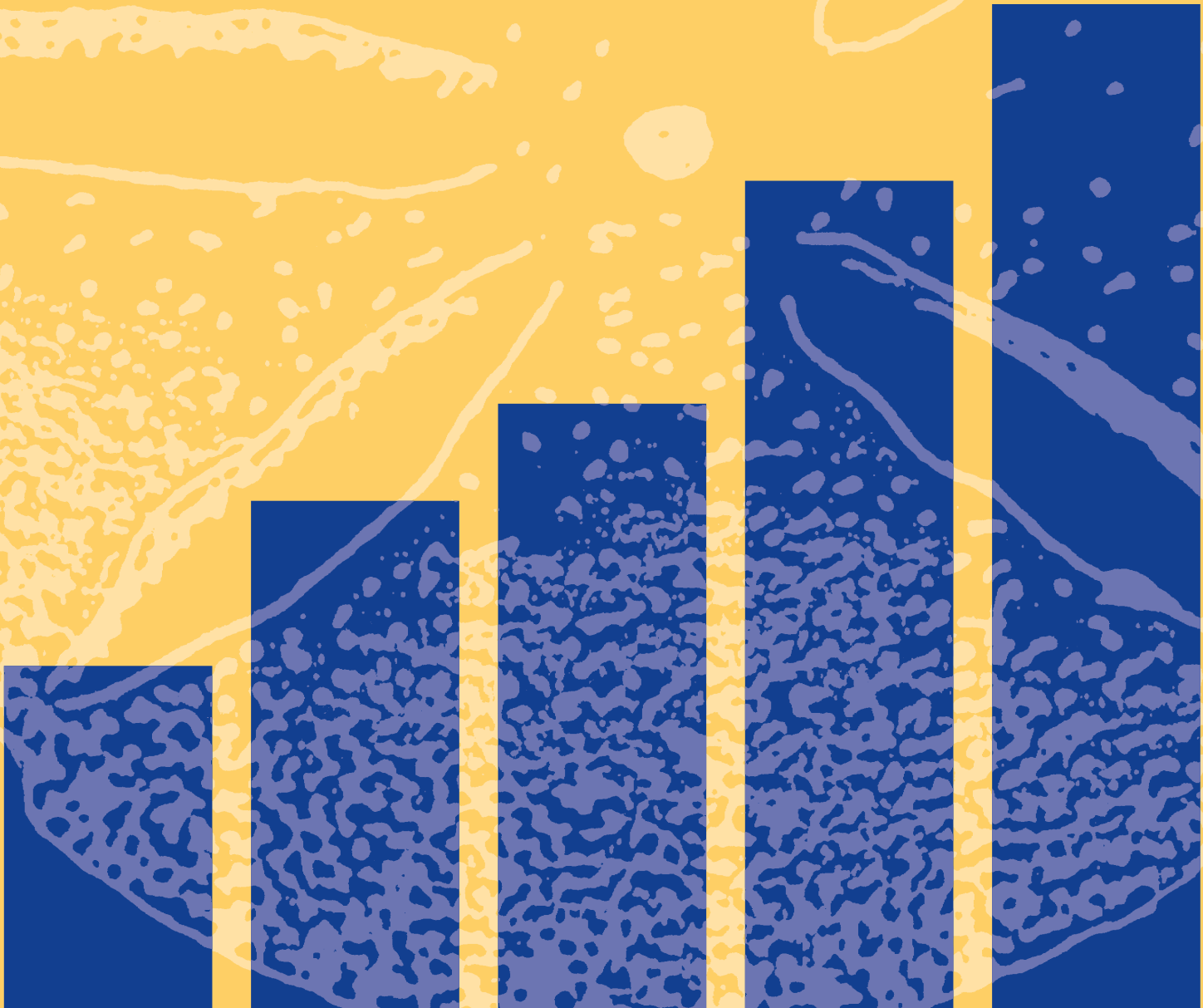
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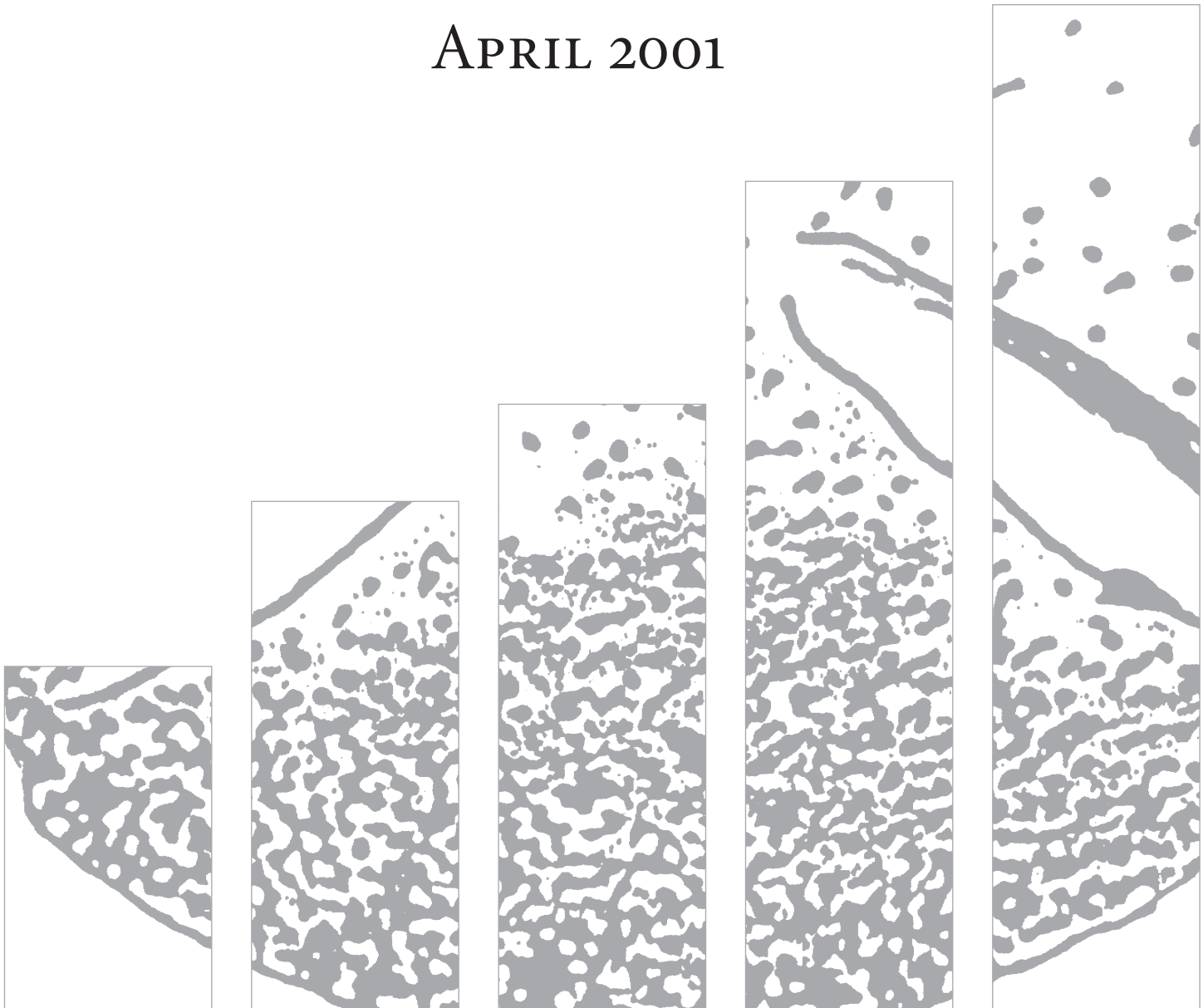
Expeditionary Learning in Year Eight



Evidence of Success

Expeditionary Learning in Year Eight

April 2001



The artwork featured in this publication is by students in Expeditionary Learning schools across the country.

Cover and interior design: Conquest Design, Inc.

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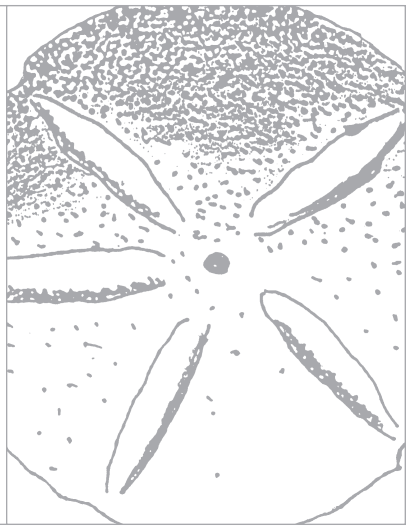
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Acknowledgments

Expeditionary Learning would like to thank New American Schools for the funding of this publication and for support and guidance with its development. *Evidence of Success* represents a collaborative effort by Expeditionary Learning staff and school-based partners.

"Expeditionary Learning brings the values that come from Outward Bound to a school—values of collaboration, of high expectations for everyone."

—Tom Glennan, senior advisor
for Education Policy
RAND Corporation



Introduction

This report assesses the effectiveness of Expeditionary Learning, a nationally recognized K–12 comprehensive school reform model. Expeditionary Learning is currently working with ninety-eight schools in twenty-nine states, the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

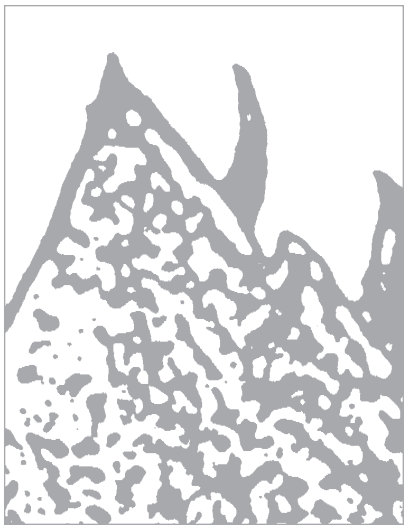
Independent, third-party evaluations and internal assessments provide strong evidence that Expeditionary Learning:

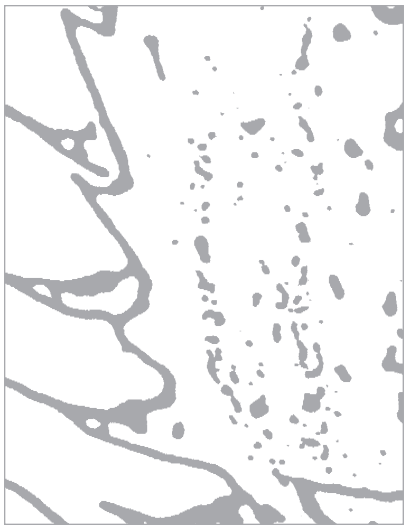
- delivers highly effective professional development;
- improves instruction and school culture;
- brings about significant improvement in student achievement as measured by standardized tests and portfolios of student work;
- improves student attendance, discipline, and behavior; and
- increases parent involvement.

Since we began working with ten schools in 1993, we have been accumulating evidence of Expeditionary Learning's effectiveness. This report examines the design in two ways. In Part I, we summarize key independent research studies, including those conducted by the American Institutes for Research (AIR), the RAND Corporation, the Center for Research in Educational Policy, the Academy for Educational Development, and Polly Ulichny, Associate Professor of Education at Brown University. These studies show that Expeditionary Learning is one of the most promising comprehensive school reform models nationwide.

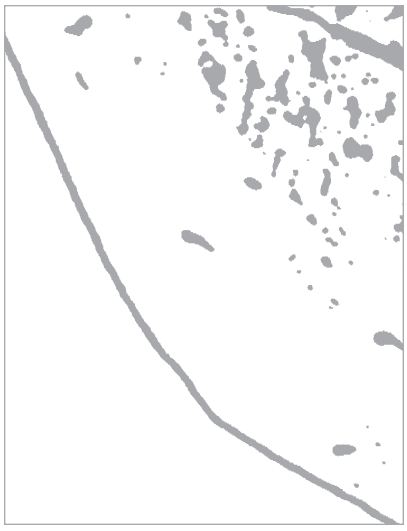
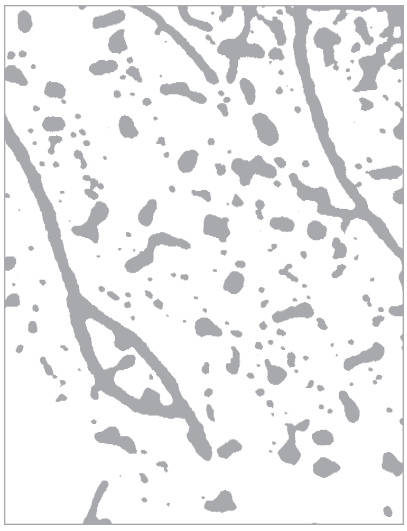
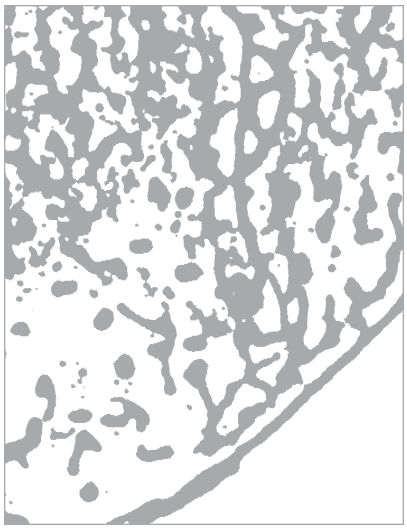
In Part II, we profile five Expeditionary Learning schools in which the design is substantially implemented. Each profile presents demographic, implementation, and student achievement data as well as a qualitative description of the school. In successful Expeditionary Learning schools, students and teachers are motivated by much more than test scores. Expeditionary Learning's goals are to raise students' academic achievement by providing in-depth learning experiences and to help build their motivation and values through engagement in real-world projects involving fieldwork, service and adventure. The profiles describe how each school has integrated and realized these goals for the benefit of students and their communities.

With increased national interest in comprehensive school reform, Expeditionary Learning is receiving additional attention from research organizations and policy makers. A bibliography of current literature on Expeditionary Learning, including all reports summarized in this report, can be found on pages 51–52. As they become available we will feature summaries of new third-party evaluations and school profiles on our web site at *www.elob.org*.

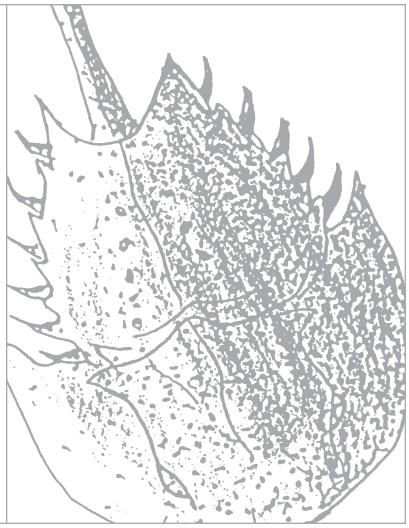


Third-Party Research on Expeditionary Learning

"Students' academic achievement in math and reading on standardized norm-referenced tests increased significantly as a result of their participation in Expeditionary Learning compared to other schools in the states and/or districts."

— *What Works in the Middle*, 1999
National Staff Development Council



Third-Party Research on Expeditionary Learning

Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound was developed under the auspices of New American Schools as a research-based, "break-the-mold" design for comprehensive school reform. In 1992 New American Schools (NAS) selected Expeditionary Learning as one of eleven design teams from an applicant pool of almost 700 proposals. Expeditionary Learning is one of seven designs from the original group that remain in the New American Schools group of designs.

Since its inception Expeditionary Learning has participated in research conducted by independent researchers and organizations. In 1995 Expeditionary Learning commissioned the Academy of Educational Development (AED) to conduct an extensive investigation of the implementation and effectiveness of the design in the ten original Expeditionary Learning schools. Other independent studies have been conducted by the American Institutes for Research, the RAND Corporation, the University of Colorado, the National Staff Development Council, and the Center for Research in Educational Policy. All these studies are summarized here. In recent years Expeditionary learning has sought funding to commission small, third-party studies of well implemented schools in particular districts or regions. The first of these studies, by Polly Ulichny, a researcher from Brown University, is included in the following summary. Additional

third-party studies of student achievement in schools implementing the design are in process. Please visit our web site, *www.elob.org,* for updates on the progress on these reports. The web site also contains links to the various research organizations and, in many cases, copies of the studies themselves.

American Institutes for Research

An Educators' Guide to Schoolwide Reform, 1999

In *An Educators' Guide to Schoolwide Reform,* the American Institutes for Research evaluated the effectiveness of twenty-four schoolwide reform models including Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound. The guide was commissioned by the American Association of School Administrators, the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, and the National Association of Secondary School Principals to critically examine the most widely available schoolwide reform approaches. The study, which is perhaps the most authoritative summary of the growing body of research on comprehensive school reform, compared the twenty-four approaches and rated them on two criteria: evidence of positive effects on student achievement, and support provided by the developer.

The report notes, "Despite the fact that this is a relatively new approach, Expeditionary Learning has already amassed a promising research base on student achievement effects."

PROMISING EFFECTS ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The evaluators determined that Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound was one of only eight schoolwide reforms with a current research base showing positive effects on student achievement. Only three of the twenty-four approaches received a higher rating than Expeditionary Learning, and these three approaches had been working in schools for an average of fifteen years, compared to the five years Expeditionary Learning had been in existence. In fact, according to the criteria for the review, designs that have been working with schools for less than ten years could not receive a higher rating than that assigned to Expeditionary Learning. The report notes, "Despite the fact that this is a relatively new approach, Expeditionary Learning has already amassed a promising research base on student achievement effects." (p. 68) The authors went on to say:

> The research results indicate that Expeditionary Learning can help to improve student achievement. Students tend to perform well compared to state and district averages on standardized tests such as the Iowa Test of Basic Skills and the Georgia Curriculum-based Assessment Test. Positive results have been found across subjects (e.g., reading, writing, math, science, and social studies). (p. 68)

"Research on implementation of Expeditionary Learning has found that schools using this approach share several implementation strengths. The training, from introduction to the approach to training all staff, is a strength; teachers felt confident and comfortable with the instructional strategies."

STRONG SUPPORT PROVIDED BY DEVELOPER

In reporting on the level of support provided by the developers for schools implementing one of the twenty-four approaches, the evaluators rated Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound as providing "strong support," and noted that the professional development provided by Expeditionary Learning was a particular strength.

> Research on implementation of Expeditionary Learning has found that schools using this approach share several implementation strengths. The training, from introduction to the approach to training all staff, is a strength; teachers felt confident and comfortable with the instructional strategies. Teachers worked well together in some schools, and parents became more involved. (p. 70)

The review noted that "some components of Expeditionary Learning were more difficult to implement than others", and that "full implementation is possible after several years."

Academy for Educational Development

Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound Project, 1995

In the first three years of Expeditionary Learning's implementation in schools, The Academy for Educational Development (AED), conducted a three-year qualitative and quantitative evaluation of the ten original demonstration schools located in five cities. The study found that Expeditionary Learning had successfully helped demonstration schools develop a strong sense of mission and purpose and transform curriculum, instruction, and assessment in the classroom. The study found significant results in six areas:

- curriculum,
- instruction and assessment,
- student work and achievement,
- student engagement and motivation,
- school organization,
- professional development, and
- parent and community involvement.

The study found that Expeditionary Learning had successfully helped demonstration schools develop a strong sense of mission and purpose and transform curriculum, instruction, and assessment in the classroom.

CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT

AED found evidence that Expeditionary Learning had a significant impact on the way teachers taught and the way students learned. Teachers reported that their classroom practices changed significantly, including collaborating with other teachers in planning and teaching, systematically addressing content and skill learning in designing expeditions, and developing clear criteria for assessing student work.

STUDENT WORK AND ACHIEVEMENT

The report found that students produced high quality work, often higher than they had ever attained in the past. Teacher and student interviews and surveys indicated that quality work was often the result of extended time for project work and the use of critique and revision. Teachers reported that students' final products often met not only school district but also professional standards. Students likewise reported that the quality of their work and work habits improved.

The study reported that teachers saw heightened student motivation as one of the most positive outcomes of teaching through learning expeditions.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND MOTIVATION

AED found a strong level of student engagement evident in Expeditionary Learning schools. Students described the personal and social relevance of the curriculum and reported satisfaction in working in groups with their peers, interest in their school work, and respect from teachers and peers. The study reported that teachers saw heightened student motivation as one of the most positive outcomes of teaching through learning expeditions.

SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

The study found that schools had made significant changes in their structure and organization to support Expeditionary Learning's approach to teaching, learning, and professional development:

- creating new schedules to allow for long periods of uninterrupted work and teacher planning time,
- developing multi-year connections between teachers and students, and
- implementing inclusion and heterogeneous grouping.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

AED reported that teachers in all schools rated all of the Expeditionary Learning professional development experiences very highly, and several teachers pointed to experiences that profoundly changed their thinking. AED found that the process of planning, implementing, and reflecting on successes and what needs improvement is a powerful professional development tool. In AED surveys, teachers said that Expeditionary Learning's program of staff development improved their ability to:

- teach students of different ability levels in the same class,
- be more of a guide or facilitator in helping students discover what they are supposed to learn, rather than an expert providing the "right answer," and
- assess students academically and socially.

PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

AED found that parent involvement in their children's education increased through participation in student exhibitions and performances as well as parent conferences structured around portfolios of student work. AED also noted that outreach to the community increased because of the positive relationships established through expeditions. The majority of parents testified that they were more involved in their children's schooling and that they participate in assessments, come to final exhibitions and performances, and become more familiar with their children's work.

National Staff Development Council (NSDC)

What Works in the Middle: Results-Based Staff Development, 1999

What Works in the Middle: Results-Based Staff Development is a National Staff Development Council report on a comprehensive two-year study of staff development programs that demonstrate an impact on student achievement in the middle grades. The report answers the question, "Which staff development programs improve student learning?" Almost 500 staff development programs were identified for the study, eighty were chosen for intensive study, and Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound was one of twenty-six programs selected as having demonstrated a link between teacher learning and student learning.

Of the twenty-six programs included in the study, Expeditionary Learning is the only program that was found to meet all twenty-seven NSDC standards for high quality staff development.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT INCREASED IN EXPEDITIONARY LEARNING MIDDLE SCHOOLS STUDIED

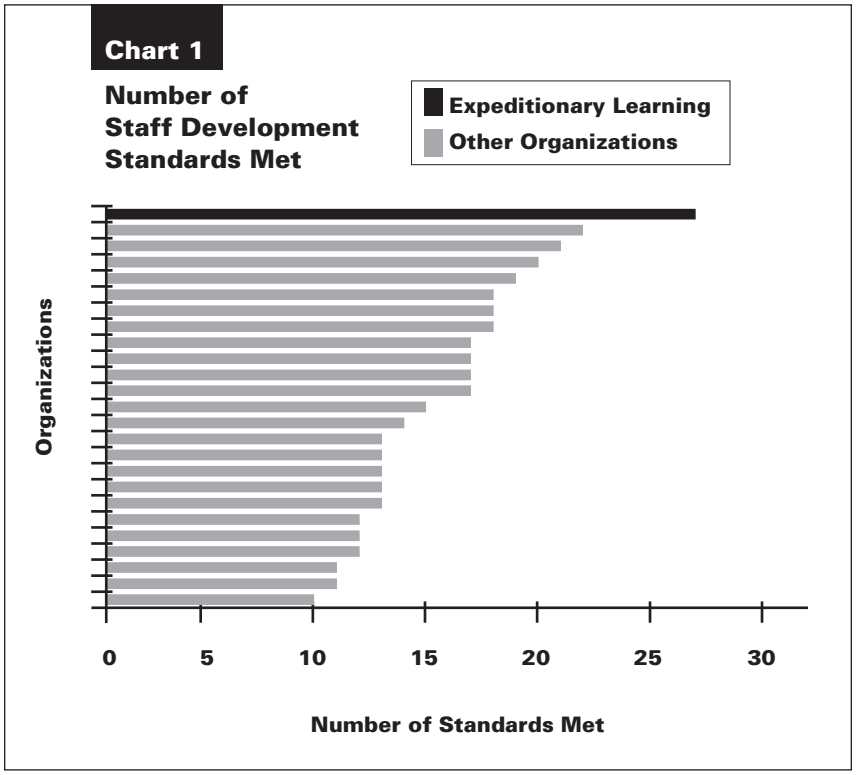
The report summarized the components of Expeditionary Learning staff development and reported achievement results in Expeditionary Learning middle schools. The authors write:

> Students' academic achievement in math and reading on standardized, norm-referenced tests increased significantly as a result of their participation in Expeditionary Learning compared to other schools in the states and/or districts. In addition, students' attendance, parent involvement, attitude about school, enjoyment of school, and active engagement in learning increased as a result of the expeditionary structure of learning (p. 159).

EXPEDITIONARY LEARNING IS THE ONLY MODEL THAT MEETS ALL NSDC STANDARDS FOR EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

Of the twenty-six programs included in the study, Expeditionary Learning is the only program that was found to meet all twenty-seven NSDC standards for quality staff development. The chart below shows the number of professional development standards met by Expeditionary Learning and by each of the twenty-five other professional development organizations.

Expeditionary Learning provides a framework for integrating innovations and relating those innovations to the mission of the organization.



Specifically, Expeditionary Learning as a staff development program:

- requires and fosters a norm of continuous improvement,
- is an innovation in itself that requires study of the change process,
- provides a framework for integrating innovations and relating those innovations to the mission of the organization,
- requires staff members to learn and apply collaborative skills to conduct meetings, make shared decisions, solve problems, and work collegially,
- increases administrators' and teachers' understanding of how to provide school environments and instruction that are responsive to the developmental needs of adolescents, and
- prepares teachers to use various types of performance assessment.

Polly Ulichny, Ed.D., Brown University

Academic Achievement in Two Expeditionary Learning/Outward Bound Demonstration Schools, 2000

Polly Ulichny, Ed.D. of Brown University is an independent researcher who carried out an in-depth evaluation of the academic achievement of the King Middle School in Portland, Maine and the Rafael Hernandez School in Boston, Massachusetts. Both of these schools initially began working with Expeditionary Learning in the 1993–94 academic year. The two main questions addressed by this evaluation were: "What is the record of academic achievement, as revealed by standardized tests and district-wide assessments, over the years of Expeditionary Learning implementation in each of the schools chosen for this study?" and "What has been the impact of Expeditionary Learning on the schools' academic performance?" (p. 1). Ulichny not only compared the test score results of King and Hernandez with their districts, but also to particular schools with similar student populations. The results of this evaluation demonstrated that the academic performance of these two schools has improved since initial implementation of the design.

"Expeditionary Learning implementation appears to be providing a strong academic curriculum that allows students from typically disadvantaged backgrounds to thrive."

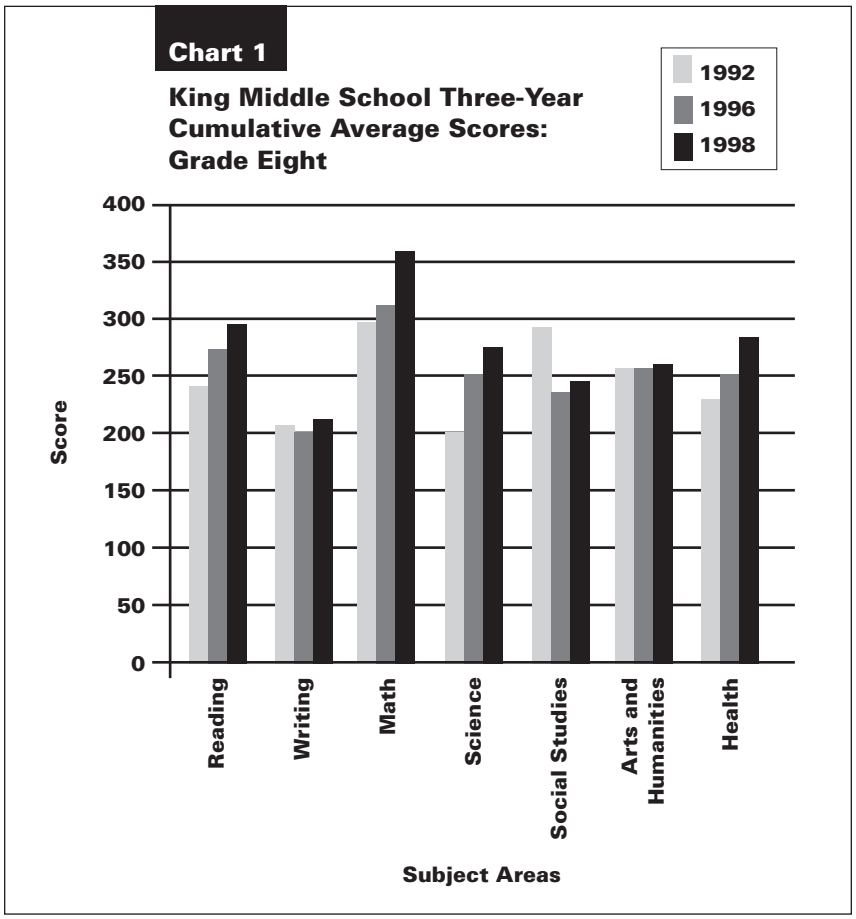
KING MIDDLE SCHOOL: PORTLAND, MAINE

The King Middle School serves about 600 students in grades six through eight. In comparison to the rest of the Portland, Maine district, a larger percentage of King students come from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Limited English Proficient (LEP) students compose twenty-two percent of King's student population, a much higher percentage than the other middle schools in the district. The primary sources of data utilized in this evaluation were data from the Maine Educational Assessment (MEA) and the district-wide Middle School Writing Assessment. King's scores on both of these assessments over the past several years indicate that its students' academic achievement has been on the rise since initial Expeditionary Learning implementation in 1993.

In the early 1990's, King Middle School tended to score lower on the MEA when compared to state and district scores. However, in the 98–99 MEA testing King students outscored the state average in six out of seven disciplines, and on the seventh discipline it scored at the state level. King has experienced a steady increase in test scores since Expeditionary Learning implementation in 1993–94. Chart 1 displays King's increase in MEA scores

In the early 1990's, King Middle School tended to score lower on the Maine Educational Assessment when compared to state and district scores. However, in the 98–99 Maine Educational Assessment testing King students outscored the state average in six out of seven disciplines, and on the seventh discipline it scored the same as the state.

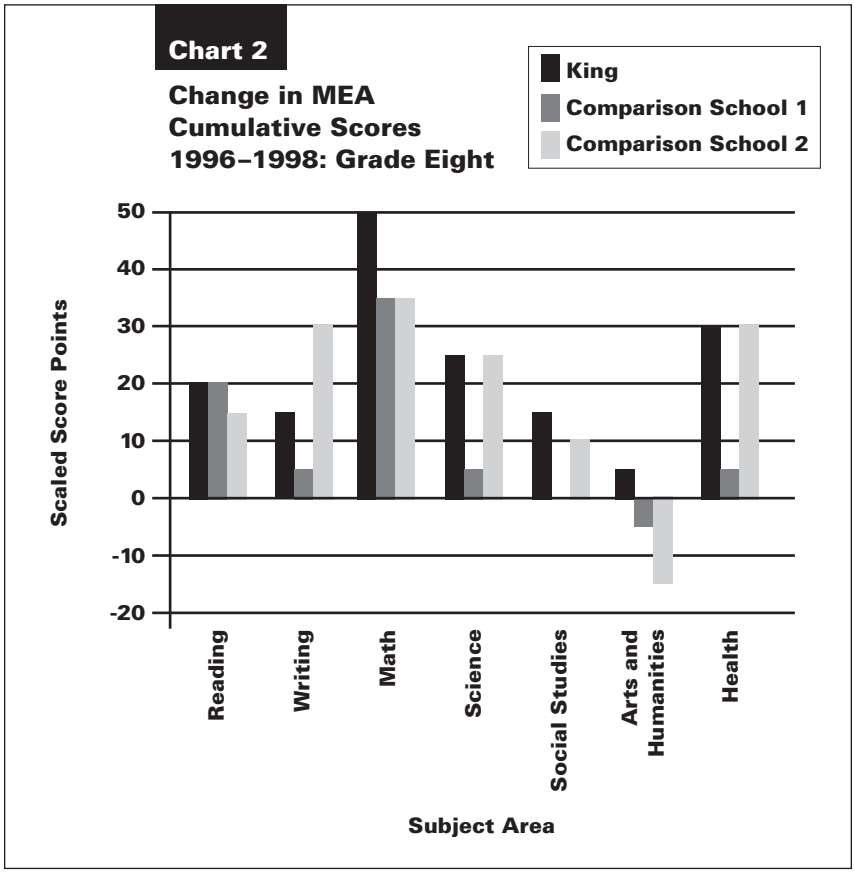
in all seven academic disciplines since 1992, the year prior to Expeditionary Learning implementation.



Compared to the two other middle schools in King's district, King has experienced the most improvement in MEA test scores in four out of seven subject areas. In two subject areas, King's improvement in scores was equal to that of the one other middle school. In only one subject area, writing, did King's rate of improvement not match that of comparison district middle schools. Chart 2 compares King's improvement in MEA scores to that of the other two district middle schools between 1996 and 1998.

Although King's writing scores did not match those of other district schools, its scores on a district-wide writing assessment did demonstrate improvement in this subject area between 1996 and 1998. The increase in King's test scores for this assessment was comparable to that of the other district middle schools. Furthermore, the report cites that "more King students…demonstrated gains in writing assessment in recent years than in earlier years of the district writing assessment." (p. 49)

During this period of increase in academic achievement, a notable change in the population of the school was taking place. Between 1993 and 1998 the number of lower income, Limited English Proficient students at the



King increased from one percent to twenty-two percent. According to the report:

> [Research has shown that] both LEP and low income, low parent-education populations of students systematically score lower on standardized achievement tests than middle class, native English speaking, white students (p. 2)… These gains in achievement [at King] may be attributed to the rich language and content experiences that students engage in during Expeditionary Learning. It may be that this type of learning is particularly effective for students who are motivated to improve their circumstances, a common finding in studies of recent immigrant students, and who have a limited ability in English due to it being their new second language. (p. 50)

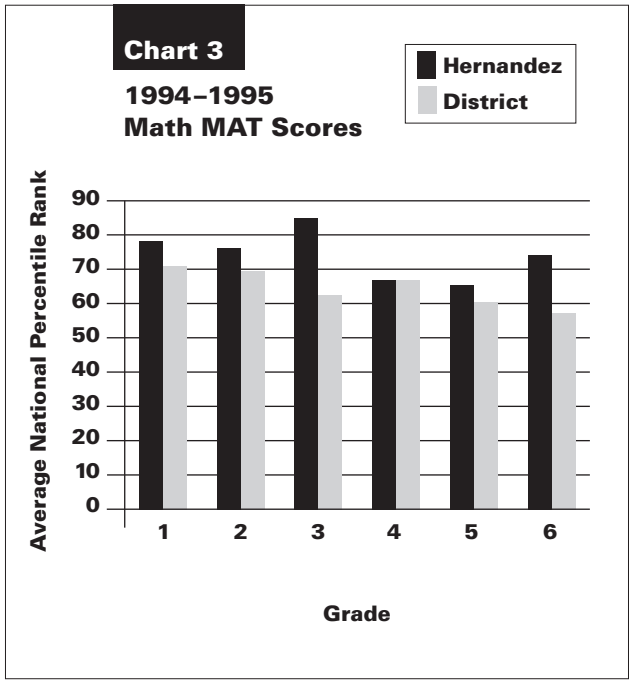
"…Expeditionary Learning is making a positive difference in the academic achievement of the Hernandez."

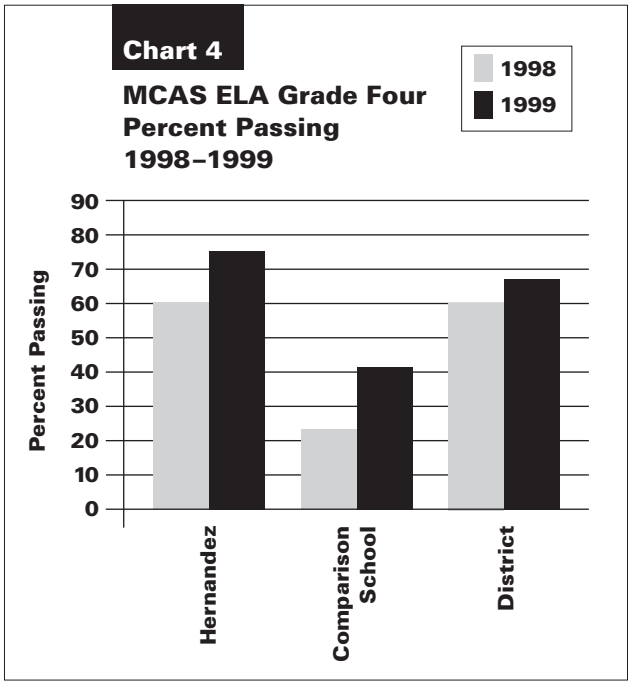
RAFAEL HERNANDEZ SCHOOL: BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

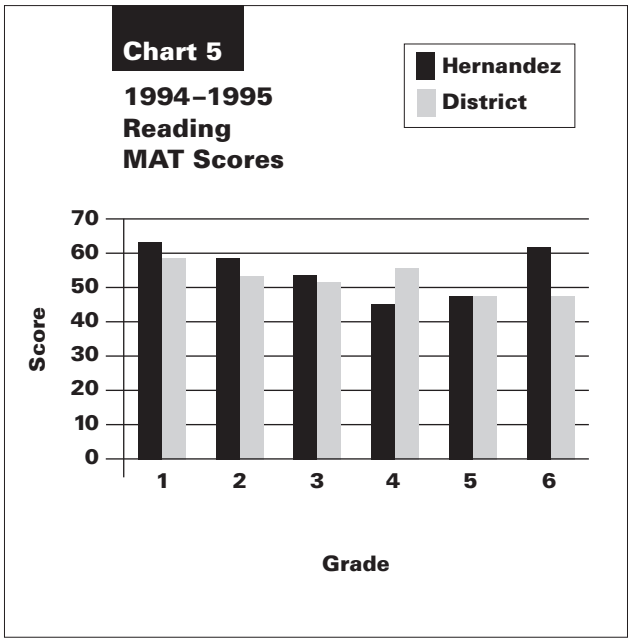
The Rafael Hernandez School, a K–8 Spanish bilingual school of about 400 students, is one of the few two-way bilingual schools in its district. While half the students are bilingual/LEP, only twenty percent of the district is composed of bilingual/LEP students. Ulichny examined data from three

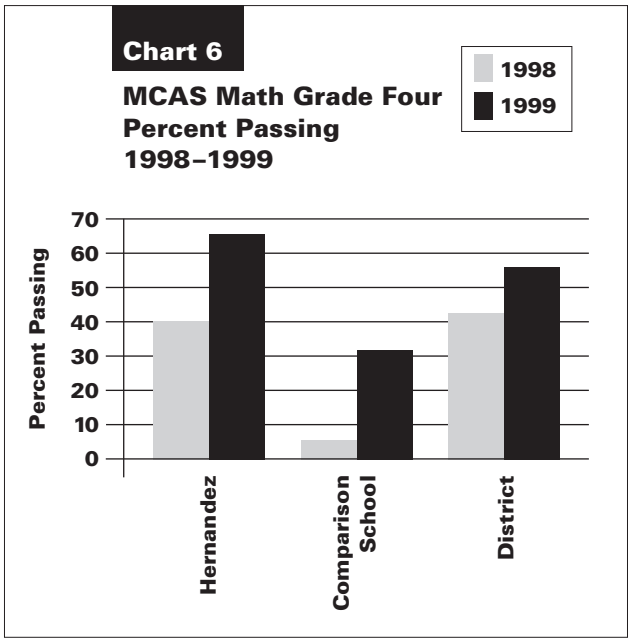
different standardized tests spanning six school years: the Metropolitan Achievement Tests (MAT), the Stanford Achievement Test 9 (SAT 9), and the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS). Students took the MAT tests in reading until the 1994–95 school year. In 1995–96 the MAT was replaced with the SAT 9 reading and math tests. These two examinations are not comparable, and so scores were analyzed independently. The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), first administered in 1998, is a standards-based, criterion-referenced test used in all Massachusetts public schools in grades four, eight, and ten. Ulichny studied first- and second-year results for MCAS. Third-year results for can be found in the school profiles section of this report.

Between 1992–93, the year prior to Expeditionary Learning implementation, and 1994–95, the second year of Expeditionary Learning implementation, the Hernandez's MAT scores improved noticeably. In 1994–95 more grade levels performed above the district average. Furthermore, after Expeditionary Learning implementation, Hernandez performed better than the national average in reading in the early elementary grades, and these grade levels also performed better than both the national and district averages in math. Charts 3 and 4 show the 1992–93 and 1994–95 scores for reading and math across grade levels and compared with district averages for the same grade levels.









The SAT 9 was first administered in the 1995–96 academic year, which coincided with the third year of Expeditionary Learning implementation. The Hernandez did slightly better than the district in the earlier grades in both reading and math. When compared to a district school with similar student demographics, Hernandez clearly performed better than this school at all grade levels. In later years of SAT 9 administration Hernandez's test scores were somewhat inconsistent from grade to grade. The report suggests that changes in district testing procedures during this time period could have been a factor confounding analysis of results.

During this same period (1998–99), however, the Hernandez MCAS scores exceeded those of both the district comparison school and the district as a whole. In 1998 and 1999, the fourth graders of the Hernandez performed better than or as well as the district on the English language arts portion of the MCAS, and they performed much better than its demographically comparable district school. Also, between 1998 and 1999, Hernandez fourth graders' improvement in the English language arts (ELA) portion of the MCAS was greater than both the district and its comparison school. In the math portion of the MCAS, the Hernandez fourth graders, once again, demonstrated a great improvement in scores between 1998 and 1999, and they outscored the district and the comparison school in 1999.

In 1998, the Hernandez eighth graders outscored both the district and its comparison school in the ELA portion of the MCAS, although there was a slight decrease in scores the following year. On the math portion of the test, Hernandez eighth graders continue to show improvement in scores between 1998 and 1999. Ulichny concludes:

> Expeditionary Learning implementation appears to be providing a strong academic curriculum that allows students

from typically disadvantaged backgrounds to thrive. In the case of the Hernandez, we see that a non–Expeditionary Learning school that shares many similarities with the Hernandez does not score nearly as well on most measures as the Hernandez. This provides further support for our conclusion that Expeditionary Learning is making a positive difference in the academic achievement of the Hernandez (p. 107).

RAND Corporation

Lessons from New American Schools' Scale-up Phase, 1998

In December, 1997 the RAND Corporation prepared a study for New American Schools (NAS) assessing the ability of each of the design teams to implement its design from 1995 to 1997. Six Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound schools were included in the study, two each in Cincinnati, Memphis, and San Antonio. The report, based on case studies of thirty-three schools in seven different districts, all of which were in their second year implementing a NAS design, found that Expeditionary Learning was one of the two most successful designs in promoting and supporting successful implementation. The study focused on two key questions: "Did schools implement the design and to what extent?" and "Are there any patterns indicating why some schools made more progress toward implementation goals than others?"

The report, based on case studies of thirty-three schools in seven different districts, all of which were in their second year implementing a NAS design, found that Expeditionary Learning was one of the two most successful designs in promoting and supporting successful implementation.

Schools were assessed on the extent to which each of five core elements of school transformation was being implemented: curriculum, instruction, assessment, student grouping, and professional development. On the basis of interviews, reviews, and school visits, schools were assigned to one of five phases of implementation: no implementation, planning, piloting, implementing, or fulfilling. For a school to be considered in the implementing phase for a core element, the vast majority of teachers had to implement the element. In the fulfilling phase, the core element had to be evident across the school and be fully developed in accordance with the design.

SUCCESS IN IMPLEMENTATION

The report concluded that Expeditionary Learning and Roots & Wings, "show significantly higher levels of implementation than the other teams" (p. 60). The two designs stood out in almost every measure of design team capacity and extent of implementation.

Expeditionary Learning was successfully implemented in five out of six schools, the second highest rate of successful implementation among the seven design teams, and Expeditionary Learning was one of only two designs with a school that had reached the fulfilling stage.

CHARACTERISTICS OF DESIGN TEAM SUCCESS

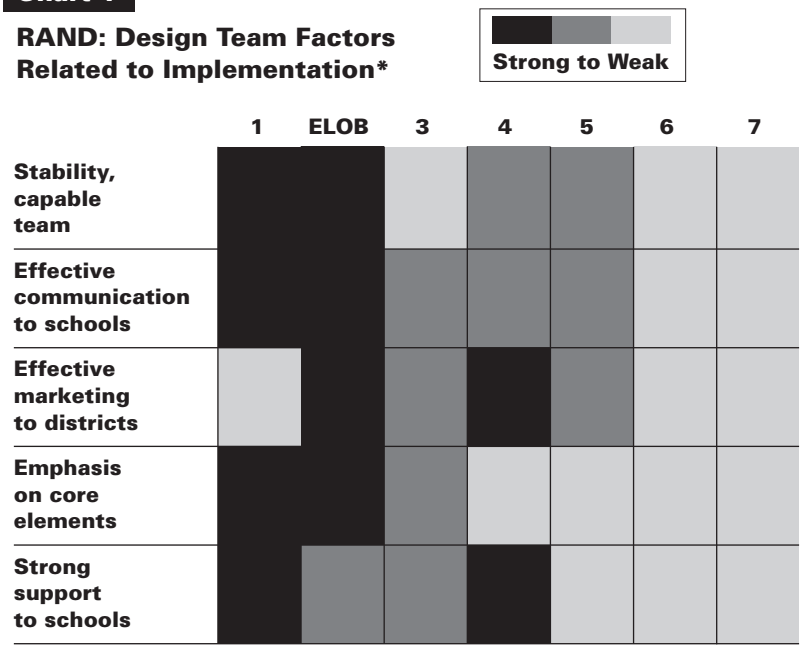
RAND identified five design team characteristics that were related to effective implementation. The five factors are:

Expeditionary Learning was particularly strong in focusing the change process in schools around the core elements of school improvement: curriculum, instruction, assessment, student grouping, and professional development. Of all the design teams, Expeditionary Learning was the only one that was found to have a clear focus on the five core elements in all of the schools studied.

- a stable team with capability to grow and capacity to field qualified personnel to serve schools,
- good initial marketing to schools and the ability to communicate their designs well,
- effective initial marketing to the district and the ability to gain the resource support needed to implement the design successfully,
- emphasis on the core elements of school transformation: curriculum, instruction, assessment, student grouping, and professional development, and
- supports for implementation that included whole-school training, facilitators, and common planning time.

Chart 1

RAND: Design Team Factors Related to Implementation*



** adapted from RAND study and reproduced with their permission*

Expeditionary Learning was ranked strong in four out of the five factors related to successful implementation, and was one of only two designs that was rated strong in more than two characteristics of effective design teams. Expeditionary Learning was particularly strong in focusing the change process in schools around the core elements of school improvement: curriculum, instruction, assessment, student grouping, and professional development. Of all the design teams, Expeditionary Learning was the only one that was found to have a clear focus on the five core elements in all of the schools studied.

Later RAND reports on NAS designs will be described as they become available.

Center for Research in Educational Policy and the University of Memphis

Evaluation of Implementation of Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound at Middle College High School, Springdale Elementary School, and Macon Elementary School, 1997

In November, 1997 the Center for Research in Educational Policy at the University of Memphis published an evaluation for the Memphis City Schools of the implementation of New American School designs in thirty-four Memphis schools. Three Expeditionary Learning schools were included in the study: Middle College High School, Macon Elementary School, and Springdale Elementary School.

The evaluation found that all three schools made important changes in curriculum, instruction, assessment, and organization.

The three schools began implementation during the summer of 1995, and data were collected during the spring of 1997. These evaluations, thus, represent a snapshot of the progress that schools had made toward the end of their second year of implementation.

The study used four different types of evidence: 1) an interview with the principal; 2) a teacher focus group; 3) teacher surveys; and 4) classroom observations. Using this evidence, the research team assessed how well the schools met the Expeditionary Learning benchmarks.

The evaluation found that all three schools made important changes in curriculum, instruction, assessment, and organization. There was evidence of significant improvement at Middle College High School, where the evaluation found that the school had transformed itself into an exemplary center of Expeditionary Learning. There was also evidence of progress, in many cases dramatic, in Springdale and Macon.

MIDDLE COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

The principal reported that there had been "tremendous accomplishments," and that teachers play a different role, viewing themselves as resource brokers, problem-solvers, facilitators, and learners. The principal's role also changed, as she became more involved as an instructional leader. She

Improvements included students taking greater pride in their work, improved communication among teachers, enhanced self-esteem among students, and improved attendance.

reported that every day was project-based and that every day involved problem solving. Interdisciplinary approaches were evidenced. Teacher portfolios, lesson plans, and expeditions were institutionalized.

Teachers commented on the high level of faculty support for the design and indicated that Expeditionary Learning had made significant contributions to innovations such as cooperative learning, classroom design, student exhibits, portfolios, journal writing, and improved use of language. All teachers support authentic assessment. There was consensus that Expeditionary Learning drives the school improvement plan, and that the quality of student work has improved. Students focus more on major projects and less on textbook exercises (this was confirmed by classroom observation).

Closing remarks by teachers focused on teacher empowerment and total school improvement since design implementation. Other improvements included students taking great pride in their work, improved communication among teachers, enhanced self-esteem among students, and improved attendance.

SPRINGDALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The principal reported that fifty percent of students' daily work occurred in cooperative groups, that students were acting better and were engaging more in learning, and that teachers were beginning to enjoy this type of teaching. The Expeditionary Learning design had become the school's improvement plan.

Classroom observation showed substantial evidence of Expeditionary Learning instructional practice. "Based on classroom observations, a great deal has been done to implement various design components. Cooperative learning is very salient, alternative assessment and self-assessment practices are visible, student work is prominently displayed, curriculum is integrated, and teachers are assuming a role as coach or facilitator" (p. 16). Researchers found ample evidence in classrooms of learning expeditions that seemed well-planned, consisted of integrated curriculum, included many hands-on activities, and involved cooperative group activities.

MACON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Classroom observation and teacher comments provided clear evidence of important changes in teaching practice, and teachers reported significant improvements in student learning. The principal commented that she had heard many teachers say Expeditionary Learning "is the way to go" and "the children are learning more." Teachers said that "faculty members are very supportive of the design," and one teacher remarked that "teachers like teaching across the curriculum… they are more enthusiastic." Teachers reported positive changes in the students since design implementation: they were more engaged and motivated; better writers and reading at a higher

level; working together more and more enthusiastic about learning; and have learned how to direct their own learning.

Evaluators found evidence of well-designed and effective implementation of Expeditionary Learning in classrooms: teachers served as facilitators of learning, students worked in teams, experiential approaches to education were evident, students guided their own learning, and there were high levels of student engagement.

Fourth-Year Achievement Results on the Tennessee Value-added Assessment System for Restructuring Schools in Memphis, 2000

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the student achievement gains that have resulted since the 1995 implementation of school reform designs in the Memphis City Schools (MCS). Expeditionary Learning was one of the eight school reform designs included in this evaluation. The MCS is the district with the largest number of students from low socio-economic background in Tennessee. In an attempt to improve the academic achievement of its students, MCS chose to restructure a number of its schools by adopting a variety of whole-school reform designs in 1995. Each school that adopted one of these designs is known as a "restructuring school." Between 1995 and 1997, additional schools in this district adopted such reform designs. Due to the fact that only a few schools in the district implemented each reform design, this evaluation focused primarily on the overall effect of all eight designs on the Memphis City Schools. In general, the findings indicated that those schools implementing reform designs such as Expeditionary Learning have demonstrated noticeable gains in academic achievement.

Students across Tennessee take the TerraNova, a version of the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills exam, in grades two through eight and grade eleven. The TerraNova measures student achievement in math, reading, language, science, and social studies. In order to analyze test data, both the Tennessee Value-added Assessment System (TVAAS) and the Cumulative Percent of the Norm (CPN) were employed. The TVAAS and CPN are sophisticated statistical procedures used to analyze standardized test results.

Results of this study indicate that restructuring schools clearly demonstrated an increase in achievement from year to year since initial school reform implementation. In the year prior to design implementation, as well as the first year of implementation, all restructuring schools experienced a smaller achievement gain when compared to non-restructuring schools. By the second year of design implementation, however, these schools began to demonstrate higher achievement gains than non-restructuring schools.

Furthermore, by the second and third years of design implementation, restructuring schools tended to improve more than non-restructuring schools in all subject areas, including math, reading, science, language and social studies. The report concluded:

> The restructuring schools] showed the prototypic pattern that is usually associated with reform efforts, that is, little change or even deficits in achievement in the first year of implementation, but positive gains over time. For all three cohorts, the "turnaround" period has been two years, which many educational reform experts would probably regard as unexpectedly brief given the demands and complexities of implementing comprehensive school reforms (p. 27).

University of Colorado School of Education

An Assessment of Outward Bound's, Urban Education Initiative, 1994

In 1990, Outward Bound U.S.A., the national Outward Bound federation, initiated a plan for an Urban/Education Initiative with the goal of improving the lives and academic success of inner-city youth. This initiative was the precursor to Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound, which was first implemented in 1993. This study assessed Expeditionary Learning during its initial phase of implementation.

According to the report, early Expeditionary Learning implementation seemed to have noticeable effects. For teachers and students, the initiative was "perceived as invigorating their school-based experiences, helping them to teach and learn more effectively, and simply making school a more engaging place to be" (p. i). Both teachers and students in Expeditionary Learning schools saw a significant change in students' attitudes about school, leading to increased interest and engagement in their schoolwork. This increase in student interest in academic work was followed by an increase in student performance and achievement. The design also appeared to further students' social development and relations with their peers by teaching skills such as conflict resolution and cooperation. One teacher remarked: "The cooperative aspect, trust, respect—that really carries over. The kids [who've been exposed to Expeditionary Learning] are more willing to cooperate. They see each other in a broader light" (p. 9).

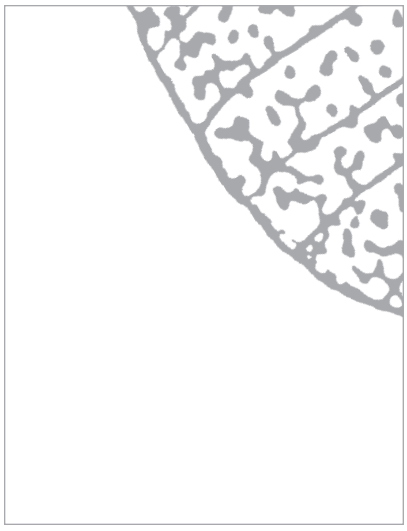
One teacher remarked: "The cooperative aspect, trust, respect—that really carries over. The kids [who've been exposed to Expeditionary Learning] are more willing to cooperate. They see each other in a broader light."

The study found that Expeditionary Learning also showed teachers new and innovative ways to think about education, and encouraged them to reassess traditional teaching practices. Exposure to the Expeditionary Learning design was said to be professionally invigorating and intellectually stimulating for both teachers and school administrators. (p. ii) Furthermore, teachers who had the most exposure to the design were most supportive of the design and were extremely committed to bringing the philosophy of Expeditionary Learning into their classrooms. School administrators were also positively influenced by the Expeditionary Learning design. They appreciated the opportunities the design afforded them to network with colleagues engaged in similar work, and they felt this type of networking provided them and their schools with much needed support.






Profiles of Implementing Schools





"What is an Expeditionary Learning school? A school where you try to find things out for yourself. The teacher doesn't just tell you."

—Second Grader
Dubuque, Iowa



School Profiles

Expeditionary Learning has been successfully implemented in a variety of schools, including urban and rural schools; schools in large and small districts; small charter schools; and affluent and high-poverty schools. The following profiles describe five diverse Expeditionary Learning schools in four states. Of the five schools, three have been working with Expeditionary Learning since the design first partnered with schools eight years ago, and two have been working with the design for four years. All five schools have implemented the Expeditionary Learning design with skill and fidelity, and they have seen strong evidence of improved student learning and a richer school culture.

IMPLEMENTATION: A PREREQUISITE FOR SUCCESS

It is self-evident that the Expeditionary Learning design can be effective only in schools that in fact implement it. The schools featured in the profiles have been selected because they meet Expeditionary Learning's criteria for successful implementation. Successful implementation is not easy; it affects all aspects of a school's curriculum, instruction, assessment system, culture, and structure and requires considerable energy, dedication, time, and effort. Research on school reform suggests that successful implementation of a comprehensive design takes three to five years and requires ongoing diligence after the initial period of intensive transformation. Not all schools that attempt to implement Expeditionary Learning—and, indeed, other such designs—succeed. The main factors are the commitment of the faculty, the skill and stability of school leadership, and the support of the school district.

Expeditionary Learning assesses a school's implementation through three levels: "beginning" (level 1), "implementing" (level 2), or "realizing" (level 3). All of the profiled schools have reached level two or higher as measured by Expeditionary Learning's annual implementation check. Since 1999, we have been using this check in all Expeditionary Learning schools: it measures progress towards implementing the design's five core practices as specified in a series of 21 benchmarks.

MEASURING SUCCESS: TEST SCORES AND OTHER INDICATORS

Test scores are one way to measure student learning. Tests are at the center of the debate on school accountability because they provide seemingly objective and comparable measures of student achievement. Norm-referenced tests allow educators and the pubic to see how students' academic skills and knowledge measure up to their peers in comparison with district, state or national norms. Criterion-referenced tests provide information on the degree to which students' academic achievement meets established criteria and standards. In the school profiles, we report on the tests the schools' states and/or districts use. For schools in which many tests are used, we focus primarily on results from the state's high-stakes test, the test that the public uses to assess effectiveness. We present the most recent test results and, when possible, show longitudinal comparative cohort data. In an appendix on pages 53–55 we provide tables of the charts in the profiles and note the sources of data.

As useful as test scores are, they provide only limited information on the depth of student learning or the quality of student work. Nor do they illuminate how such personal qualities as initiative, commitment, and persistence contribute to academic success. The five school profiles attempt to explore dimensions of school and student character that the test scores do not address. Each school profile includes a data profile that describes the school in its community and state. The profile features a narrative section that briefly describes the history of the school, its focus as a school community, and some of its most important qualities and accomplishments. Each profile also features several indicators of success that provide additional information. We believe that the collected profiles give readers a balanced sense of achievement in Expeditionary Learning schools across the country.

Clairemont Elementary School

Decatur, Georgia

	Clairemont	District	State
Special Needs	18%	13%	11%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	33%	35%	43%
Limited English Proficient	1%	1%	2%
Attendance Rate	97%	95%	N/A

Principal
Judy Greene

Expeditionary Learning Start Date
September, 1993

Student Diversity
White: 59%
African-American: 38%
Other: 3% (Latino, Asian-American, Multiracial)

Grade Levels
K–5

Students
219

Faculty
16

Setting
Urban

Single-parent homes
40%

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Since Clairemont Elementary School partnered with Expeditionary Learning eight years ago, parents have made a hands-on, philosophical, and financial commitment to the design. Since this small school has struggled with minimal financial support for its school reform efforts, the Parent-Teacher Association has stepped in and raised funds to send teachers to summits and other national professional development offerings. Parents contribute many volunteer hours of direct support for teachers, including driving students to fieldwork assignments and helping teachers enrich learning expeditions. For example, during an expedition on communities, one parent led third graders on a historical walk through the cemetery and the town, and, in an expedition on Lewis and Clark, built a canoe with second-graders.

At Clairemont, every teacher is committed to doing learning expeditions, and teachers are continuously finding new ways to stretch their practice through reflection and professional development. Teachers and students make new discoveries that connect to the real world. For example, the fifth-grade teaching team recently studied the idea of rebellion, focusing on the Civil War, women's suffrage, and the civil rights movement. One day, to help the students realize the predicament of women with no right to vote, the teachers gave one group of students green cards and the other group yellow cards. The students with the green cards were prohibited from fully participating in the school day. This prompted much insightful debate and reflection on rights and suffrage issues.

Clairemont celebrates its diverse school community and reaches out to the community at large. Special education and gifted students are taught in the same classes as other children, and teachers use practices that allow all students to thrive. The school invites community members as experts and audiences, and children and teachers use the surrounding community for

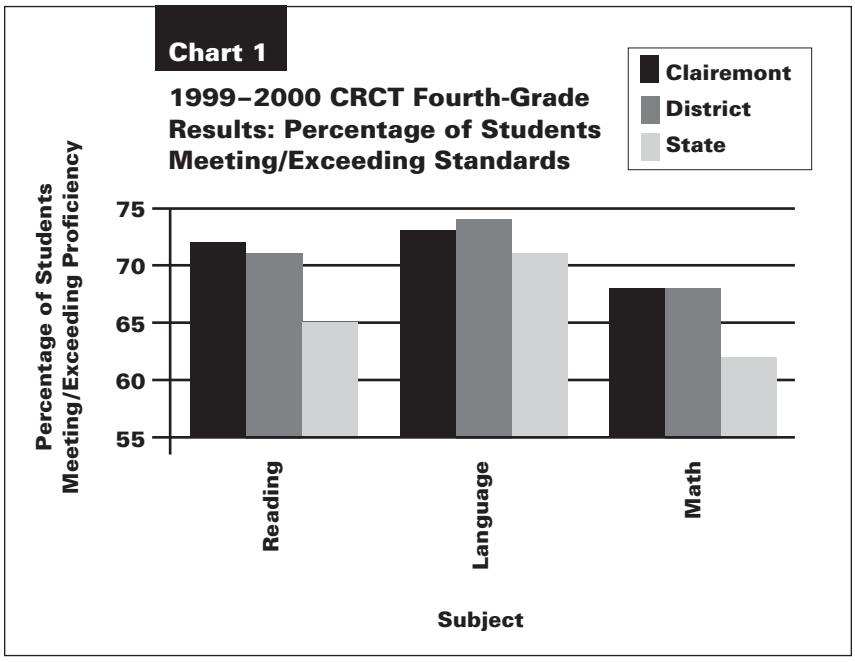
fieldwork and service. Every learning expedition contains some form of service. For example, during a fifth-grade expedition, the class learned of two current state bills, including one that would extend the middle school day by an hour. The children decided to write letters to their state representative. The teacher remarked that the students did their best writing of the year in these letters. Their state representative made a surprise visit to the school to speak to the class about the two bills.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

- All regular classroom teachers that have been in the school for one full year or more have participated in a summit, Outward Bound educator course, or both. Six faculty members have attended two or more summits.
- A strong Parent-Teacher Association backs Expeditionary Learning financially, physically, and philosophically. At parents' insistence, a minimum of two PTA meetings per year are devoted to Expeditionary Learning. The PTA holds several fundraisers to raise money for teachers to participate in on-site and national Expeditionary Learning professional development offerings.
- The current district superintendent recommended the school to the Georgia State Department of Education as a model implementation site for nationally recognized whole-school reform designs.
- Clairemont teachers are continuously contacted by schools throughout Georgia and surrounding Southeastern states to present their experiences in implementing Expeditionary Learning.
- A commitment to provide on-going community service has grown because of participation in Expeditionary Learning. Behind the school, Clairemont parents built a nature trail and pond that are used by students, teachers, and the community-at-large.
- Ninety-five percent of parents participate in expedition showcases, exhibitions, and performances.
- Clairemont has a stable faculty with little turnover. Clairemont teachers stay at the school on average almost thirteen years.
- Before the school partnered with Expeditionary Learning, special education students spent more time in resource classrooms. Currently, most special education students are integrated into the regular classrooms.
- Before Expeditionary Learning gifted students were also pulled out of the regular classroom and instructed apart from their peers. Currently, a certified gifted teacher works with the regular classroom teacher to serve all students.

PERFORMANCE ON TESTS

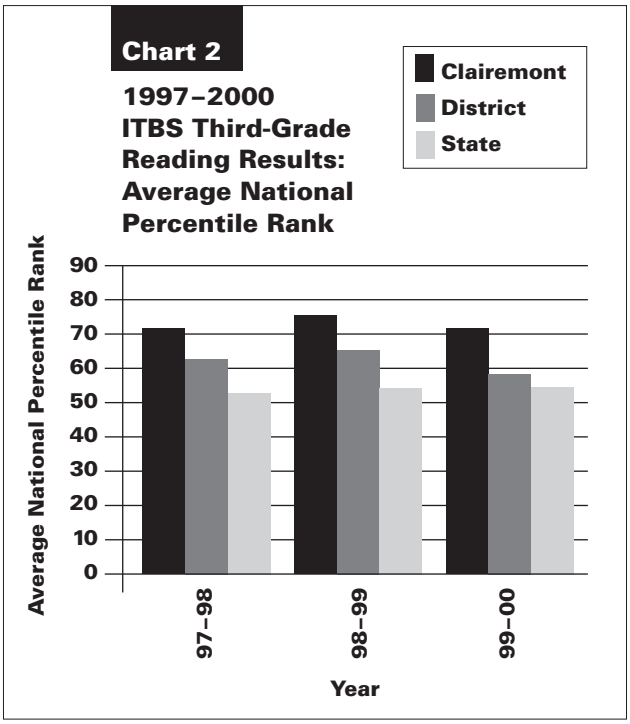
Clairemont fourth graders' performance on the 1999–2000 CRCT was similar to that of the district but surpassed that of the state in reading, language, and math. Chart 1 compares the percentage of students meeting and exceeding standards on this exam for Clairemont, the district, and the state.

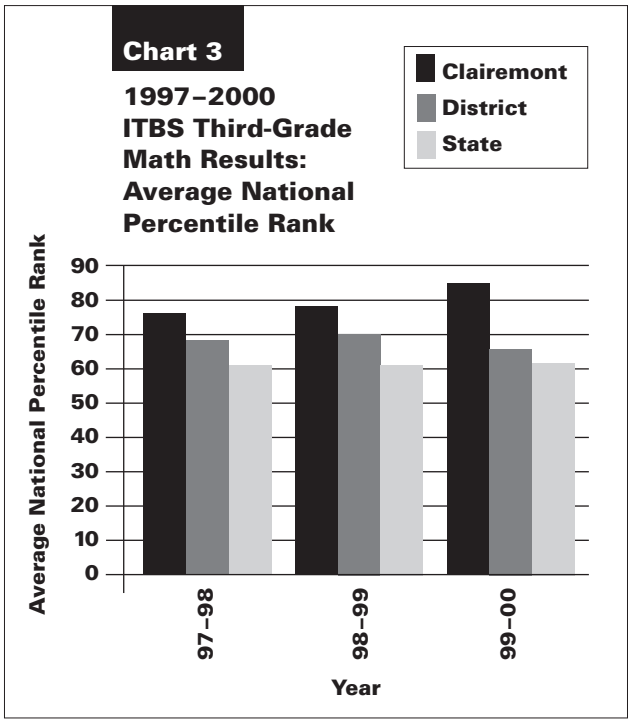


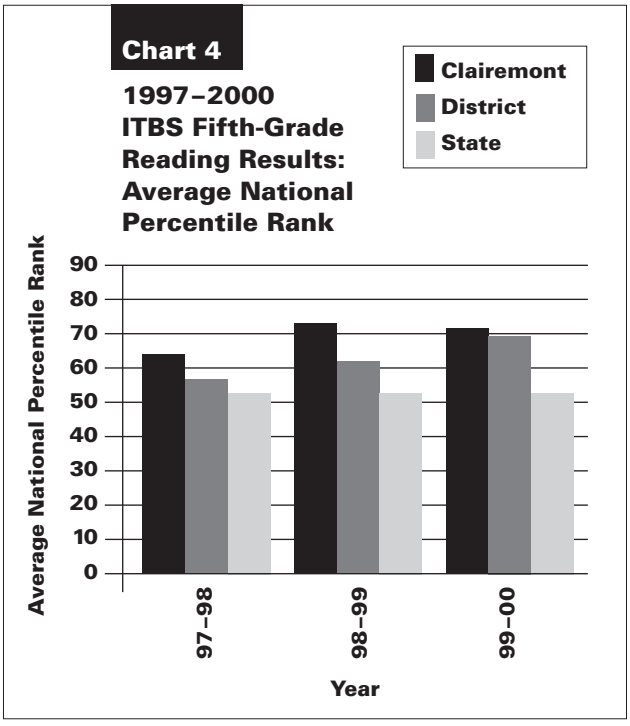
Clairemont third and fifth graders have consistently performed better than both the district and the state on the reading and math portions of the ITBS. Charts 2 and 3 compare Clairemont third graders' performance on the ITBS with the district and state averages since the 1997–1998 academic year. Charts 4 and 5 compare Clairemont fifth graders' performance on the ITBS with the district and state averages since the 1997–1998 academic year.

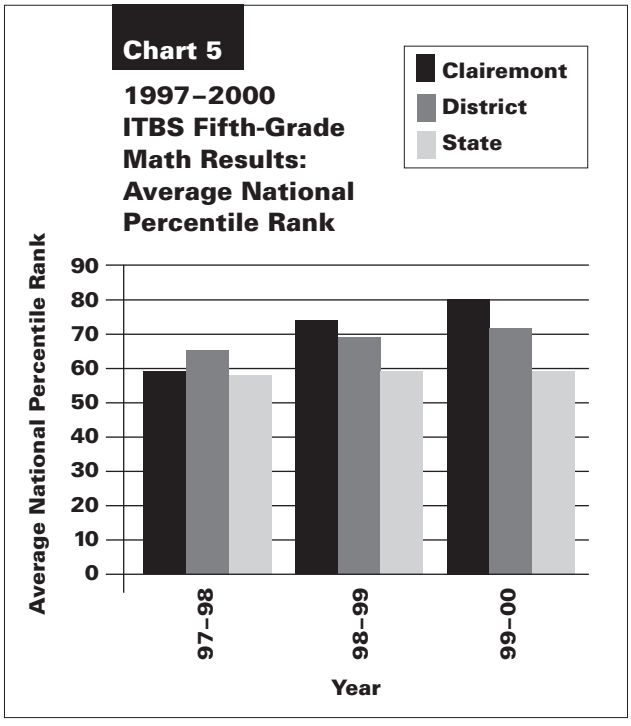
Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Test

In April and May, 2000 fourth graders, along with sixth and eighth graders, took the Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) in the areas of reading, English/language arts, and mathematics. The test is part of Georgia's newly designed accountability system. CRCT science and social studies tests are scheduled for implementation in 2002, and testing in additional grade levels in all subject areas is planned for coming years.For the past few years, Georgia students have been required to take the norm-referenced Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) in grades three and five with optional testing at additional grade levels. Starting in 2001, the Stanford 9 will replace the ITBS.


Chart 2
1997–2000
ITBS Third-Grade
Reading Results:
Average National
Percentile Rank
Clairemont
District
State
Average National Percentile Rank
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
97–98
98–99
99–00
Year


Chart 3
1997–2000
ITBS Third-Grade
Math Results:
Average National
Percentile Rank
Clairemont
District
State
Average National Percentile Rank
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
97–98
98–99
99–00
Year


Chart 4
1997–2000
ITBS Fifth-Grade
Reading Results:
Average National
Percentile Rank
Clairemont
District
State
Average National Percentile Rank
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
97–98
98–99
99–00
Year


Chart 5
1997–2000
ITBS Fifth-Grade
Math Results:
Average National
Percentile Rank
Clairemont
District
State
Average National Percentile Rank
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
97–98
98–99
99–00
Year

Helen King Middle School

Portland, Maine

	King	District	State
Special Needs	15%	11%	13%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	60%	24%	14%
Limited English Proficient	22%	12%	1%
Attendance Rate	95%	95%	94%
Promotion Rate	100%	99%	99%

Principal
Mike McCarthy

Expeditionary Learning Start Date
September, 1993

Student Diversity
White: 69%
African-American: 15%
Asian-American: 9%
Latino: 4%
Other: 3%

Grade Levels
6–8

Students
610

Faculty
61

Setting
Urban

Languages Students Speak
28

Single-parent homes
70%

www.king.portlandschools.org

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Since beginning their work with Expeditionary Learning, the faculty of King Middle School in Portland, Maine have raised the standards for student work in learning expeditions by emphasizing high expectations and high quality. Grade-level teams have developed a sequence of learning expeditions, grounded in the Maine state standards, that are passed on to teaching colleagues and further developed each year. New teams refine the expeditions, based on their own expertise and their students' interests. Students are motivated to deepen and improve the quality of project work by looking at examples of previous students' work, and by using and revising "product descriptors" that establish the criteria for quality work.

Teachers at King have assumed increasing responsibility for their students' learning as well as their own. Six grade-level teams of teachers in two vertical "houses," York house and Windsor house, determine their students' weekly schedule, adjusting it to accommodate student research, fieldwork, and project work. Teachers in teams document their own expeditions planning and the work of students. After students complete an expedition and present their work to an authentic audience, teachers reflect upon the course of the expedition and the quality of the student work produced, and they use their new ideas to update the expedition. Many expeditions are also documented on video.

Another focus of King's work is making meaningful connections with the community. At least half of the school's expeditions involve a service component and have themes grounded in the community. Expeditions have dealt with themes such as Maine flora and fauna, local architecture, and local and worldwide perspectives on immigration. To encourage parent and community involvement, King regularly holds public exhibitions and

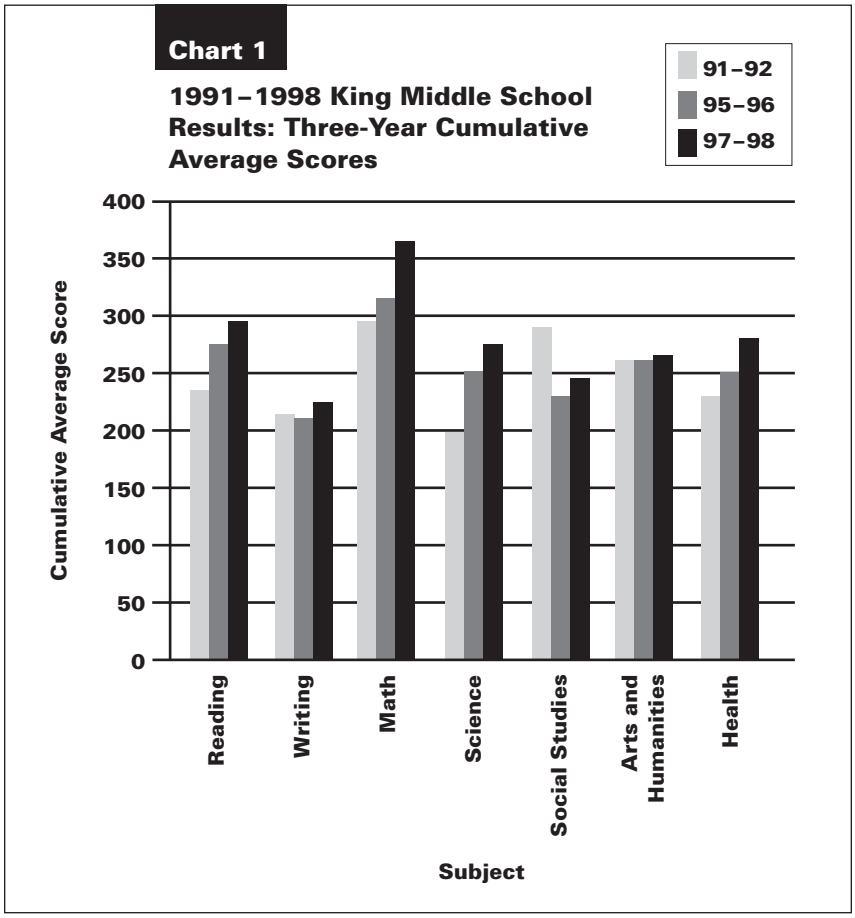
presentations of student expedition work. Parents are also invited to attend student-led portfolio conferences twice a year. King has been enriched in recent years by an influx of students from Portland's refugee resettlement community. King students speak twenty-eight different native languages, and almost a quarter are classified as Limited English Proficient (LEP). King prides itself on including LEP students in learning expeditions and rapidly integrating them into regular classrooms. In recent years, even with the increase in students needing language services, standardized test scores have risen for the entire student body.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

- Before implementation of Expeditionary Learning, special education students were segregated. Currently, however, almost all special education students are integrated into regular classrooms. Furthermore, over the past three years thirty-six students have transitioned from special education to regular education programs.
- Since Expeditionary Learning, the number of ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) students mainstreamed in regular classrooms has increased by 250–300 percent.
- Since Expeditionary Learning implementation, there has been a nineteen percent decrease in the number of students leaving King to attend schools in other districts.
- Prior to Expeditionary Learning implementation, no students were leaving private schools to attend King. Over the past three years, however, over twenty students have left private schools to attend King.
- Ninety-five percent of teachers have participated in Outward Bound activities.
- The school's physical education program is adventure-based.
- Since Expeditionary Learning implementation, student participation in sports has increased from 145 to 224 students, and student participation in co-curricular activities has increased from twenty-one to 240 students.
- Parent-teacher portfolio conferences led by students are held twice a year. Since the conferences began, parental attendance and participation at teacher-parent conferences has increased from sixty-five to ninety-eight percent.

PERFORMANCE ON TESTS

In the early 1990's, King Middle School tended to score lower on the MEA compared to the state and district. In the 1999–2000 MEA testing, however, King students outscored the state average in six out of seven subjects, and on the seventh discipline it scored the same as the state. Chart 1, which is adapted from the work of independent researcher Polly Ulichny, displays King's steady increase in MEA scores in all seven academic subjects since 1992, the year prior to Expeditionary Learning implementation.

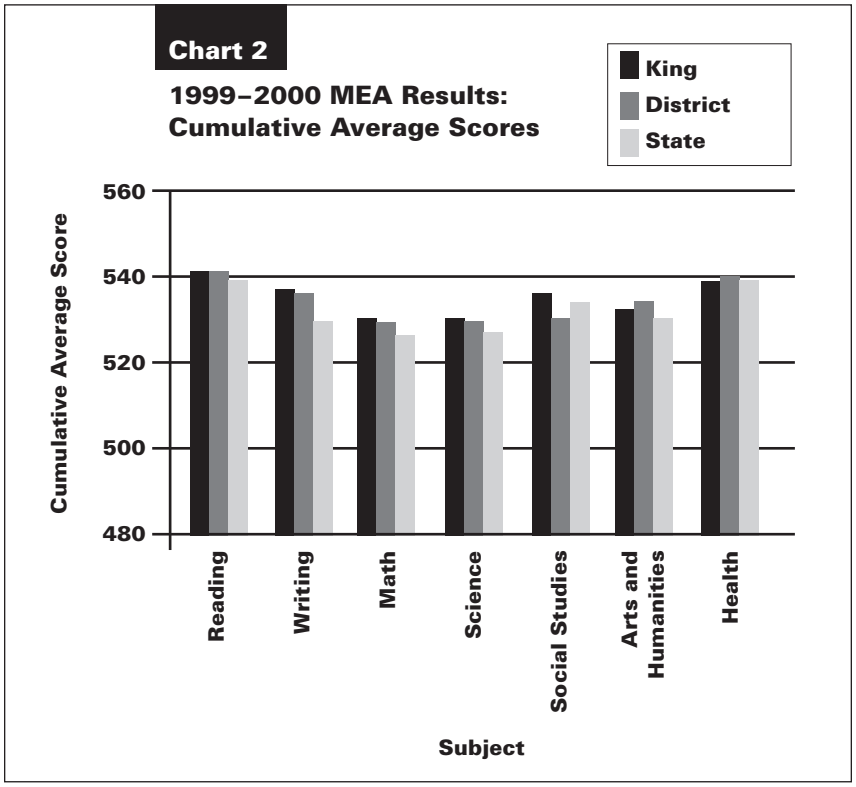


During the 1998–99 school year the MEA was redesigned to measure the state's Learning Results standards, and the scoring scale for the test changed. Scores from 561 to 580 exceed standards, those from 541 to 560 meet standards, those from 521 to 540 partially meet standards, and scores from 500 to 520 do not meet standards. In 1998–99 King matched or exceeded the state average in six of seven subjects, with writing as the sole area below the

The Maine Educational Assessment

Fourth-, eighth- and eleventh-grade students in Maine take the Maine Educational Assessment (MEA) in the fall of each year. The MEA is a criterion-referenced test based on the state's learning standards. It covers the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science, arts/humanities, health and social studies. The state requires that districts administer additional assessments to schools.

state average. On the most recent MEA test for which scores are available, 1999–2000 (Chart 2), King Middle School students' average exceeded both the state's and the district in writing. King scored higher than the district (and state) in writing, math, and science. It scored the same as the district in reading and social studies, and in the areas of health and arts and humanities, King was slightly below the district average.



Rafael Hernandez Two-Way Bilingual School

Roxbury, Massachusetts

	Hernandez	District	State
Special Needs	7%	21%	17%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	76%	71%	26%
Limited English Proficient	49%	22%	5%
Attendance Rate	95%	91%	94%

Principal
Margarita Muñiz

Expeditionary Learning Start Date
September, 1993

Student Diversity
Latino: 63%
African-American: 21%
White: 16%

Grade Levels
K–8

Students
400

Faculty
31

Setting
Urban

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Rafael Hernandez School is a two-way Spanish/English bilingual school in the Roxbury neighborhood of Boston. Approximately half the students are native Spanish-speaking students from Puerto Rican and Dominican families, and the other half are native English speakers. At the Hernandez School, students learn to read, write and speak both English and Spanish; the Spanish native speakers learn English, while English native speakers learn Spanish. All students learn through learning expeditions, give service in the community, and present academic work of high quality to their families and the community. The Hernandez, one of the original ten Expeditionary Learning schools, has always stood out in the national network as a school with a vibrant culture and deep commitment to its local community. Crowded student exhibitions and performances feature student work along with ample portions of rice and beans and lots of music and dance.

While the Hernandez School has, from its inception in 1974, been committed to language acquisition, during recent years the faculty has focused intensely on teaching reading and writing well and deepening literacy in learning expeditions. Several teachers published chapters in Expeditionary Learning's 1999 book, *Literacy All Day Long,* and teachers have presented at national workshops. Four-teacher teams in grades K–1, 2–3, and 4–5—along with a six-teacher team in grades 6–8—do a two- or three-year loop with their students. In each grade level in K–8, one teacher focuses exclusively on literacy in Spanish and another on literacy in English. Almost all classroom teachers are bilingual. Meeting regularly, teacher teams study literacy, analyze their classroom practices, and cooperatively assess the work and progress of students. Grade-level teams use a whole-school protocol to

examine student work, align work to standards, and develop team- and school-wide assessments that ensure high standards. The faculty's commitment to literacy instruction and reflection on student work has paid dividends, as evidenced by school-administered performance-based assessments and state-mandated standardized tests.

Hernandez learning expeditions combine subject area content with a lot of reading and writing and an authentic connection to the community, often through service. In a recent first-grade learning expedition on the theme of the family, students explored families through text, discussion, and fieldwork. Partnering with a local home for the elderly, each student interviewed one elderly resident on his or her experience as a family member. After two interview sessions each student composed an illustrated biography of his or her resident and returned to the elderly home to present it. In another expedition on plant life, students in the eighth grade worked on a community garden with students in the first grade. As part of the expedition eighth-graders worked as reading buddies to first graders and helped them write books about plants.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

- Under the Boston Public Schools parent choice program, the Hernandez is "over selected" year after year by families. At the beginning of the most recent school year, one hundred kindergartners were on the waiting list.
- After three years of working with Expeditionary Learning, the participation of parents as volunteers increased from an average of twenty-five parents to 125 parents per year. This level of participation has been maintained for the past five years.
- Family attendance at the school's three annual open house celebrations averages seventy-six percent.
- Each Hernandez student publishes a book each school year. Many books are copied and distributed in the school's library.
- The school has a home reading initiative with students and their families. Teachers track home reading for students. Currently eighty-five percent of students in grades Kindergarten through five, read at home every night. Seventy percent of students in grades six through eight read nightly.
- The Hernandez School is one of twelve finalists in Massachusetts—and two in the city of Boston—to be designated as "Exemplary Schools" by the Massachusetts Department of Education.
- The Hernandez School's schedule was featured as an exemplary schedule in a New American Schools publication.

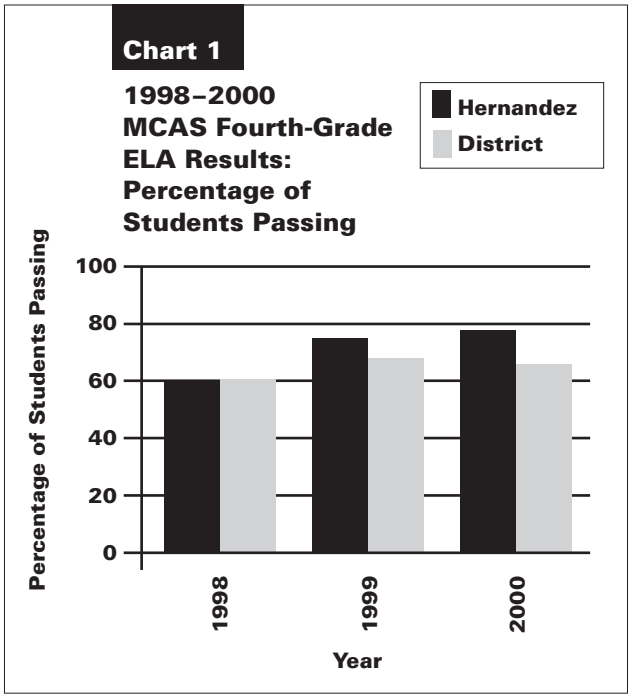
PERFORMANCE ON TESTS

The State of Massachusetts gave the Rafael Hernandez School an "Exceeds Expectations" designation for its 2000 fourth-grade MCAS performance. The designation is given to schools that perform better than expected according to a formula that takes student demographics into account. Charts 1 and 2 present fourth-grade MCAS data for three consecutive fourth-grade classes from 1998 to 2000. Since 1999, a larger percentage of Hernandez fourth graders has passed the English and math portions of the MCAS than the district. Furthermore, since 1998, Hernandez fourth graders have shown a greater improvement on the English portion of the MCAS than the district.

Charts 3 and 4 show how Hernandez eighth graders have fared on MCAS. Massachusetts students in urban middle and high schools show low albeit increasing passage rates on MCAS, particularly in mathematics. By the time they reach the eighth grade, about a third of Hernandez students who were in the fifth grade have departed the school for "honors" level programs in the city's "exam schools." Thus, the top performing students from grade four are no longer included in the grade eight cohort of students. The two-thirds of eighth graders who remain in the school, however, continue to perform better than their district peers. Charts 3 and 4 show that, since 1999, a larger percentage of Hernandez eighth graders have scored higher on both the English and Math portions of the MCAS than the district. We exclude in these charts Boston's three elite exam schools, "the public middle schools that admit middle schoolers" based on a separate entrance examination.

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System

Since 1998, Massachusetts students in grades four, eight, and ten have taken the Massachusetts Comprehensive Achievement System (MCAS). The MCAS is a criterion-referenced test series linked to the state's curriculum frameworks. The tests assess students' performance in English language arts, mathematics, science/technology, and history/social studies. Beginning this year these assessments and additional tests in reading will be administered in other grade levels. Starting in 2003, high school students must pass the tenth-grade English language arts and math test in order to graduate.



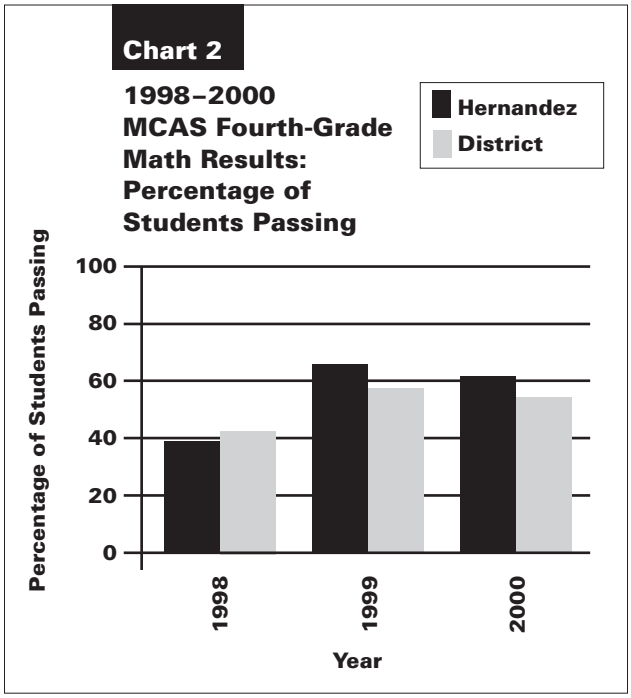


Chart 3

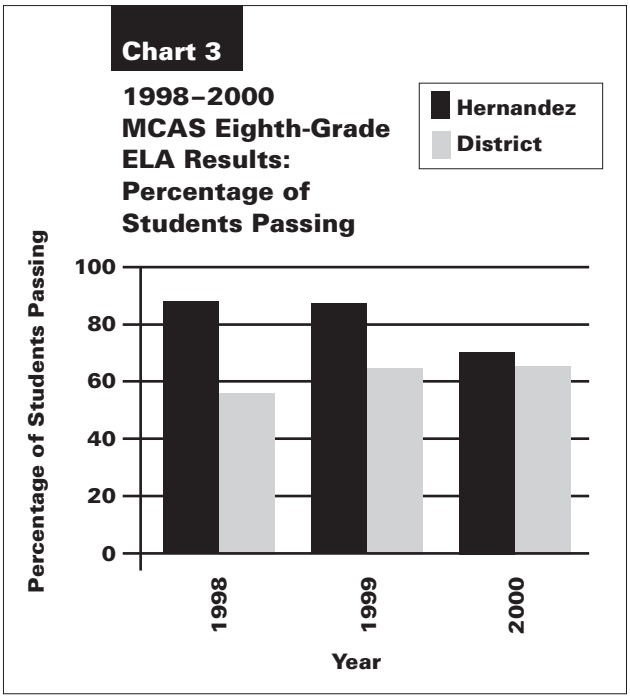
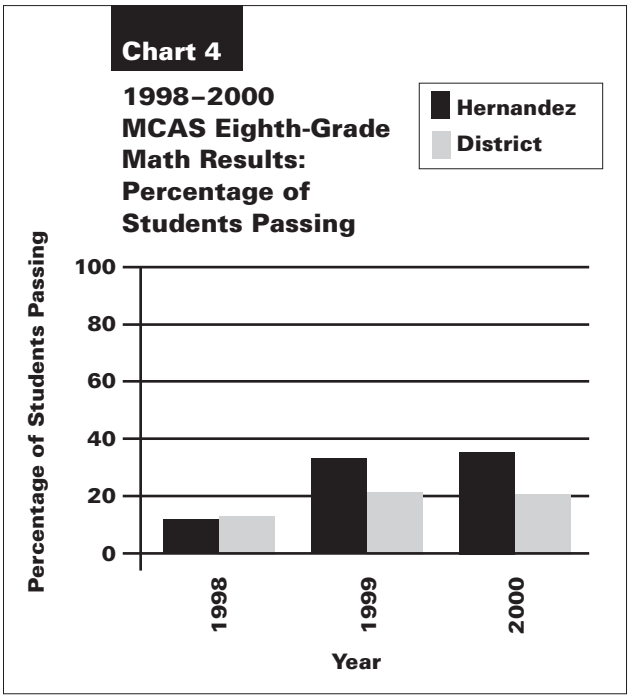


Chart 4



Alternative Elementary II

Seattle, Washington

	AE2	District	State
Special Needs	14%	9%	N/A
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	9%	39%	N/A
Limited English Proficient	3%	13%	N/A
Attendance Rate	96%	91%	N/A

Principal
John Miner

Expeditionary Learning Start Date
August, 1997

Student Diversity
White: 63%
Asian-American: 16%
African-American: 7%
Latino: 7%
Native American: 7%

Grade Levels
K–5

Students
312

Faculty
15

Setting
Urban

www.seattleschools.org/schools/ae2/

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Alternative Elementary II (AE2) was founded in 1974 by teachers and parents who wanted to create a progressive, child-centered elementary program within the Seattle School District. Since its inception, a committed, stable staff, and active, engaged parents have shaped AE2. While teachers at this school have always created integrated curriculum and believed in field trips and community service, there was a feeling of isolation from other schools and colleagues striving to meet similar objectives. Teachers sensed that they could do even better than they were doing, and so the school adopted Expeditionary Learning in 1997.

A tour of AE2's classrooms, halls, and courtyards reveals the school's strong commitment to the arts and to service. Each expedition features a major visual or performing arts project. During the 2000–2001 year, for instance, two classes jointly wrote, composed, and produced their own opera on friendship, the hardships of being excluded from a group, and the delights of being included. A second-/third-grade class designed a new, more sensitive habitat for the local zoo's jaguar. A fifth-grade class created a fanciful but technically accurate art exhibit, "Animals on Bikes," for the local bike path. The doors to the library display an artful invitation to come in and read—a final service project completed by the previous year's graduating fifth graders. The faculty makes a strong effort to incorporate the arts in expeditions, since they believe that the arts are a crucial aspect of learning.

At recess, first and second graders are busy teaching other classes the almost lost art of jump-roping and jump rope chants—a service they will take on the road as they visit other elementary schools to teach what they have learned and created. Service is an integral part of AE2's mission, and AE2 teachers and students are committed to serving the larger community and the school itself.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

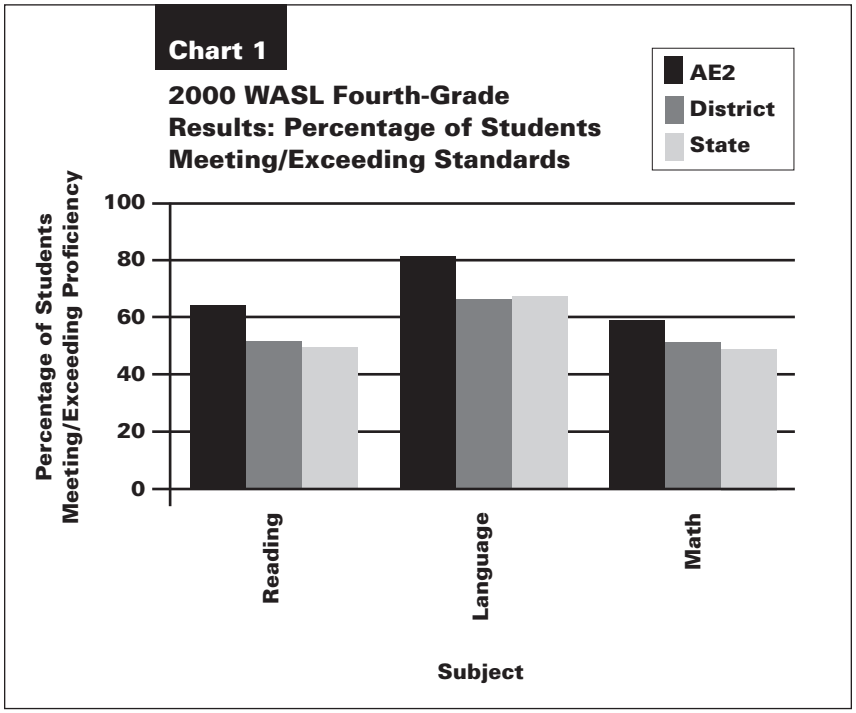
- Seventy-five percent of parents volunteer at the school, totaling an average of 1000 volunteer hours per month. This represents a fifteen percent increase since AE2's adoption of Expeditionary Learning in 1997.
- Since the school initiated portfolios, parent attendance at open houses has risen markedly.
- According to a school administered parent survey, satisfaction with the school assessment system has increased from "somewhat satisfied" to "satisfied" over the past three years.
- Ninety to ninety-five percent of parents attend student work exhibitions and conferences.
- Each classroom carries out at least one service project per year as an integral component of its learning expeditions.
- Some classrooms have incorporated community service as part of their regular monthly activities. Examples of recent projects include the following: packing and sorting food at a local food bank for the homeless; fund-raising for food for third-world countries; and performing at local retirement homes.

The Washington Assessment of Student Learning

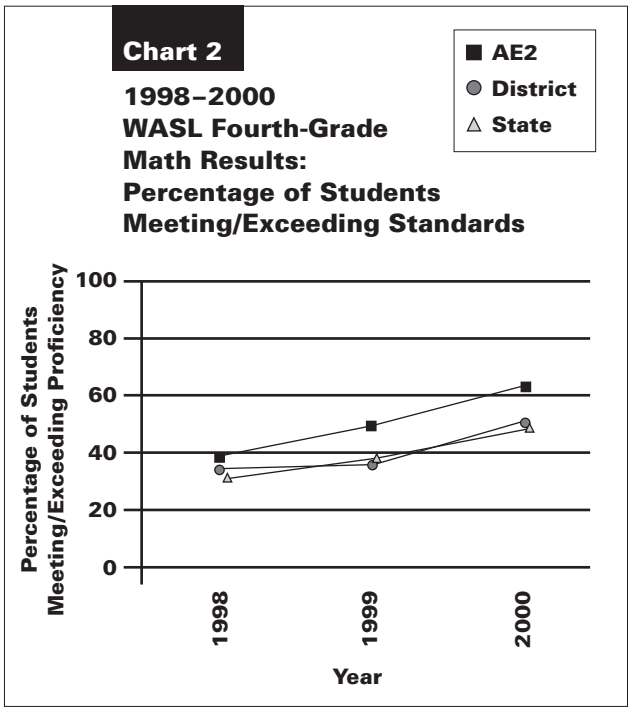
Since 1997 the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) has been administered to all fourth-grade students in the areas of math, reading, writing, and communication. Other WASL component areas are scheduled for implementation in coming years. The WASL is a criterion-referenced test linked to the Washington State Standards. In upcoming years, the state plans incentives and sanctions for schools based, in part, on WASL performance. Washington State also requires third graders to take the math and reading sections of the ITBS, a norm-referenced standardized test.

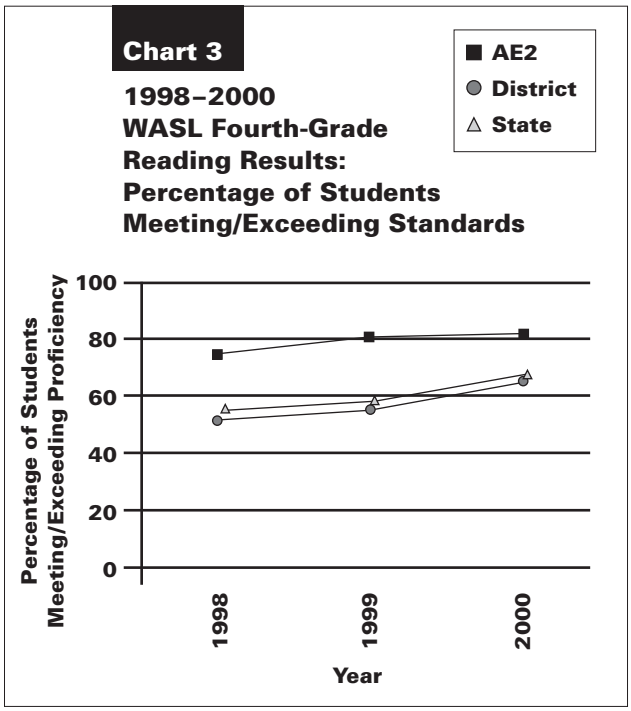
PERFORMANCE ON TESTS

In AE2's most recent WASL results, the school's percentage of students meeting or exceeding standards exceeded that of both the district and the state for each of the major subject areas. This finding is displayed by Chart 1.

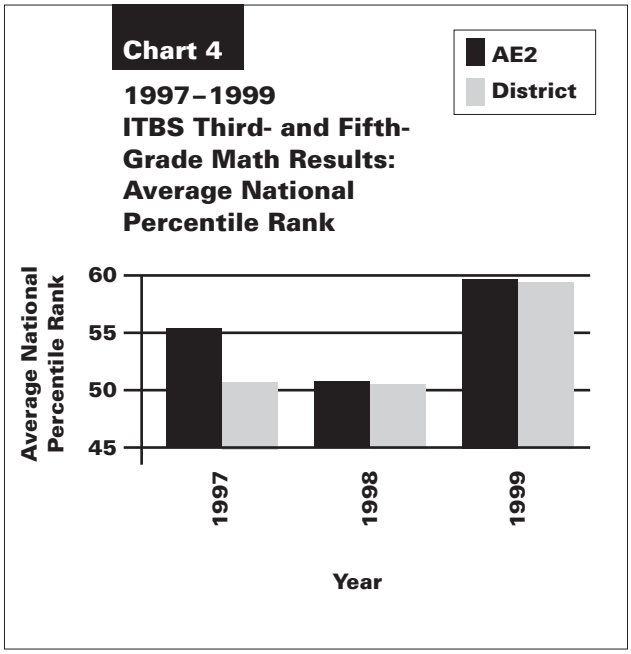


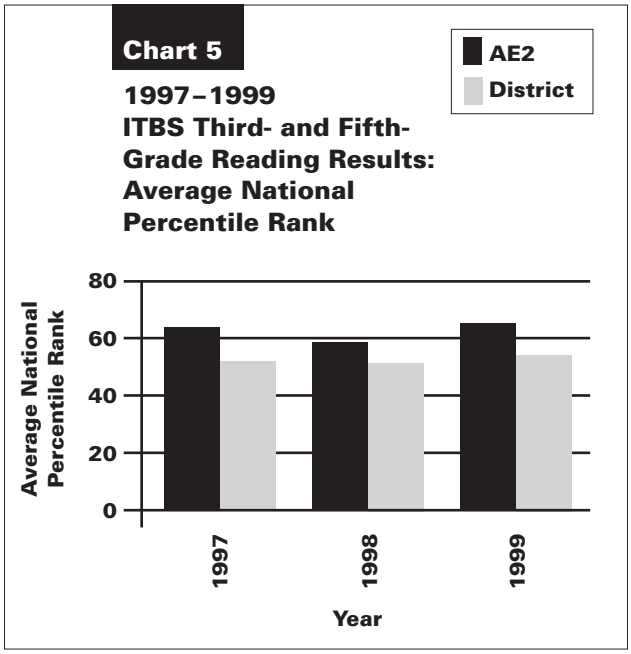
Charts 2 and 3 show that positive trends can be traced over the past three years. In the areas of math and reading, AE2 maintains consistently higher passing rates than the district and state and has widened the distance between the state and district in the area of math.





Similar performance trends can be observed in the school's ITBS scores for the most recent years. Charts 4 through 5 compare AE2's average ITBS scores for grades three and five with those of Seattle from 1997 to 1999.





The Harbor School

Dorchester, Massachusetts

	Harbor	District	State
Special Needs	11%	21%	17%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	75%	71%	26%
Limited English Proficient	12%	22%	5%
Attendance Rate	93%	91%	94%

Principal
Scott Hartl

Expeditionary Learning Start Date
August, 1997

Student Diversity
African-American: 67%
Latino: 18%
White: 14%
Asian-American: 1%

Grade Levels
6–8

Students
265

Faculty
34

Setting
Urban

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Harbor School was founded in 1997 as an Expeditionary Learning school with a mission to serve urban middle-school students in the Dorchester neighborhood of Boston. The school is one of ten "pilot" schools, which function as city-run charters in the Boston Public Schools system. In four years, the school has grown from sixty students to 265. The school has thrived with a committed faculty and strong alliances with a variety of organizations. One such partnership is with the Island Alliance, a local community organization committed to helping develop the Boston Harbor Islands National Park. Teachers developed a learning expedition on the human and natural history of Boston Harbor and its islands. After learning about the harbor islands, students serving as ambassadors for the islands attended community fundraising events and met with business leaders and prominent political leaders, including the mayor and governor. Several students have been offered summer employment as Site Interpreters for the National Parks Service. One final product of the harbor islands expedition was a professionally produced set of greeting cards, each featuring original student art and writing about the history of the islands. The cards were sold at school exhibitions and over the Internet to support Boston Harbor educational activities for other middle school students.

The Harbor School strongly emphasizes student involvement in the arts. An arts teacher serves as a full-time project specialist who works with teams of teachers and students on developing high quality work within learning expeditions. "For us art is about standards," said Scott Hartl, principal of The Harbor School. "It's about attention to detail, it's about attention to presentation, and it's about building beautiful work. And then it's about building the same commitment to quality and process in all other academic classes." In keeping with the Expeditionary Learning design principles, students at The Harbor School are encouraged to work hard, take initiative, and become responsible community members, caring for others and the environment. Each new year at The Harbor School begins with a course

where students learn about the school's values and engage in activities that directly pertain to these values and the design principles. As part of this course eighth-graders revise and plan the school's student governance structures, building upon and reworking the structures from the previous year. Two eighth-graders serve as co-student body presidents and serve on the school's governing board.

The Harbor School has an extended school day that gives students the opportunity to participate in a variety of after-school activities and clubs. The schedule allows teachers on teams to have two hours of common planning time four days each week and on the fifth day up to three hours for full-faculty professional development. Students at Harbor stay with a team of teachers for two consecutive years in the seventh and eighth grades. In addition to taking tests and doing complex projects, students at the Harbor School graduate by presenting their cumulative portfolios to panels of parents and community members.

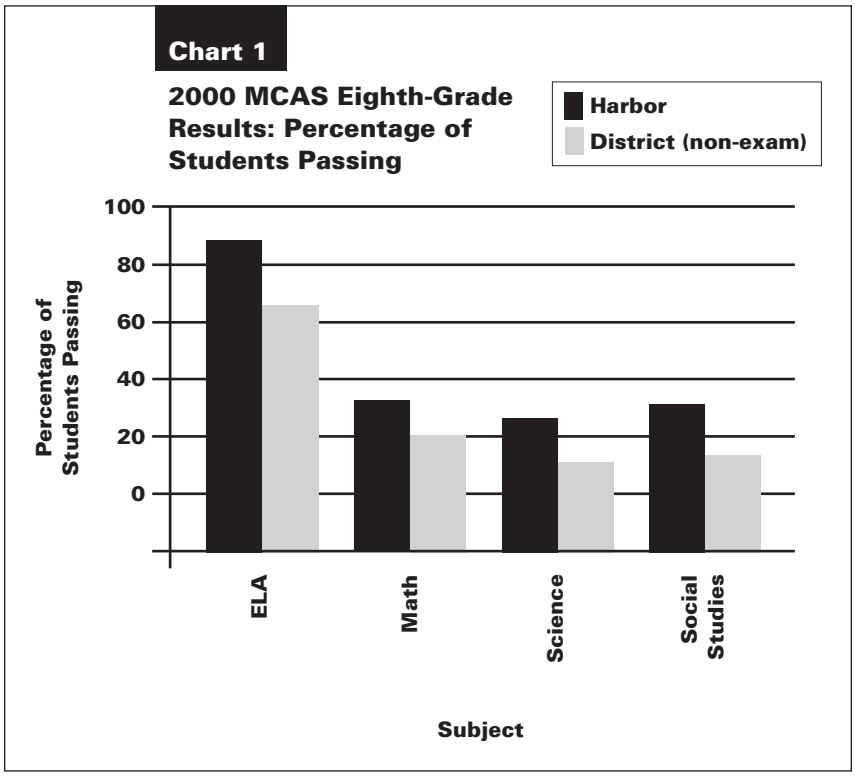
INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

- Throughout the year a series of public events bring in family members and community partners. These include a career night, a school-wide exhibition, and a portfolio defense at the end of the year. All events feature student work. Seventy-five percent of parents attend these events.
- The staff meets regularly to track and analyze the progress of individual students on several measures of achievement including standardized tests. The faculty uses achievement data to understand the progress of each student and plan and coordinate appropriate strategies to improve instruction.
- The use of data extends to other areas of school life. The school tracks and examines data on discipline referrals and classroom management. Discipline referrals have dropped dramatically since the practice was adopted, and teacher collaboration and discussions about classroom management have increased.
- All students do fieldwork, often spending a day a week in the field during certain periods in the year. On two days during the past school year all students were out of the building doing field studies. A designated senior teacher spends fifteen percent of his time helping teachers plan and organize fieldwork.
- The Harbor School is one of the top three middle schools chosen by parents under the Boston Public School's choice plan. For one school year there were nine students seeking a placement for each available place.
- Expectations for the grading system reflect the school's commitment to high standards. Any grade lower than a C- is deemed not yet acceptable and no credit is given.

- The faculty has a partnership with Project Zero of the Harvard Graduate School of Education and meets regularly with Project Zero staff to examine student and teacher work.
- Each teacher has a professional improvement partner, who observes him or her in the classroom four times per year and who participates in formal teacher assessment meetings with administrative supervisors.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE ON MCAS

In the spring of 2001, The Harbor School's first eighth-grade class, most of whom began in the school as sixth-graders, took the MCAS. The 2000 MCAS results represent the school's baseline year on this measure. When The Harbor School's MCAS scores are analyzed by subject area, a higher percentage of Harbor eighth graders pass each subject area than the district. Chart 1 compares the percentage of Harbor eighth graders that passed each subject area in the 2000 MCAS with the district average for "non-exam" schools. Non-exam middle schools, the schools open to all Boston students, serve approximately eighty-five percent of middle school students. Three selective exam schools serve fifteen percent of high performing students.



The Massachusetts Comprehensive Achievement System

Since 1998, Massachusetts students in grades four, eight, and ten have taken the Massachusetts Comprehensive Achievement System (MCAS). The MCAS is a criterion referenced, series of tests linked to the state's curriculum frameworks. The tests assess students' performance in English language arts, mathematics, science/technology, and history/social studies. In coming years these assessments and additional tests in reading will be administered in other grade levels. Starting in 2003, high school students must pass the grade-ten test in order to graduate.

When ranked among the twenty-seven non-exam middle schools included in this analysis, The Harbor School's total MCAS results place it third highest in this group. In the particular subject areas of English language arts and mathematics, The Harbor School's MCAS results rank third highest among this cohort of twenty-seven schools. The school's MCAS results rank highest in social studies and fourth highest in science. Table 1 presents the ranking by each subject area.

Table 1

MCAS Rank According to Percentage of Students Passing Subject Area

MCAS Subject Area	Rank Out of 27 Non-Exam District Schools
English Language Arts	3
Mathematics	3
Science/Technology	4
History/Social Studies	1

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Appendix A

The following tables correspond with the charts in Part II, School Profiles.

CLAIREMONT ELEMENTARY

Source for Charts 1–5: 1999–2000 Georgia Public Education Report Card: Decatur City Schools: Clairemont Elementary School, prepared by Georgia Department of Education

Chart 1, p. 33

1999–2000 CRCT Fourth-Grade Results: Percentage of Students Meeting/Exceeding Standards

	Clairemont	District	State
Reading	72	71	65
Language	73	74	71
Math	68	68	62

Chart 2, p. 34

1997–2000 ITBS Third-Grade Reading Results: Average National Percentile Rank

	Clairemont	District	State
97–98	71	63	53
98–99	75	65	54
99–00	71	58	54

Chart 3, p. 34

1997–2000 ITBS Third-Grade Math Results: Average National Percentile Rank

	Clairemont	District	State
97–98	76	68	61
98–99	78	70	61
99–00	85	66	62

Chart 4, p. 34

1997–2000 ITBS Fifth-Grade Reading Results: Average National Percentile Rank

	Clairemont	District	State
97–98	64	57	53
98–99	73	62	53
99–00	72	69	53

Chart 5, p. 34

1997–2000 ITBS Fifth-Grade Math Results: Average National Percentile Rank

	Clairemont	District	State
97–98	59	65	58
98–99	74	69	59
99–00	80	72	59

KING MIDDLE SCHOOL

Chart 1, p 37

1991–1998 MEA King Middle School Results: Three-Year Cumulative Average Scores

	91–92	95–96	97–98
Reading	235	275	295
Writing	215	210	225
Math	295	315	365
Science	200	250	275
Social Studies	290	230	245
Arts & Humanities	260	260	265
Health	230	250	280

Source: Ulichny, Polly. (2000). Academic Achievement in Two Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound Demonstration Schools. Providence, RI: Author.

Chart 2, p. 38

1999–2000 MEA Results: Cumulative Average Scores

	King	District	State
Reading	541	541	539
Writing	537	536	534
Math	530	529	527
Science	530	529	528
Social Studies	536	536	533
Arts & Humanities	533	534	530
Health	539	540	539

Source: Maine Department of Education website for Maine Educational Assessment: Maine Department of Education: www.state.me.us/education/; Maine Educational Assessment website: http://janus.state.me.us/education/mea/mea.htm

RAFAEL HERNANDEZ TWO-WAY BILINGUAL SCHOOL

Source for Charts 1–4: Office of Research, Assessment, and Evaluation. (2000). Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System Results: May, 2000. Boston, MA: Author.

Chart 1, p. 41

1998–2000 MCAS Fourth-Grade ELA Results: Percentage of Students Passing

	Hernandez	District
1998	60	60
1999	75	67
2000	78	66

Chart 2, p. 41

1998–2000 MCAS Fourth-Grade Math Results: Percentage of Students Passing

	Hernandez	District
1998	39	42
1999	66	57
2000	61	54

Chart 3, p. 42

1998–2000 MCAS Eighth-Grade ELA Results: Percentage of Students Passing

	Hernandez	District
1998	88	56
1999	87	64
2000	70	65

Chart 4, p. 42

1998–2000 MCAS Eighth-Grade Math Results: Percentage of Students Passing

	Hernandez	District
1998	12	13
1999	34	21
2000	35	20

ALTERNATIVE ELEMENTARY II

Source for Charts 1–6: Seattle Public Schools: Student Information Services Office

Chart 1, p. 44

2000 WASL Fourth-Grade Results: Percentage of Students Meeting & Exceeding Standards

	AE2	District	State
Math	64.9	51.1	49.7
Reading	81.8	66.2	66.3
Writing	59.5	50.7	48.8

Chart 2, p. 45

1998–2000 WASL Fourth-Grade Math Results: Percentage of Students Meeting & Exceeding Standards

	AE2	District	State
1998	39.3	34.8	31.2
1999	50	35.7	37.3
2000	64.9	51.1	49.7

Chart 3, p. 45

1998–2000 WASL Fourth-Grade Reading Results: Percentage of Students Meeting & Exceeding Standards

	AE2	District	State
1998	75	52.3	55.6
1999	81.5	55.9	59.1
2000	81.8	66.2	66.3

Chart 4, p. 45

1997–1999 ITBS Third- and Fifth-Grade Math Results: Percentage of Students Meeting & Exceeding Standards

	AE2	District
1997	56	53
1998	53	52
1999	59	58

Chart 5, p. 45

1997–1999 ITBS Third- and Fifth-Grade Reading Results: Percentage of Students Meeting & Exceeding Standards

	AE2	District
1997	64	52
1998	59	51
1999	65	54

HARBOR SCHOOL

Chart 1, p. 49

2000 MCAS Eighth-Grade Results: Percentage of Students Passing

	Harbor	District (non-exam)
ELA	88	65
Math	33	20
Science	26	16
Social Studies	31	14

Source: Office of Research, Assessment, and Evaluation. (2000). Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System Results: May, 2000. Boston, MA: Author.



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