fun or interesting.

Technology

Each of the five new schools had incorporated technology into learning in new ways, with students using Netbooks or iPads and teachers using smart boards and in some cases their own websites or the program SchoolTown to provide access to lessons or homework. The lessons CGR observed also featured the use of various instructional websites for students to review content or perform research. The only school in which we observed no

instructional use of technology was Early College, although we saw evidence of student-created PowerPoints, international Skype calls and independent practice on computers.

The school taking the use of technology the furthest was Integrated Arts, where most teachers had a website with assignments posted and much of student work was submitted online. Technology—Google earth, video, webquest, websites, SchoolTown, etc.—was used in every class we observed and in some cases used for sending students online to collect data or view primary sources connected to a lesson. The use of technology for even the mundane tasks of teaching like submitting bell work, sharing the directions and rubric for a project, or gathering data to plot set teaching practice at this school apart. Most teachers seemed quite comfortable navigating the technology, and almost 100% of students at this school report their teachers using technology to make learning interesting. Across the five schools, 86% of students said teachers used technology to make learning interesting. Among teachers, 97% said in the survey that they were satisfied with access to technology and resources, although several schools did not receive their iPads and Netbooks until mid-year.

However, it is worth noting that the shift in the modes and methods of teaching did not come without its challenges. Teachers noted that it was difficult to monitor students' appropriate use of technology, and one commented that technology had real but limited value in instruction because students were conditioned to view it as a communication or entertainment tool – not a tool for learning. Our visits validated this challenge; in every school where we observed individual students working on computers, we did see at least some students on inappropriate websites.

Professional Development

Schools took varying approaches to professional development for the teaching staff; for some, it was delivered by or connected to the outside partners; for others, most of the work was done internally. Teachers were pleased, with 95% saying in the CGR survey that they were satisfied with the quality of professional development, and 44% were very satisfied.

At least three of the schools designed schedules with daily, built-in professional development in which almost all staff participates. Two of these used the last period of the day, and one the first, when all students attend special classes such as art. Another visible sign was STEM's Professional Development Center, which took the place of a faculty lounge. The space fostered collaborative planning and displays included a rubric of instructional practices. These structures operationalize the expectation that professional development should be embedded in teacher practice, and also aid in setting a unified school culture.

A sampling of approaches and topics:

- Both Robert Brown and Vanguard tried to establish some common classroom techniques through a staff-wide book study of *Teach Like a Champion*. At Robert Brown, staff took turns presenting various chapters and brainstorming ways to engage students; at Vanguard they focused on implementing a few strategies at a time.
- Schools worked with district staff specifically on implementing new technology into instruction. Integrated Arts featured a regular “Tech with Randy” professional development session.
- Curriculum design was a focus at many schools. STEM worked closely with its partner to plan for the career academies, and to design aligned courses. Integrated Arts also focused planning its first expedition, a hallmark of Expeditionary Learning.
- Early College has worked with the Asia Society to embed the global approach into their curriculum.

How often do teachers ...	Every day	Every day or often
work with peers to share instructional practices.	35%	89%
look at student work together.	8%	47%
participate in professional development.	33%	98%
receive feedback on instruction from principal.	14%	73%
receive instructional feedback from colleague.	14%	55%
have opportunity to observe others teach.	11%	47%

The most common ways teachers worked together were sharing instructional practices and participating in professional

development, according to survey responses. Less frequent was looking at student work together, observing each other teach and receiving instructional feedback from a colleague. Almost three-quarter of teachers said they received instructional feedback from their principal daily or often. This proportion ranged from 50% to 100% across schools.

It should be noted that for most of the schools, much of the “professional development” time was devoted to things that could be deemed logistics and communication, as required by starting a new school. While satisfied thus far, many school leaders, partners and teachers also expressed a desire to focus in more deeply on fewer instructional practices.

Student Engagement

No matter how much schools and teachers do to make instruction rigorous, it can only have impact if students are actively engaged in their work. The level of student engagement we observed during our visits varied greatly, within schools and even within classes.

In each school we visited at least one classroom in which student engagement was uniformly high, with the whole class actively

participating in the learning activity. In these classes, students not only responded to teacher prompts, but also volunteered thoughts, questions and observations. There was a level of enthusiasm or focus demonstrating that students were cognitively engaged – thinking about their work. Students in these classes used their independent or group work time constructively; even if they engaged in some socialization, they stayed focused on the task at hand, and at times directed themselves or peers back to work. When asked, students in these classes could explain the larger purpose of what they were working on, and use the academic language. In short, students viewed these classrooms as places of learning and themselves as learners.

At the other end of the spectrum, there were a handful of classes in which the majority of students were socializing, teasing each other and/or the teacher, texting on phones and actively disengaged.

Most classes observed fell in the middle on that spectrum; in these rooms, there was a wider range of student engagement. Some students were working, some were socializing or being disruptive, and others were compliant and possibly paying attention/working or possibly daydreaming.

It's clear that increasing the level of student engagement is an important task facing each of the new schools – even in schools where it was higher, it needs to be even better. More classrooms need to establish that culture of scholarship and urgency, where time is used productively and well.

The student and staff survey generally paint a mixed picture of student engagement as well. The majority of both teachers and students said that students are working hard, coming to class prepared, interested and actively participating in learning, although even students seem clear that there is room for improvement. For example, while roughly 80% said that students participate in learning, only 57% of students say that their peers come to class prepared. And 40% of students admitted that they go to class

Students at this school...	% Agreement	
	Students	Teachers
work hard.	81%	66%
do their homework.	62%	37%
come to class prepared.	57%	57%
participate in class.	83%	84%
are interested/show interest in learning.	66%	75%
% Every day/most of the time		
How often do you/students...	Students	Teachers
go to class without having done your/their homework.	39%	66%
participate actively in learning (group work, hands-on activities, presentations, etc.)	81%	89%

daily or often without having done their homework.

According to other survey responses about their engagement in learning, students said they do the following things every day or most

of the time:

- 71% ask questions when they don't understand something and 82% keep working even when a task is confusing
- 36% stay after school for extra help
- 60% feel bored in class, ranging from 37% to 74%

One of the most encouraging responses is that almost three-quarters of students (ranging from 65% to 80%) reported that students in their school think it is “cool to be smart” – which isn't always the case among 7th and 9th graders. Our interviews with students conveyed this sense as well.

PERSONALIZATION

The culture of a school is key to its success. Making the school environment feel more friendly, personal and comfortable for students is one important goal for the new schools, and their smaller size is seen as one way of accomplishing this. A good school culture also has as its backbone a feeling of safety and enough orderliness for work to be accomplished. In this section, we discuss the new schools' efforts and progress toward creating a school climate conducive to learning.

Common Structures

The new schools used a number of structures to try to build a productive school culture. Making the environment inviting, developing opportunities for students to connect to one another and to staff members, and setting consistent standards for behavior were all part of efforts to develop a sense of identity, of community and of being part of something special.

“The best thing about my school is, giving us work to challenge us. The worst thing is how some students dont take school serious.”

Environment

The two structures most apparent were student uniforms and attention to making the school's physical space, from classrooms to hallways to bathrooms, tidy and attractive. Uniforms were required at every school, though the level of compliance seemed to be higher at some schools than others. Two schools stood out for putting a high premium on attractiveness: At Integrated Arts, the staff spent summertime painting and repairing rooms, and at Early College, the principal made a point of making the bathrooms attractive and homey in response to student concerns and asked students to help keep them that way, which appeared to have worked. But each of the new schools seemed clean and neat.

Environments inside the classrooms varied. While some rooms were purely functional, many teachers had created cozy, comfortable work environments that included features such as a math lounge. These rooms displayed student work, motivational sayings and student-created content and process charts. Some displays celebrated high-achievers or tracked mastery of discrete goals. Others were more personal—an “I Can” wall featuring students’ talents, or a board with student-written goals created in an advisory period. At many schools, photos of students involved in service projects, clubs or activities were posted in hallways and rooms.

Small, Connected Groups

All of the schools had one or more structures aimed at creating connections between students, often by breaking them into smaller groups. Three of the schools – Integrated Arts, Early College and Vanguard – had an advisory period built into the school day for a smaller group of students to connect with one or more adults. For all three, the advisory period is connected to the school model: Expeditionary Learning for Integrated Arts, Early College for Early College, and College Board for Vanguard.

Many of the schools also created afterschool tutoring, clubs or activities for students to participate in. Most schools made teachers available afterschool for extra help, at least during Regents review time, and some held Saturday review sessions. At Vanguard, the principal led afterschool “cramming and jamming” sessions that coupled academic help with aerobics. At Integrated Arts, a character-building community organization held weekly afterschool sessions for male students. Students also worked on community service projects to benefit the neighborhood surrounding the Franklin campus.

These types of opportunities were not limited to afterschool. At STEM, about 20 students participated in a robotics team that met during fifth period, and traveled to a conference together. Before school started in the fall, 150 students participated in a summer camp where they did various get-to-know-each-other activities and interacted with staff members. At Robert Brown, students were grouped and traveled through their school day from class to class with the same “pack.” There is also a team of school ambassadors that are working to form a student government; many if not all of the schools have some type of leadership roles for students.

At Early College, part of the work of instilling a sense of school community, where every student is known and where the identity of the school is celebrated, was done through meetings of the whole school two times a week in addition to the advisory periods.

Adults at the schools expressed the challenge of providing students with robust extracurricular offerings, but also a commitment to doing so. Both

staff and students see the value of these interest-driven and relationship building activities. All school seem to have had at least some success thus far: this year, 64% of students agreed that students in their school have “enough” extracurricular and leadership activities; 42% of staff feel the same. This may get easier to address as the schools grow.

Behavior Standards

The difficult task of setting common standards and consequences for student behavior was a work in progress at all of the new schools, with some having made more progress than others. At Integrated Arts, partway into the school year, the staff developed common consequences, visible in classrooms, and a more unified approach to discipline. The school also had a student pledge signed by students, and students were escorted any time they needed to leave the hallway that houses the school. A good amount of administrator time was spent greeting buses and shepherding kids through the building.

“The best thing about my school is that they push us to do well, and the worst is that bullies know how not to get caught, even though it's quite obvious even to me.”

Vanguard used core values of excellence, passion, integrity and communication (EPIC) and the “5 Ps” (e.g., polite, prompt, prepared, etc.) to help set common standards for adults and students. At Robert Brown, staff members were encouraged that their work to get on the same page and communicate regularly about students had paid off. “The kids figured out that we’re all invested in them and that we talk to each other,” said one teacher. Staff at Early College focused in on student language – when students were heard using curse words early in the school year, staff members would remind them to “talk scholarly.” By the end of the year, students were heard repeating that phrase to each other.

Many of the schools also found various ways to “catch kids being good.” Staff efforts at Vanguard and STEM included recognizing students behaving well and/or participating in class with rewards like pizza parties and ice cream socials. Similarly, at Early College, staff members praised students for doing well through such recognition as Golden Key Scholars, and photos of various school events were visible in the hallways.

“I must be honest I love Vanguard and I'm proud of my school but not the students' behaviour.”

STEM and Robert Brown began the early stages of implementing Positive Behavior Supports (PBS), which is a coordinated whole-school approach

to teaching and reinforcing positive behaviors. STEM sent a full staff team to training this summer; Robert Brown experienced a good bit of staff turnover, so it is unclear how this will proceed.

The schools had different approaches to cell phones and other mobile devices. At Integrated Arts and Vanguard, they are collected at the start of the day and returned at the end. At Robert Brown and STEM, they are not, and we observed students using their phones when they should have been working during class. Robert Brown teachers requested a collection policy in open-ended comments on the CGR survey. Early College's policy is that students may have their phones, but may not use them during instructional time; the first time a phone is seen during class, it is confiscated until the end of the day.

Progress

In each of the five schools, there does seem to be a sense of strong, positive relationships established between staff and students. Students that we interviewed were almost unanimous in feeling that teachers genuinely cared about students. And for the most part, teachers exhibited fondness and personal knowledge of their students.

At the end of the first year, a majority of the students in the new schools have bought into the idea that these schools are "special" and offer them unique and valuable opportunities. Almost half of the survey responses identifying the best thing about their school referenced the positive school environment (fun, caring teachers, interesting activities, focus on college, career and successful futures). Furthermore, 59% said they enjoy being in school, and 62% agreed that students are proud of their school.

The high rates of suspension at Robert Brown, STEM and Vanguard show those schools were working toward but experiencing difficulty in getting student behavior to an appropriate level. For the most part, staff members at those schools said in interviews that they felt they had made progress in improving student behavior but also recognized there was more work to do. At 3 of the 5 schools (all but Vanguard and Robert Brown), poor student behavior was the most frequent answer given by students in an open-ended survey question asking what was the worst thing about their school. Improving behavior was a prevalent theme in teacher responses about how to better their schools as well.

Students at this school ...	% Agreement	
	Students	Teachers
waste a lot of time playing or involved in drama.	63%	66%
get away with a lot of negative behavior.	46%	43%
skip classes.	40%	28%
follow rules.	56%	72%
treat each other kindly.	55%	70%
respect our school building/environment.	64%	72%
have enough extracurricular / leadership activities.	64%	42%
Teachers at this school ...	Students	Teachers
seem like they enjoy teaching at our school.	81%	94%
care about students.	86%	100%
treat students respectfully.	83%	97%
let us get away with a lot.	32%	29%

Responses to other survey questions about school climate show that students and teachers at the new schools were generally in agreement that students wasted time on playing or drama. More than 40% of both students and teachers agreed that students get away with a lot of negative behavior. Student perceptions ranged from school to school, but in general it seems that students were fairly honest; for example, where higher percentages of student reported negative behaviors, it was supported by discipline data as well.

On other questions, students and teachers were more split, with teachers generally having a more favorable view, both of students and of themselves, than students did. While 70% or more of teachers said students follow rules and treat each other kindly, closer to half of students agreed. And while nearly all teachers said that teachers seem to enjoy teaching in the schools, care about students and treat students respectfully, somewhat lower proportions of students agreed – in the 80% range.

Although 29% of students said they often (every day or most of the time) see students fighting in their school, just 12% said they often feel unsafe in school, and a majority said they enjoy being in school. Just 9% of teachers said students often get into fights. And while 82% of teachers said they are satisfied (very satisfied or satisfied) with the overall culture of the school, less than that, 61%, said they are satisfied with student behavior.

PARTNERSHIPS

The engagement of outside organizations as key partners in the creation and operation of the new schools is a signal from the RCSD that it needs and values help in meeting its mission of delivering quality educational experiences to students. The role of partners is to bring an outside layer of expertise, professional development and accountability to the district.

In creating the five new schools, the district tapped two well-known national school design organizations, Expeditionary Learning and the College Board, as well as less well-known national and local organizations. In most schools, the partners helped to one degree or another with curriculum development and professional development, and some partners worked directly with students in academic or extracurricular activities. Nearly all of the partners described their relationships with school leaders as positive and were optimistic about their school's future. In the CGR teacher survey, 72% of teachers said they believed their school's partner added a lot of value to what the school is offering students. Below is a brief description on each school's partner(s).

Expeditionary Learning

Integrated Arts is part of the national Expeditionary Learning school network. The partner brings its proven model of instruction, school structures and professional development to the table. All new staff is sent to summer institute, and a school designer is assigned to the school. Her role is to ensure that the EL model is implemented with fidelity, which in practice entails coaching the principal, working directly with staff in a professional development capacity, and providing ongoing feedback and support. EL has a growing critical mass here in Rochester, with at least five other schools. This could provide a robust professional learning community over time.

Integrated Arts also has many less intensive and less academically focused partners such as Channel 15 and Roots. While many of these provide positive opportunities for students, the consensus from staff at all levels of the school and district is that perhaps fewer partners would be better in the next few years.

College Board

Vanguard is part of the College Board's growing network of schools: 18 in New York State, 43 nationally. The partner brings knowledge, services and products in the arena of college readiness, access and assessment. The organization provides professional development both for teachers and principals, as well as a school and instructional model that foster "college-going" skills and culture. College Board provides a local implementation manager to oversee and guide the schools. Her role is to ensure that the model is implemented with fidelity, which in practice entails coaching the principal, working directly with staff in a professional development capacity and providing ongoing feedback and support. College Board also has a growing critical mass here in Rochester, with three schools.

Of note, Vanguard's staff was less satisfied with the partner relationship than other schools were, with 58% saying the partner added a lot of value

to the school's offerings. This could provide a good starting point for more targeted professional development to take place in Year Two.

Early College/International Studies

Early College is distinct in bringing together two models for accelerating/enhancing the high school experience: Early College and International Studies. The school is 1 of 23 in the Asia Society's International Studies Schools Network. Of those, 3 are offering an Early College program as well. The school's primary partners are the Asia Society and Monroe Community College.

MCC is working with the school to offer college courses at the high school and to allow high school students to attend courses on campus. The relationship is significant, in part because teachers must be credentialed to deliver post-secondary content in order for the courses to carry college credits. This means MCC and the school must coordinate teacher hiring/selection to ensure that teachers have the right qualifications in the eyes of the appropriate MCC department. Individual departments have the power to grant or deny requests for dual-credit courses.

In 2010-11, all 9th graders took Computer Information Studies 121, an introductory technology course covering use of the Microsoft Office programs, including Word, Excel, Powerpoint, Access and Outlook. For 2011-12, the school planned to add MCC's Art 101 course as an offering for 10th graders. In addition, 5 Early College students will take a Spanish course at MCC's Damon City Center campus. Rochester's Early College school is somewhat unusual in offering college credit to underclassmen; often that is delayed until junior and senior years.

Key staff members at MCC interact with the principal and teachers at least a few times a month. An important moment in the school's journey will be at the end of next school year (2011-12) or start of the following year, when the first cohort will take the Accuplacer exam that indicates whether a student needs reading/English or math remediation in college.

The Asia Society is a non-profit global organization whose goal is to foster understanding and strengthen relationships between the Asia-Pacific region and the United States. The Society has formed partnerships with public schools to create a network of schools with curricula that include international content in all subject areas as well as greater opportunities for foreign-language development and international travel. The Society has developed global leadership competencies and related performance outcomes and works with teachers at Early College and its other schools to help them embed those ideas into the curriculum through providing coaching and professional development. A Summer Institute brings

together teachers, administrators and coaches from across the country to reflect and build on the work.

At Early College, opportunities for international learning included a trip to New York City to see Ellis Island, the United Nations, Chinatown, Broadway and Little Italy. Opportunities for travel to China were explored, and students were communicating online with their counterparts in Ghana.

National Academy Foundation

STEM's major partner, the National Academy Foundation, has a network of academies attended by more than 50,000 students. At each academy, NAF partners with local companies and encourages the employees to act as mentors, create opportunities for paid internships, and engage one-on-one with students in the classroom. NAF's educational model combines industry-focused curricula, work-based learning experiences and business partner expertise to engage and prepare high school students for post-secondary employment or college opportunities.

Last year (2010-11) at STEM, staff members and NAF consultants engaged in the yearlong planning process to create the school's three academies focused on information technology, engineering and health sciences. NAF specialists in academy development, curriculum and partnerships worked with school staff members throughout the year, spending an estimated total of 20 days on site.

Alfred State University/Unicon

This is an area that Robert Brown partially struggled with this year, finding it difficult to establish a strong working relationship with one of the school's major partners, Unicon. As the school's principal has changed, there will be a new opportunity to find a solid footing for that relationship. This may entail some tough conversations about what a career and technology school looks like in the current educational climate.

One of the school's other major partners, Alfred State University, completed several joint projects with the school, including career fairs and projects around renewable energy. One class of Robert Brown students interacted online with Alfred students, with the Alfred students providing instruction. A connection was also made between some girls at Robert Brown and Alfred through the national Association of Women in Construction local chapter. They worked on community service projects and attended an association dinner with professors and female construction workers and company owners. Alfred was also working with Robert Brown staff to develop curriculum in property maintenance/facilities management and architecture.

The school is working to increase the focus throughout classes on the construction and design theme of the school. This school year (2011-12), a geometry in construction course is to be piloted, and a new partnership with the state Department of Transportation will enhance offerings in environmental science.

DISTRICT SUPPORT

We asked school staff members in interviews and on the surveys for thoughts about how well the district had supported their school in the first year of operations. Overall, sentiment was positive, with most staff members saying they felt that Central Office had been supportive. We did hear concerns about students who were placed at the schools rather than choosing them and fears that these students would drag down the school's testing and graduation results. We also heard concern about coming teacher layoffs, about the timing delays and changes associated with the School Improvement Grants, and about some difficulties coordinating with Central Office departments, such as the travel office.

The survey asked what the district could do to ensure the success of the new schools. One of the most frequently mentioned responses was to give the schools time to succeed; 19% of respondents mentioned this. This theme also came out in interviews; some staff members came from phasing out schools and for those who didn't, the implications were nonetheless clear. As one respondent wrote, "Instead of closing and/or renaming schools, work with low performing schools to improve. Changing a name or entire staff does not guarantee success unless given the time to improve. It takes more than 5 or 6 years to create a culture of success and solidify an image in the community of a good school." Related, a few responses called for district leaders and school board members to come more often and be more visible in the new schools.

The other most frequent response was to keep the staff together, avoid layoffs and ensure good teachers at the school, with 19% of responses mentioning this idea. "Be aware of how much moving around staff hurts our students. Teachers are moved around/ displaced/ laid-off and it is clear that something needs to be done to provide consistency for our schools and students," said one response.

Other somewhat common responses were improving the response to poor student behavior, with some staff members calling for alternative settings, and allowing selectivity in choosing students for the new schools. A few respondents asked for the ability to remove students who were not performing or were uninterested in the school's focus.

A few of the partners mentioned that it sometimes seems that the district places logistical hurdles in front of principals. Specifically, the budgeting

process, the requirements for scheduling travel to conferences, and the tendency to change key dates, making planning ahead a challenge, were all mentioned. So too was the tension of having too many potentially competing “masters” or “voices” suggesting how to move forward. In some cases, this is being addressed head-on by the District’s School Chief and pertinent partner; where this alignment is not happening, it should.

PHASE-OUT SCHOOLS

Without question, the most painful part of executing a portfolio-style strategy is closing unsuccessful schools. To provide some feedback to the district on how the phasing out process is going, we interviewed staff and students at several of the phase-out schools on the Franklin and Edison campuses, including visiting school cafeterias to interview students during lunch. Many of the new school students and staff were formerly at the phase-out schools, so their input was also included.

Among staff members and some students, we heard dismay over the school closures. Many felt their school had made progress and should have been given more time to prove it could succeed. Many criticized the district’s handling of the phase-out process, saying that information about the closure and related changes and impacts had not been shared widely or in a timely fashion. Several staff members expressed concern about the emotional impact on students of knowing their school had been labeled a failure and was being shut down, and the practical effect of many staff members choosing to leave a school headed for closure. “We’re a family. We don’t want our family torn apart,” one staff member said. One student said, “It’s horrible. There’s no more school spirit. My whole support network’s gone because they’re dropping teachers like flies.”

Some staff and students said it would have been better to simply close down the schools rather than phasing them out. Some students said the quality of their education had gone down sharply since the phasing out process began. “This is not a school even,” said one. “They’re just pushing you along until you graduate. I hate it. They don’t care about you at all.”

However, other students said they thought their schools were still good and that teachers and new leaders installed at the schools were working hard to maintain morale and make classes productive.

There are no easy conclusions to draw on how to best handle persistently low performing schools. It is a painful process for all involved. Many of the staff at the new schools were particularly torn as they have now seen both “sides.” Despite the very real angst they shared about the demoralization of the phase-out process as well as the concern about repeating the same cycle, 65% of new school staff ended up agreeing that closing low performing schools and opening new ones is worth it.

CONCLUSION

An implementation evaluation is meant as a formative checkpoint. The District is to be commended for formalizing this process at the end of the first year. Individual reports were prepared and shared with each school's Principal and School Chief; those reports included more specific observations and recommendations as well as the entire survey results for their school. Here, we summarize the key conclusions drawn and also offer district level suggestions.

It should be noted that many of these findings and suggestions are not only relevant to new schools; in fact, many apply to all district secondary schools. That said, using a "portfolio approach" in a district which has seen new schools painfully fail requires a balanced watchfulness on the part of district leaders. New schools must have time to build a cohesive staff, establish a strong culture, and build systems and instructional practices that support students. The payoff will not come in year one. However, there must be strong signs that the payoff is likely. District leaders must take time to discuss what they expect after the first two years, and to give some forethought to how they will monitor and intervene if necessary.

School-level improvement opportunities

In many respects, the new schools are off to an encouraging start. Despite enrolling students similar in most ways to the overall student body, the five schools largely achieved above average outcomes: higher attendance, GPA, credits and test scores. In addition, to a school, the group has committed faculty who are energized about the venture, positive about their school's climate and optimistic, if nervous, about the future.

However, this positive buzz in each of the schools is also a potential challenge. In some of the schools, the fact that the culture/morale of the school is "so much better" than it was in staff members' previous schools seems to have had the unintended, and perhaps unrecognized, consequence of obscuring the academic/instructional focus. We see three key focus areas for the schools as a group:

High expectations. Bluntly, teachers and students overwhelmingly believe that students are being held to a high standard, but our classroom visits and some student outcomes indicated that was sometimes not the case. While we did see classes where students were doing challenging working requiring higher level skills, we also saw classes where students were allowed not to work, where work was very low level and where answers were freely given to students if they raised their hands. Test results also point to this issue: while passing rates in the new schools exceed the district, they are still generally low.

Student engagement. At some of the schools, students seem largely unengaged in their classes, and each school could improve in this area. Is there a need to be more varied in the types of lessons and class activities? Is it possible to draw student interests in more? Can more effective pacing keep interest and create a sense of productivity? Can more challenging work that demands their cognitive attention be provided? How can classroom management and student engagement both be addressed? A large part of the challenge is to figure out how to establish the baseline expectation that when students are in class, they work, meaning they actively think and produce. This will take lots of reflection on instructional practice, follow-through and consequences for students at first, but the payoff in terms of a scholarly atmosphere will be well worth it.

Academic intervention. Clearly, accelerating/remediating students' skills is a concern at most of the schools. Robert Brown has provided a good model for the other schools to consider in offering flexible, targeted intervention regularly built into the school day.

Student behavior. Each school has worked on and will continue to work on establishing consistent standards and consequences for behavior. Schools where staff members buy into a set of standards and hold students to account in consistent ways will make significant progress. Schools that don't already have a policy of banning or collecting cell phones and other personal electronic devices should consider taking this step, as the items do distract students from class.

The fact that the survey found that students are also concerned about student behavior is an opportunity to engage student leaders in tackling this difficult issue. In fact, when students were asked what they would like to see change at their school, the second most frequent answer—after the predictable complaints about uniforms—was poor student behavior. They want to see students acting more mature and more focused on learning.

District support improvement opportunities

By all accounts, starting a new school demands a huge amount of planning, logistic coordinating, on-the-fly decision-making and ongoing problem-solving. Clearly some principals got a jump start on this because they were selected earlier and given release time prior to opening. While this seems obvious, the District should make every possible effort to allow this lead time.

Thus far, the new schools have been treated as any other school when it comes to reporting to School Chiefs based on geographic zones. This means that currently, two schools are supported by the NW Zone Chief, two by the NE Zone Chief, and one to the South Zone Chief. It is possible that if they all reported to one Chief, there could be a positive

concentration of knowledge. This could simplify the relationship with partners as well. Having one Chief support all new schools could foster specialized supports germane to new schools as well as sharing of successful practices. The window for getting this right is short, and this may be one way to ensure success.

As the district moves forward with a portfolio approach, the underlying concerns are twofold: (1) Are you creating a culture of “haves and have nots”? and (2) Will there be a perpetual sense of chaos and churn? Obviously the answer to both is ideally no, but it will take ongoing work on the district’s part to communicate its intentions and its decision-making criteria in effective and respectful ways. It will also require taking an honest and sustained look at the implications on students of phasing out schools. In the interim, as schools are phasing out and new ones are coming on line, it can be a challenge for schools to enforce unique policies, equitably allocate space and work through other potential conflicts that come with sharing a building. The district has taken steps to work through problems and create structures for resolving issues as they come up.

Of course, the best remedy is prevention—ensuring that each new school is successful is paramount. Investing resources in evaluating the schools, engaging their staffs in honest conversations about strengths and challenges, and finding other ways to be proactive in monitoring, supporting and holding them accountable for student learning are all important challenges for district leadership.

“I think the best thing about my school is that we all work to achieve the same thing. We all want to go to college and our teachers help us get there.”

APPENDIX: SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

New Schools - Student Survey

Why you should take this survey

This survey will help tell how your school is doing, and how it can improve. The Superintendent, School Board and the staff at your school want to know what you think, so they hired us to ask you.

Your answers are anonymous, so be honest, please. If you have questions about the survey, you can email Kirstin at kprior@cgr.org.

Don't forget to hit the "Done" button at the end to submit your survey.

Thank you!

School Behaviors

How often do you do the following things in school?

	Every day	Most of the time	Once in a while	Almost never
Ask questions when you don't understand.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stay after school for extra help.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Go to class without having done your homework.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feel smart.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feel challenged by your classes and schoolwork.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feel bored in class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participate actively in learning (group work, hands-on activities, presentations, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have choices in your learning (what book to read, type of project to do, topic to research, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learn new information or ideas in class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
See students fighting in your school (not campus).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feel unsafe in school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enjoy being in school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

New Schools - Student Survey

Please tell us how much you agree with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Grades I earn in high school matter for college or work success.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am satisfied if I pass all my classes, regardless of the grade.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Most of the kids in this school will go to college.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My teachers care about me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My classes are too hard.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have talked to my guidance counselor about future plans and what classes I need to take.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When a topic is confusing, I keep working on it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My teachers use technology to make learning interesting.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Schoolwork

How much time do you spend doing homework on a regular night?

- 0 - 30 minutes
- 30 minutes - 1 hour
- 1 - 2 hours
- More than 2 hours

Which choice best describes how much effort you put into your schoolwork?

- I work my hardest.
- I do just enough to pass my classes.
- I don't work too hard.
- I work hard at the end of the semester/school year when it really matters.

Which choice best shows your thinking about college?

- I am positive I will go to college.
- I will probably go to college.
- I'm not sure if I need to go to college for the future I want.
- I'm too young to think about college.
- I do not plan to go to college.

Students in Your School

New Schools - Student Survey

Tell how much you agree with each statement about students in your school:

Students in this school...

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
work hard.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
do their homework.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
plan on going to college.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
come to class prepared.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
participate in class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
think it's cool to be smart.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
waste a lot of time playing or involved in drama.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
get away with a lot of negative behavior.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
are proud of our school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
skip classes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
follow rules.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
treat each other kindly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
are interested in learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
respect our school building/environment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
have enough extracurricular / leadership activities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Adults in Your School

Tell how much you agree with each statement about teachers in your school:

Teachers in this school...

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
teach in interesting ways.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
make us explain our answers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
give us feedback on our work to help improve it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
believe that all students can learn difficult work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
give students opportunities for extra help.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
connect what we learn to the world outside of school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
seem like they enjoy teaching at our school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

New Schools - Student Survey

Tell us how much you agree with each statement about adults (including teachers) in your school:

Adults in this school...

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
care about students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
treat students respectfully.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
have high expectations for our behavior and work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
let us get away with a lot.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
push students to do our best.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
talk about college.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What do you think?

What's the best thing about your school? The worst?

What would you like to see done differently at your school?

Why did you choose this school? Did you get what you expected?

New Schools - Student Survey

Is your school different from other City schools? If so, how or why?

Your survey is anonymous, but we need to know which school you attend.

***Please let us know which school you attend.**

School Name

My school is:

LAST PAGE

Don't forget to click the DONE button to submit your answers. THANKS for filling this out.

New High Schools - Teacher Survey

Why you should take this survey

As part of the work we do with the District, CGR is conducting a progress evaluation of the first year at the new schools. As you know, your school is part of the Portfolio Plan, which aims to create more high-quality options. We need to hear from you to fully understand the culture that has been created thus far at your school.

No one expects that everything will be perfect in the first year, but waiting until four years have passed to ask how the new schools are doing isn't wise. We are assessing the first year in terms of student outcomes, and in terms of the perceptions and observations of staff, students and parents. We hope to report progress and identify opportunities for the school and the district to improve next year.

Your answers are anonymous, although you will be asked to identify your school. Honest answers are the most helpful, of course. If you have questions about the survey, you can contact Kirstin at kprior@cgr.org or 327-7055.

Use the "Next" button to move through survey and don't forget to hit the "Done" button at the end to submit your survey.

Thank you!

Student Behaviors

1. How often do students do the following things in your school?

	Every day	Most of the time	Once in a while	Almost never
Come to class without having done the homework.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participate actively in learning (group work, hands-on activities, presentations, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have choices in learning (what book to read, type of project to do, topic to research, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learn new information or ideas in class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Get into fights in your school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. Agree or disagree: Students in this school...

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
work hard.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
do their homework.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
plan on going to college.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
come to class prepared.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
participate in class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
waste a lot of time playing or involved in drama.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
get away with a lot of negative behavior.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
skip classes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
follow rules.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
treat each other kindly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
show interest in learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
respect our school building/environment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
have enough extracurricular and/or leadership activities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

New High Schools - Teacher Survey

Staff Behaviors

3. How often do teachers do the following things in your school?

	Every day	Often	Once in a while	Almost never
Work with peers to share instructional practices.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Look at student work together.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participate in professional development.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Receive feedback on instruction from principal.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Receive instructional feedback from colleague.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have opportunity to observe others teach.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Talk about college with students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. Agree or disagree: Teachers in this school...

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
teach in interesting ways.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
make students explain their answers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
give students feedback on their work to help improve it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
believe that all students can learn difficult work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
give students opportunities for extra help.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
connect learning to the world outside of school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
seem like they enjoy teaching at our school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Staff Behaviors continued

5. Agree or disagree: Adults (including teachers) in this school...

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
care about students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
treat students respectfully.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
have high expectations for student behavior and work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
have high expectations for staff behavior and work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
let students get away with a lot.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
push students to do their best.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
talk about college.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

New High Schools - Teacher Survey

6. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
My school's partner has added a lot of value to what we offer students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My school's daily schedule makes effective use of time and allows me to provide students with different learning opportunities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Despite the pain, closing low-performing schools and opening new schools is worth it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Adults in Your School

7. How satisfied are you with what your school has achieved thus far in the following areas?

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Not satisfied	Very dissatisfied
The overall culture of the school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overall student behavior.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Academic standards set for students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Academic achievement of students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The access to technology and resources.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The quality of professional development provided.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The level of collaboration among school staff.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The schedule of our school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. Would you recommend working in this school to a respected colleague?

- Yes
- No

What do you think?

9. What's the best thing about your school? The worst?

10. What would you like to see done differently at your school?

New High Schools - Teacher Survey

11. What can the District do to ensure the success of new schools?

Your survey is anonymous, but we need to know which school you teach in.

* 12. We need to know which school work you in to use your survey results in a meaningful way.

School Name

My school is:

13. How many years of teaching experience do you have?

- 1-3
- 3-10
- More than 10 years

LAST PAGE

Don't forget to click the DONE button to submit your answers. THANKS for filling this out.