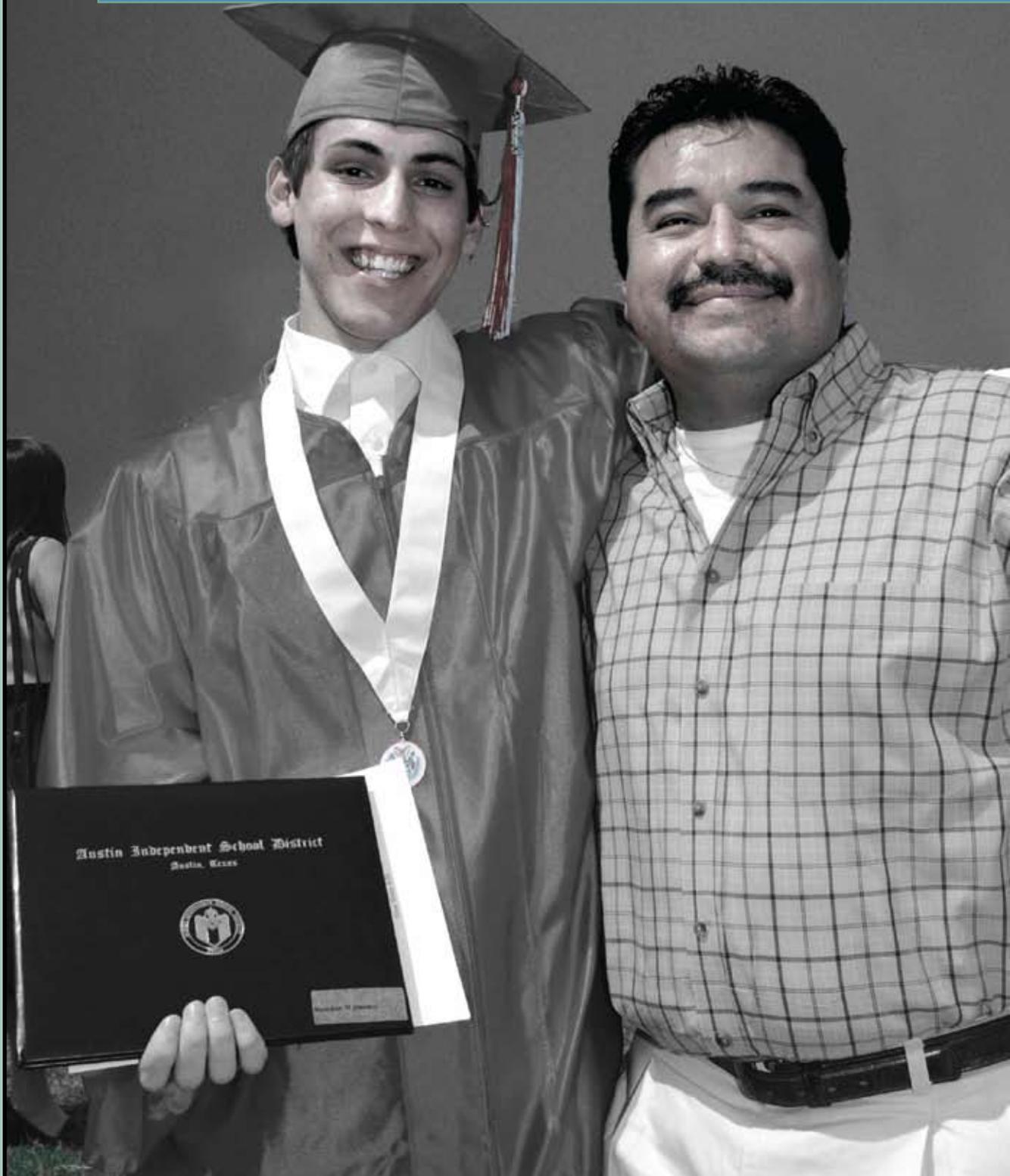# Austin Independent School District and the School Redesign Network at Stanford University: A Partnership for Successful School Redesign

Raymond Pecheone, Paul Tytler, and Peter Ross

SCHOOL REDESIGN
NETWORK
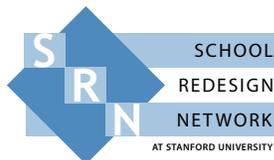AT
STANFORD UNIVERSITY

SRN

This report documents eight phases of the Austin Independent School District's (AISD) High School Redesign Initiative, conducted in partnership with the School Redesign Network (SRN) at Stanford University. The AISD redesign initiative is grounded in the principles of rigor, relevance, relationships, and results identified by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. These foundational principles frame AISD's goals and objectives for the initiative and its request to SRN for support. The report highlights the redesign process through the completion of the AISD/SRN planning phase.

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Acknowledgements

This report reflects the commitment and dedication of multiple individuals who gave generously of their time and expertise to advance the work of redesigning 11 high schools in the Austin Independent School District.

Austin Independent School District

AISD Board of Trustees
Superintendent, Dr. Pascal Forgione
Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Darlene Westbrook
Chief of Staff, Karen Sperry
Former Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Rosalinda Hernandez
Director of High School Redesign, Kent Ewing
Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Dr. Ann Smisko
Assistant Superintendent for Education Support, Dr. Paul Cruz
AISD High School Principals: Vicki Baldwin, Mary Alice Deike, Anabel Garza, Michael Garrison, Dr. Barbara Gideon, John Hudson, Stephen Kane, Dr. David Kernwein, Edmund Oropez, Patrick Patterson, Carlos Rios, Dr. Celina Russell, and Barbara Spellman
AISD Central Office Department Personnel
Director of Foundation Development, Geoff Rips
Planning and Community Relations Project Manager, Patti Everitt
AISD High School Redesign Teams
AISD High School Teachers, Parents, and Students

School Redesign Network at Stanford University

Co-Executive Director of SRN and Stanford University Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Education, Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond
Co-Executive Director of SRN, Dr. Raymond Pecheone
Stanford University Doctoral Candidate, Peter Ross
Director of Districtwide Redesign, Paul Tytler
SRN Coach, Don Leydig
SRN Coach, Sue Showers
SRN Expert on Redesign, Richard Owen
SRN Expert on Redesign, Dr. Al Rogers

Foreword

The Austin Independent School District (AISD) is an urban school district of 80,000 students. The district is redesigning its 11 high schools to better prepare every student for the 21st century. The primary goals of AISD's high school redesign initiative are:

1. To increase four-year high school completion rates dramatically for all students.
2. To make sure high school graduation means college and career readiness for all students.
3. To make sure every high school provides well-articulated pathways to career success (AISD Gates Foundation Report, 2006).

AISD has engaged in a yearlong intensive strategic planning process that has prepared it to transform its high schools into more personalized and high-performing smaller learning communities for all students and teachers. After two years of intensive self-examination, planning, and public engagement, and with the benefit of a one-year planning grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, AISD is now ready to implement a comprehensive wall-to-wall redesign process across its 11 comprehensive high schools. The district goal is to create a portfolio of high school opportunities and choices, tailored to meet the needs of its 11 comprehensive high schools, while taking into account the local school context.

The AISD initiative was made possible by the bold vision and leadership of the AISD Board of Trustees and Superintendent Pascal Forgione. Their devotion to the mission that every student, regardless of background, should be as well educated as any in the world, and that all of their students have the capacity to be high achievers, serves as the cornerstone of the High School Redesign Initiative. Their commitment and dedication to equity of outcomes for all students was the catalyst for engaging the community and campus leadership to redesign all 11 AISD comprehensive high schools.

The following report summarizes the learning events, activities, workshops, community engagement, and strategic planning that AISD and SRN accomplished during the 2005-06 High School Redesign Initiative.

"Our children need to be independent thinkers and problem solvers. They should all be prepared for college and career. They should be prepared for the complex, changing universe of the 21st century. They should be prepared to change jobs several times in their adult lives, bringing with them the ability to think deeply, communicate effectively, calculate solutions, understand the world they live in, and master evolving technology. To meet those needs, we must change the way we teach them."

— AISD Board of Trustees

Origins of AISD/SRN Partnership

"Why change? Because after more than a century of structuring our high schools in one basic way, it is time to look at other models to better serve our students — to better prepare them to be the thinkers and well-rounded citizens of the 21st Century."

— Dr. Pascal Forgione, Superintendent, AISD

In May of 2005, Superintendent Pascal Forgione and the Austin Independent School District (AISD) approached the School Redesign Network (SRN) at Stanford University to request assistance with the redesign of AISD's secondary schools. As will be discussed in greater detail below, after a national search for a redesign partner, AISD chose SRN for two primary reasons. First, SRN's research-based 10 Features of Good Small Schools (Darling-Hammond et al., 2002; see Appendix 3 for further detail) were consistent with AISD's vision and core values for high school redesign, as well as the Gates Foundation's core principles of rigor, relevance, relationships, and results. Second, SRN's customized, inquiry-based approach is not a "one size fits all approach," rather it allows AISD to develop a customized redesign plan that is tailored to Austin's particular context and the specific needs of each school community.

While AISD's comprehensive high schools were working well for some students, a 2004 report from the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) highlighted the need for AISD to raise the academic achievement of all its students and to close achievement gaps between student groups. While approximately 8 of 10 students overall and 9 in 10 white students in AISD complete high school in four years, only 7 of 10 economically disadvantaged students, and a little over 5 in 10 English-language learners achieve that standard[1] (see Appendix 1 for

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[1]Figures are rounded. Source: Texas Education Agency Adequate Yearly Progress District Data Table: http://www.tea.state.tx.us/cgi/sas/broker.

greater detail on AISD's demographics and Appendix 2 for a summary of SREB and the University of Texas' findings).

AISD requested support from SRN in framing a redesign process that met the following policy goal set forth by the AISD Board of Trustees:

> *We firmly believe that all of our students should be as well educated as any in the world, and that all of our students have the capacity to be high achievers. By 2010, all AISD students will be achieving at consistently high levels in all subject areas, and achievement gaps between student groups will be eliminated.*
> — AISD Board of Trustees Strategic Plan, 2005

In addition, AISD charged SRN to create a redesign process that included:

- Wall-to-wall redesign of all 11 of the district's comprehensive high schools into interdependent small learning communities (SLCs) or small schools (Appendix 5).
- Preliminary examination of the district central office to create an organization that meets the implementation needs of the redesigned schools.
- Creation of a portfolio of unique schools that offers parents, students, teachers, and staff educational choice.
- Development of an inclusive redesign process with a strong community engagement component. The process engaged the following: the AISD Board of Trustees, district administrators, school administrators, teachers, parents, students, and the Austin business community.
- Creation of a multi-year redesign plan that is approved and adopted by the AISD Board of Trustees.

The plan included seven contracted activities (for details and timeline, see page 30):

1. Development and release of the AISD Request for Design (RFD) and consultation advice to 11 Austin high schools.

2. Coordination of a series of high school redesign forums with scholars and professors from Stanford University and AISD personnel, local higher education colleagues, and business and civic leaders.

3. Technical review by Stanford redesign experts of each of the 11 AISD comprehensive high schools' RFD proposals.

4. Summary analysis by Stanford experts of the 11 campus redesign plans.

5. Summary presentation by Stanford on major features of campus redesign plans to AISD school board; dialogue/seminar with school board members and nationally recognized/Stanford redesign experts.

6. Examination of the role of the central office in high school redesign.

7. Organization of a district leadership and principal retreat.

> **SRN Theory of Change for High School Redesign**
>
> • Emphasis on 10 research-based features of effective schools
> • Use of a customized, inquiry approach to the redesign process
> • Focus on local context as central to change initiative
> • Investment in stakeholder engagement and knowledge building
> • Construction of a diverse portfolio of secondary school options
> • Foster critical conversations with a national network of distinguished scholars and experienced school and district leaders

Why SRN? A Theory of Change that Fits the Austin Context

District offices and schools must jointly engage in redesign to create, support, and sustain equitable schools that are intellectually rigorous and high performing. Without central office redesign, individual schools remain extremely vulnerable to programmatic and policy reversals due to local politics and changes in leadership or direction.

A guiding principle in the design and creation of SRN's engagement with schools and districts is the belief that for reform to be sustained, school systems need to engage in a shared inquiry process that respects local context, is intellectually rigorous and honest, and actively leads the community toward equitable educational solutions. In short, educational reforms that emphasize one-size-fits-all solutions are destined to fail. Instead of offering reductive prescriptions, SRN's learning events provide context-specific activities that lead to new understandings and knowledge about what works for specific school and district redesign. While each of SRN's resources is powerful in its own right, together they provide a spectrum of clear and consistent learning tools and events that scaffold systems change (e.g., SRN Study Kit, *Windows on Conversions,* Small School and Leadership Study Tours, and Summer Institutes).

To meet its dual goals of school-based customization and wall-to-wall redesign, AISD contracted with SRN to support building new knowledge and understanding
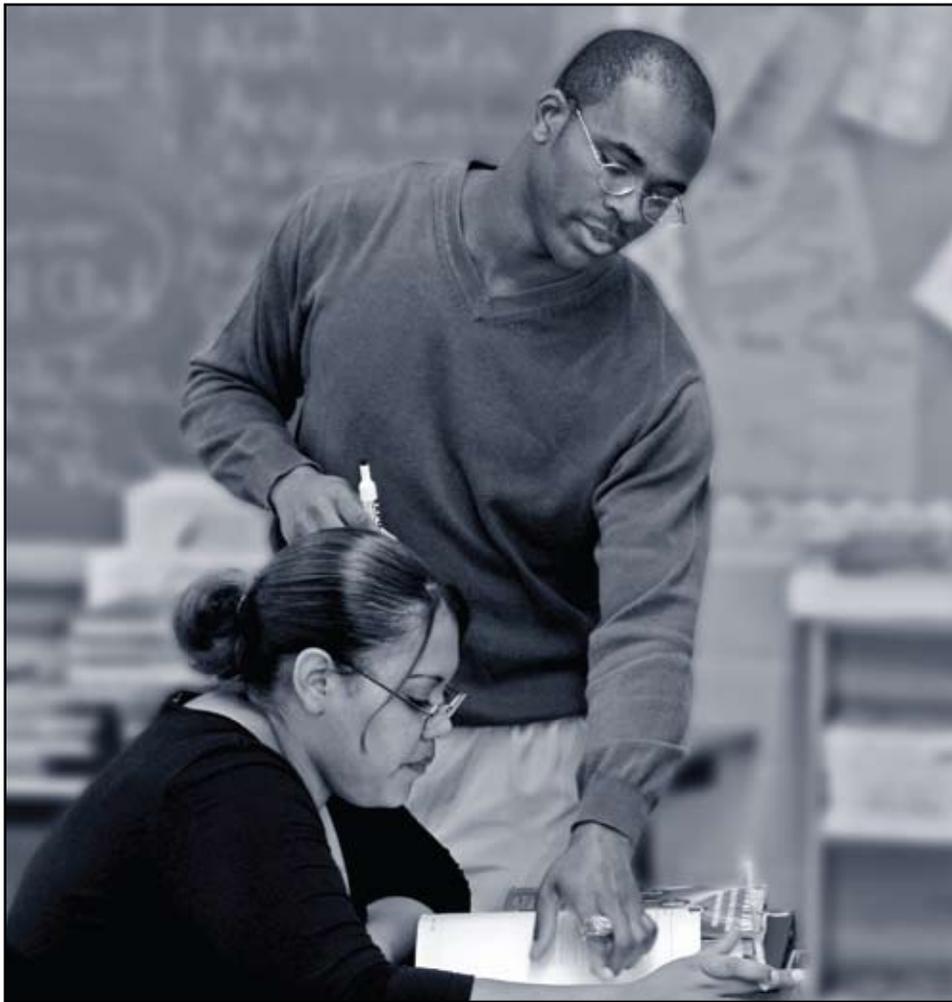
around redesign options and models using tools and protocols developed by SRN, including the following:

• SRN's research-based *10 Features of Good Small Schools* are consistent with AISD's community-driven vision for redesigning its schools. AISD based its reform on the belief that creating interdependent SLCs would better serve all students and help to close achievement gaps between student sub-groups. Building on the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation attributes of rigor, relevance, relationships, and results, and based on the research of a number of scholars, SRN has identified the 10 Features of Effective Schools which are (see Appendix 3 for further information on the 10 Features):

> • Personalization
> • Continuous relationships
> • High standards and performance-based assessment
> • Authentic curriculum
> • Adaptive pedagogy
> • Multicultural and anti-racist teaching
> • Knowledgeable and skilled teachers
> • Collaborative planning and professional development
> • Family and community connections
> • Democratic decision-making

• SRN's inquiry approach supports AISD's stated purpose of tailoring its redesign process to meet each school's and the district unique needs. In contrast to a "one size fits all" approach, an inquiry approach takes into account the particular context of Austin and of each of AISD's diverse school communities. This approach is tailored to each school's redesign plan to meet the particular needs of the school. As a result, SRN's inquiry approach supports AISD's goal of developing a redesign process that emphasizes public engagement and results in a diverse portfolio of secondary school choices for AISD's students and families.

- SRN provides AISD with access to Stanford University's world-class faculty and SRN's national network of distinguished scholars and experienced school and district leaders that can share current research findings and lessons learned from other school redesign and district reform efforts.

- SRN's tools and learning events are geared towards redesigning existing comprehensive high schools and can support AISD as it seeks to redesign its existing comprehensive high schools into smaller interdependent schools or SLCs.[2]

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[2] See Appendix 6 for a list of SRN learning tools.

The Redesign Process

To meet AISD's high school redesign goals, SRN engaged the district in an eight-phase redesign process.[3]

Phases of Redesign	Theory of Action
I	Securing a commitment for change
II	Creating a shared vision for change
III	Engaging all stakeholders and deepening understanding
IV	Developing a portfolio of schools through an RFD process
V	Coaching to support redesign
VI	Completing RFD Review Process
VII	Providing Support for Strategic Planning
VIII	Examining the role of the central office in high school redesign

The SRN's eight phases of redesign were crafted to help create, support, and sustain equitable schools that are intellectually rigorous, high performing, and provide all students with the opportunity to acquire the skills needed for college and to meet the work-force demands of the 21st century. These eight phases represent the fundamental elements necessary to transform secondary schools, with a focus on developing a commitment to a shared vision of redesign. The phases additionally represent the essential features of district and school strategic planning and leadership coaching. Under the leadership of SRN Co-executive Directors Professor Linda Darling-Hammond and Dr. Raymond Pecheone, an experienced team of redesign experts was assembled to support the high school redesign initiative. An overview of the eight phases follows.

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[3] See Appendix 4 for a complete list of SRN's learning activities organized by month.

> **Effective redesign of secondary schools requires a commitment for change from the school board, senior and campus leadership of the district, and all stakeholders in the community.**

PHASE I: SECURING A COMMITMENT FOR CHANGE

To achieve sustainable school and district redesign, AISD and SRN committed to engaging all stakeholders in the redesign process within AISD. SRN began its work by engaging in a series of conversations and strategic planning sessions with the district's superintendent, senior leadership, and the school board. Together, senior AISD leadership and SRN created a timeline for engaging stakeholders within the district and in the broader community. A series of meetings and forums occurred throughout this phase of the process, as summarized below.

Phase I Activities	Date/Participants
AISD Community Leaders Meeting: High School Redesign Initiative Kick-off with Linda Darling-Hammond Presentation: "Community Engagement Workshop and High School Redesign"	May 22, 2005 Attended by AISD senior, district, and high school leadership; parents; and community stakeholders
AISD/SRN Round Table Meeting with University of Texas faculty	May 23, 2005 Attended by AISD senior leadership, University of Texas faculty members, and Linda Darling-Hammond
AISD School Board High School Redesign Conference	May 25, 2005 Attended by AISD School Board, community members, AISD senior and high school leadership, and SRN
Community Forums hosted by AISD/SRN, Austin Voices, and Austin Partners in Education	June 16, 2005 Attended by Austin community members, parents, students, AISD personnel, and SRN

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Phase I Activities	Date/Participants
Dissemination of SRN Study Kit: *Understanding and Leading a High School Redesign Process*	June 2005 SRN Study Kit distributed to AISD district and high school leadership
AISD/SRN Community and Public Engagement Workshop	July 26-27, 2005 Attended by AISD senior, district, and high school leadership
AISD High School Redesign Action Plans and Timeline Drafted	August 30, 2005
Campus Public Forums on High School Redesign	September-December 2005 Three public forums sponsored by each AISD high school and designed to actively engage parents and community members in the development of high school redesign goals and objectives

> **A shared vision for change is required to effectively guide wall-to-wall high school redesign: Define the need for change by analyzing data and clearly communicating to the public the reason for change.**

PHASE II: CREATING A SHARED VISION FOR CHANGE

Once an initial plan of action was agreed upon, AISD worked to clearly define the need for change. A series of forums allowed teachers, families, principals, and the superintendent to meet and gain a common understanding of why the district was proposing changes (i.e., "Why Change?"). Building on reports from SREB and UT, AISD and SRN identified specific learning needs (e.g., closing achievement gaps) and articulated a clear and precise message regarding the need to change.[4]

During this phase and throughout the redesign process, SRN conducted a series of professional development activities for the AISD Board of Trustees. These activities included presentations and seminars with SRN staff Linda Darling-Hammond, Richard Owen, and Raymond Pecheone, as well as national experts Marla Ucelli (Associate Director, Annenberg Institute for School Reform), Steve Philips (Former Superintendent, New York City Alternative Schools Superintendency), Van Shoales (Executive Director, Colorado Children's Campaign), and Jennifer O'Day (Managing Research Scientist, American Institutes for Research).

Phase II Activities	Date/Participants
SREB Report	September 11, 2004
The Future of Austin's High Schools by University of Texas	September 15, 2004
AISD District and High School Redesign Public Forums	May 2005-May 2006. Forty meetings, attended by community members, parents, students, high school personnel, AISD senior and high school leadership, and SRN

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[4]Please see Appendix 8 for "A District-Wide Approach to High School Conversion: An Urban Superintendent's Perspective" (AERA presentation by AISD Superintendent Dr. Pascal Forgione, April 8, 2006).

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Phase II Activities	Date/Participants
Challenges to Redesign at the School and Central Office levels	June 29, 2005. Attended by AISD Executive and Central Office Leadership
SRN Summer Institute	June 30, 2005. Attended by AISD senior high school, and teacher leadership
AISD 2010 Strategic Plan	August 9, 2005
AISD High School Redesign Vision and Purpose Meeting	August 16, 2005. Attended by AISD senior leadership
AISD School Board Review and Expert Panel Discussion	October 15, 2005. Attended by Paul Tytler, Richard Owen, and Dr. Raymond Pecheone
AISD School Board Presentation and Public Meeting on Redesign: National Panel of Redesign Experts	January 9, 2006. Facilitated by Dr. Raymond Pecheone. Expert Panel: Jennifer O'Day, Van Schoales, Stephen Phillips, and Marla Ucelli.
Community Partners Task Force on High School Design	March 2006. Attended by AISD leadership and community and high school representatives

> **Building a deep understanding and authentically engaging all stakeholders in the need for change is vital in creating momentum and support for redesigning secondary schools.**

PHASE III: ENGAGING ALL STAKEHOLDERS AND DEEPENING UNDERSTANDING

Building on the commitment of senior staff and the school board on the need for redesign, SRN focused its work with the district on engaging the public around the need for change. Forums and workshops were held for key stakeholders including principals, teachers, staff, students, and families; the community at large; and key community leaders (e.g., Chamber of Commerce, local political leaders, and business leaders). In particular, SRN's 2005 Summer Institutes were instrumental in helping school and district staff build knowledge and understanding of redesign challenges.

Phase III Activities	Date/Participants
AISD District and High School Redesign Public Forums	May 2005-May 2006. Forty meetings attended by community members, parents, students, high school personnel, AISD senior and high school leadership, and SRN
Focus Group on High School Redesign with Leadership of Capital City African American Chamber of Commerce	July 21, 2005. Attended by AISD district leadership and Austin community members
AISD High School Redesign Initiative Meeting	August 23, 2005. Attended by SRN/high school and district leadership team
AISD High School Redesign Vision Meeting	August 24, 2005. Attended by AISD district and high school leadership
AISD/SRN Focus Group on High School Redesign with Leadership of Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	August 27, 2005. Attended by Austin community members, AISD district and high school leadership

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Phase III Activities	Date/Participants
AISD Public Forums on High School Redesign	September 7, 2005 and December 15, 2005. Sponsored by each AISD High School and supported by the SRN technical assistance team
AISD Public Engagement Protocol	September 11, 2005
Community Forums hosted by AISD, Austin Voices and Austin Partners in Education	September 14, 2005. Attended by AISD students, parents, community members, AISD personnel, and SRN
Community Forum with Austin Leaders: Fishbowl Discussion of Essential Questions to High School Redesign	December 21, 2005. Facilitated by SRN. Attended by Austin community members, parents, students, AISD Senior, District, and campus leadership
AISD School Board Presentation and Public Meeting on High School Redesign: National Panel of Experts	January 9, 2006. Facilitated by Dr. Raymond Pecheone. Expert Panel: Jennifer O'Day, Van Schoales, Stephen Phillips, and Marla Ucelli
AISD Principal Seminar on High School Redesign	March 17, 2006. Attended by 11 AISD High School Principals and SRN
AISD/SRN in-service day with Linda Darling-Hammond and SRN	April 7, 2006. Attended by AISD Superintendent Cabinet, AISD High School Principals, AISD Teachers, and AISD Board of Trustees
AISD Community Partners Task Force on High School Redesign	April 9, 2006. Facilitated by AISD leadership and attended by community and high school representatives
AISD Web Site on High School Redesign	High School Redesign Information available at www.austinisd.org/inside/initiatives/ redesign2004/

> **Creating multiple learning pathways is vital and can be achieved by providing educational choices for students and families through the development of portfolios that are purposefully designed to respect local context and individual student needs.**

PHASE IV: DEVELOPING A PORTFOLIO OF SCHOOLS THROUGH A REQUEST FOR DESIGN PROCESS

As stakeholder engagement efforts continued, SRN worked with district and school teams through an RFD process.[5] Modeled on best practices from around the nation, the Austin RFD process is inquiry-based and is customized to meet the particular needs of the district. A series of forums and workshops were held with senior district and leaders collaboratively, with full participation by and agreement from the AISD executive team. In addition, AISD teachers, principals, and district staff reviewed and provided substantive feedback on multiple drafts of the RFD.

Therefore, the final RFD reflected the best thinking of the AISD community with input from SRN, which brokered knowledge and expertise for the district from experts at Stanford and experienced educators from around the nation. SRN helped the district create a review process structured to result in the best possible design proposals. Internally, the district senior leadership and personnel for each department reviewed the High School Design Plans and provided feedback using a protocol developed by SRN. Additionally, an external review process was designed by SRN. This process utilized a panel of national experts on high school redesign and small schools. Using the SRN-developed redesign rubric,[6] each panelist reviewed the High School Design Plans and provided an extensive analysis of each plan.

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[5] See Appendix 5 for more information on the RFD process at each school
[6] See Appendix 9 for the AISD RFD Rubric

Phase IV Activities	Date/Participants
AISD/SRN RFD Process Central Office Workshop	June 25-26, 2005. Attended by AISD senior leadership
AISD High School Redesign Initiative RFD DRAFT by SRN	July 25, 2005. RFD reviewed by AISD Senior, AISD Department, and high school leadership
AISD/SRN Central Office Questions to Consider on High School Redesign	July 25-26, 2005. Questions developed during AISD Leadership Review of RFD
AISD High School Principals Redesign Meeting	August 14, 2005. Attended by 11 AISD high school principals
AISD Central Office Review: High School Redesign Initiative RFD Final Draft	August 25, 2005. Approved by AISD senior leadership
SRN High School Redesign Glossary of Terms	August 25, 2005
Superintendent Memo: Final RFD Proposal	September 9, 2005
AISD High School Redesign Key Concepts and Guiding Questions	September 15, 2005
AISD High School Redesign Schedule	September 9, 2005
AISD RFD Rubric	February 11, 2006
AISD Gap Analysis Data	March 28, 2006
AISD/SRN Snapshot in Time	April 24, 2006. SRN overview of nine Campus Design Proposals
AISD Executive Summaries of High School RFD plans	April 24, 2006
AISD Implementation Priorities	April 24, 2006
AISD/SRN Board of Trustees Presentation on High School Design Plans	April 24, 2006
Executive Summary of SRN Review of AISD High Schools' Design Plans	April 2006
A Portfolio of Schools: Expanding Secondary Education Options in AISD by Creating Small Learning Communities, Small Schools, Charters/Choice, and New Specialized Schools	May 2006. AISD Briefing Paper on Portfolio of Schools

Request for Design Protocol

- Process is based on research of redesign efforts from around the nation
- Guiding principles are based on local context, resulting in customized High School Design Plans.
- Redesign process is led by High School Redesign Teams
- Process includes:
  - o an assessment instrument;
  - o an evaluation and feedback procedure that includes in-district feedback as well as feedback from national redesign experts;
  - o on-demand assistance in examining campus needs and design possibilities.

> **Effective redesign requires coaching and technical assistance that focuses on the essential elements of personalization, collaboration, and academic rigor.**

PHASE V: COACHING TO SUPPORT REDESIGN

In this phase, SRN provided professional development on redesign, helped with community outreach, identified sites, and brokered visits to observe exemplary practices firsthand. SRN provided each school-level team with an experienced redesign expert who served as a coach and helped build the school's capacity for redesign as the RFD proposal was crafted. These coaches provided key resources that allowed schools to consider various redesign options and also asked critical questions to refine each school's proposal. Those resources included SRN's *Solving the Puzzle: Redesigning Large High Schools Together,* a study kit of resources for redesigning high schools, and *Windows on Conversion,* a multimedia case study of redesigning high schools from around the nation.[7] In addition, SRN facilitated Small School Study Tours and Leadership Study Tours to New York, Boston, Seattle, Sacramento, Chicago, Houston, Kansas City, and Baltimore. These in-depth study tours provided school and district staff as well as community members with a vision of "what is possible" in redesigned high schools (see Appendix 6).

The dates, meetings, and coaching reports listed below illustrate the range of technical assistance in coaching that SRN provided to support the AISD High School Redesign Initiative. Ongoing meetings took place between SRN coaches, the AISD Leadership Team, the AISD High School Principals Team, High School Design Teams, and the individual school principals from September 2005 to April 2006. The table also highlights the 41 study tours completed between September 2005 and April 2006 that were designed to provide powerful images of best practice.

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[7] See Appendix 4 for greater detail on Phase V and Appendix 6 for more information on SRN's learning tools.

SRN Learning Events and Tools Used to Support AISD's Redesign Initiative

- Small School Study Tours and Leadership Study Tours to learn from experienced school and district practioners in other cities.

- A series of meetings and learning events with the AISD superintendent, senior staff, school board, parents, students, community, and schools.

- Community and school focus groups.

- Public forums that included an examination of school data and redesign possibilities.

- School Board of Trustees development sessions.

- Workshops to create and refine RFD proposals.

- *Solving the Puzzle: Redesigning Large High Schools Together.*

- *Windows on Conversions: A Multi-Media Exploration of Redesign at Four Comprehensive High Schools.*

- District Support for High School Redesign: 10 Challenges.

- Summer institutes to explore redesign issues in depth.

Phase V Activities	Date/Participants
High School Redesign Initiative: A Multi-Faceted Approach to High School Reform Taking Place in the AISD (produced by AISD)	October, 2004
AISD High School Design Plans: First Draft, Revisions, and Final Draft	March and April 2005. Nine High School Design Plans completed and board approved
Seminar on High School Redesign Event	May 23, 2005
SRN Summer Institute: "Rigor & Relevance: Reinventing America's High Schools"	June 27-July 1, 2005. Attended by district and school leadership
AISD and SRN Technical Assistance and Coaching Model	August 27, 2005
AISD/SRN Coaching Plan	August 27,2005
SRN Review of High School Improvement Plans	September 15-16th, 2005

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Phase V Activities (cont'd)	Date/Participants
SRN Technical Assistance Coaches	September 2005-April 2006. Four coaches with on-site contact 2-3 times a month (60 person days) with additional monthly phone and e-mail contacts per campus
Small School and Leadership Study Tour Visitation Schedule	September 2005-April 2006. Forty one Small School and Leadership Study Tours facilitated and coordinated
AISD Executive Committee for High School Redesign Meeting	September 2005 -April 2006 (weekly scheduled meetings)
AISD High School Redesign Transformation Team Meeting	September 2005-April 2006 (weekly scheduled meetings)
AISD/SRN Principals' High School Redesign Meeting	September 2005-April 2006 (monthly scheduled meetings)
SRN Coaches Contact Log	November 21, 2005
SRN Coaches Contact Log	December 22, 2005
SRN Coaches Contact Log	January 29, 2006
SRN Coaches Contact Log	February 26, 2006
AISD Principal Seminar on High School Redesign	March 1, 2006
SRN Coaches Contact Log	March 30, 2006
SRN Coaches Contact Log	April 25, 2006
Summer 2006 AISD High Redesign Professional Development Priorities	May 10, 2006
SRN Coaches Contact Log	May 30, 2006

> **High School Design Plans are constructed to meet the unique needs of each campus. An internal and external review process is used to fine-tune the plans to ensure quality of implementation and fidelity to the redesign guiding principles.**

Phase VI: RFD review process

The RFD process documented key activities and events that occurred during the course of the planning stages of the AISD High School Redesign. Each secondary campus of AISD organized High School Design Teams that led the redesign process and was responsible for the completion of the High School Design Plan.

Each school-level team's RFD proposal was reviewed three times. The first review was a status check with the AISD Office of High School Redesign and the SRN technical assistance team, during which each school's draft proposal was reviewed and the High School Design Team was provided with feedback. The second review was a formal evaluation by an outside panel of redesign experts convened by SRN. This panel provided each school with substantive feedback on its proposal. After a period of revisions, a third and final review was conducted by AISD senior leadership in conjunction with SRN. Following this final review, each High School Design Plan was presented to the AISD Board of Trustees for approval.

> **Key Milestones in AISD's High School Redesign Initiative**
>
> 1) Setting the vision: 2005 Strategic Plan
> 2) Crafting of Request for Design
> 3) Completion of High School Design Plans
> 4) National Expert Review of High School Design Plans
> 5) Central Office Review of High School Design Plans
> 6) AISD Board of Trustees Approval of High School Design Plans

Phase VI Activities	Date/Participants
AISD/SRN RFD Rubric Development	December 2005
AISD/SRN Quality Review of High School Redesign Process and Plans	January 10, 2006 (Attended by AISD District Leadership, AISD Campus Design Leadership Teams and SRN)
AISD RFD Rubric	February 11, 2006
AISD First Draft of High School Redesign Submitted	March 23, 2006
Phase II AISD/SRN Redesign Revisions Process	March 23-28, 2006
SRN Analysis of AISD Department of Key Challenges and/or Opportunities	March 23-28, 2006
AISD/SRN RFD Commendations and Recommendations by high school	March 23-28, 2006
Independent Expert Review Panel Evaluations of High School Design Plans and Technical Review by SRN	March 23-28, 2006
AISD/SRN Compiled Reviews of High School Design Plans	March 23-29, 2006
SRN Executive Summary of Review of AISD High Schools' Draft Design Plan	March 23-29, 2006
AISD/SRN High School Design Plan Feedback and Revision Sessions	March and April 2006 (Attended by AISD District Leadership, AISD High School Design Leadership Teams and SRN)
AISD/SRN High School Redesign Follow-Up Conversations about RFD feedback and revisions	April 4-5, 2006 (Attended by AISD District Leadership, AISD High School Design Leadership Teams and SRN)
Final AISD High School Design Plans	April 13, 2006 (Submitted from nine AISD High School Design Teams)
SRN Cross Case Analyses of Central Office RFD Reviews	April 14, 2006
SRN Executive Summary of AISD High Schools' Design Plans	April 15, 2006
AISD School Board High School Redesign Presentation on Key Elements and Essential Features of Redesign Plans	April 24, 2006 (Facilitated by Dr. Raymond Pecheone and Kent Ewing)

> **Technical assistance and support activities move from design and planning to preparing for implementation and identifying priorities for high school redesign.**

PHASE VII: SUPPORT FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING

After the Board of Trustees approved the RFD proposals, AISD and SRN sought to identify system-wide priorities for the redesign. After multiple conversations and in-depth analysis with High School Design Leadership Teams, the Office of High School Redesign, and SRN, the key elements of personalization and professional learning communities (i.e., teacher collaboration) were identified as system-wide essential priorities. Each element is crucial in the initial steps of redesign, and together they are the building blocks needed to reinvent schools of excellence where all students achieve at high levels. In April 2006, the AISD Board of Trustees approved the development of student advisories and professional learning communities as implementation priorities.

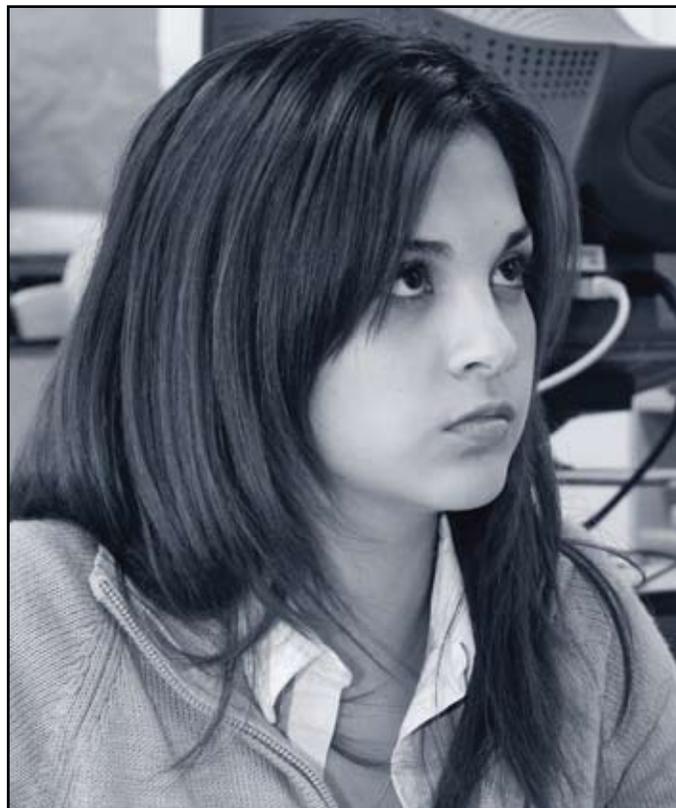| Phase VII Activities	Date
AISD High School Principals meeting to discuss High School Redesign Priorities: Advisory and Professional Learning Communities	June 8-9, 2006
AISD Principals Professional Development Seminar	June 9-10, 2006
Strategic Planning with Office of High School Redesign	June 19-20, 2006
AISD Implementation Action Planning with High School Leadership and the Office of High School Redesign	July 19-20, 2006

> **Transformation of the central office into a more service-oriented system supporting a portfolio of schools: SRN's 10 Challenges provide key senior central office staff from all departments with a framework to examine redesign principles.**

PHASE VIII: EXAMINING THE ROLE OF THE CENTRAL OFFICE IN HIGH SCHOOL REDESIGN

Using SRN's *District Support for High School Redesign: 10 Challenges* as a guidepost, SRN worked with key senior AISD central office staff from all departments to begin examining the redesign of the central office to meet the needs of the portfolio of redesigned schools. Due to the impact of Hurricane Katrina, the district reconsidered the initial timeline and decided to postpone SRN's partnership agreement with the Annenberg Institute for School Reform to conduct a central office redesign audit until after the RFD process was completed in Summer/Fall 2006. In doing so, the district intentionally chose to focus its efforts on supporting the schools as they crafted their RFD proposals and to postpone implementing a formal central office redesign until the needs of the redesigned schools were clearly defined (as identified by their RFD proposals). Nevertheless, through a series of interactions with experts from around the nation, central office staff members began the process of considering how to support schools in the redesign process.

A major step in beginning to adjust central office policies and practices to support school redesign was the establishment of two standing committees to address challenges and possible administrative barriers to the schools' redesign plans. The steering committee (i.e., High School Redesign Committee) was established to serve as a clearinghouse for issues that high school design teams and central office departments faced. The committee identified priorities and the process for addressing each redesign issue or challenge. It also established a forum to problem solve and propose solutions or alternative strategies to support the schools' proposed redesign plans. Additionally, an executive committee (i.e., High School Redesign Executive Committee) was put in place to establish priorities and provide oversight and review of the strategic plans and change processes recommended by the steering committee.

Phase VIII Activities	Date/Participants
AISD School Board High School Redesign Conference	May 9, 2005 (Attended by AISD School Board and AISD senior leadership)
SRN Institute: "Improving Our High Schools: Barriers and Challenges to Redesign at the School and Central Office"	June 28, 2005 (Attended by AISD senior and high school leadership)
AISD High School Redesign Steering Committee	September 2005-June 2006
AISD Executive Committee for High School Redesign Meetings	September 2005-April 2006 (Monthly scheduled meetings)
School Board Development Sessions: SRN Expert Panel Discussion	October 15, 2005; December 9, 2005; and January 21, 2006
SRN Summer Institute: "Reinventing the Central Office: 10 Challenges of High School Reform"	June 22, 2006 (Attended by AISD senior leadership)

Summary of the Redesign Process

Effective redesign of secondary schools requires a commitment for change from the school board, senior and campus leadership of the district, and all stakeholders in the community.

A shared vision for change effectively guides wall-to-wall high school redesign. Define the need for change by analyzing data and clearly communicating to the public the reason for change.

Building a deep understanding and authentically engaging all stakeholders in the need for change is vital in creating momentum and support for redesigning secondary schools.

Creating multiple learning pathways is vital and can be achieved by providing educational choices for students and families through the development of portfolios that are purposefully designed to respect local context and individual student needs.

Effective redesign requires coaching and technical assistance that focuses on the essential elements of personalization, collaboration, and academic rigor.

High School Design Plans are constructed to meet the unique needs of each campus. Creating an internal and external review process to fine-tune plans ensures quality of implementation and fidelity to redesign guiding principles.

Technical assistance and support activities move from design and planning to preparing for implementation and identifying priorities for high school redesign.

Transforming the central office into a more service-oriented system supports a portfolio of schools. SRN's 10 Challenges provide key senior central office staff from all departments with a framework to examine redesign principles.

Outcomes and Results

As the 2005-06 school year came to a close, SRN had successfully completed all components of its contract for redesign work with AISD. Results include the following:

1) The creation of a redesign process that featured an RFD. The redesign process met all of AISD's stated goals including:

- a significant community engagement component;
- an inquiry approach that emphasized the importance of local school context and that led to the creation of a portfolio of schools;
- a plan for the wall-to-wall redesign of all 11 comprehensive high schools by the year 2010;
- advice and coaching from national redesign experts;
- establishment of two district level committees to support high school redesign.

2) Approval of AISD High School Design Plans by the AISD Board of Trustees.

Lessons Learned

> "Our whole nation's democracy rests on public schools working."
>
> — Principal Mary Alice Deike

Through its work with AISD, SRN has learned several lessons that will inform its work with Austin and other districts going forward. Those lessons include:

1. *Establish clearer frameworks.* While considerable attention was given to stakeholder engagement, the redesign process could be improved by addressing the following:

• *Need for clarity of outcomes.* Greater communication of the expected short-and long-term outcomes of the redesign process from the outset would have been beneficial. Although the RFD provided clear parameters and timelines for the campus redesign initiative, identifying clear benchmarks and performance targets could have provided a mechanism for continuously monitoring the process and progress of change.

• *Need for evaluation tools and metrics to monitor processes.* SRN needs to develop a comprehensive set of formative evaluation tools and metrics to better monitor each phase of the redesign process. Having benchmarks and data-based progress reviews with the High School Design Teams would provide targeted feedback to schools to support the change process. Making an intentional connection with the implementation phase of the High School Redesign Initiative by conducting project status reviews at regularly scheduled intervals would have strengthened and deepened the understanding of high school redesign.

• *Need for engagement at the executive level.* The process could also benefit from more extensive and

specific engagement at the executive level (e.g., regular reports and strategic planning sessions on progress being made toward outcomes).

- *Need for clarity, transparency and articulation of the inquiry process.* SRN's customized, inquiry-based approach allowed AISD to create a redesign process that worked for each of its school communities, but which was not always entirely transparent to all stakeholders. Making the crafting of the RFD a more public process would lead to a greater level of understanding by all partners. Greater monitoring of each phase and data based reporting on outcomes would have allowed SRN to provide high schools and the district with the capability to better address problems of implementation and to make appropriate mid-course corrections.

2. Establish Professional Learning Communities at All Levels
While the redesign effort was successful in creating two effective learning communities early on (e.g., AISD Executive Committee for High School Redesign, AISD High School Redesign Transformation Team), the effort as a whole would have benefited from the active presence of more learning communities throughout the district. In particular, the important work of transforming instructional practice through redesign would have been strengthened if a principals' network and a teacher leader network had been established at the beginning of the redesign process. The AISD committees on high school redesign served as a collegial group of administrators and school staff who became united in their commitment to address the challenges of high school redesign.

3. Promote Greater Student Participation
While students were engaged to varying degrees in the redesign process (engagement varied by school) through school and community meetings, greater student participation in the process would have been beneficial. In particular, students should be included as members of high school design teams. Another way to elicit a strong student voice in the redesign process would be to hold district-wide student forums with student representatives from each high school. The forums would serve as learning events intended to build a deeper understanding for redesign among students and develop student leadership that could, in turn, motivate greater student involvement at the campus level.

4. Adapt to Organizational Change

Midway through the planning year, AISD leadership realized that the initiative would be better served through the appointment of a dedicated High School Redesign Director rather than continuing to run the initiative from the office of the Associate Superintendent for High Schools. This new position signaled the importance of the initiative and enabled the Associate Superintendent (who was dealing with, among other things, the impact of Hurricane Katrina on the district) to focus on day-to-day operations of high schools. However, the transition in responsibilities and the redefinition of leadership roles led to some confusion and delayed the redesign initiative in the short term. In the end, the reorganization should bring more coherence, clarity, and support to the redesign work at the campus and central office level.

5. Examine Central Office Functions

While Hurricane Katrina was a major factor in influencing the district's decision to postpone implementation of the Annenberg central office redesign, there were several instances throughout the year when the central office was not fully prepared to meet the changing needs of a portfolio of redesigned schools. For example, school requests for block scheduling and an early start to support teacher collaboration and planning were scaled back or postponed, in part, due to administrative policy and procedures. There is a need to transform the operations of the central office from a system focused on compliance to one centered on service and capacity building at the campus level. Traditional structures of a central office are currently designed to respond to federal, state, and local regulations and centralized rules of conduct. In contrast, AISD's comprehensive and customized approach to redesign (i.e., a portfolio of schools approach) will inevitably further strain and challenge the current structure of the central office and should expedite the transition to a more service-based system.

Summary

During the course of the planning year, school year 2005-06, SRN has served as a resource, technical assistance provider, coach, and partner with AISD in its mission to examine, research, and develop a strategic plan for redesigning the 11 secondary schools in the district. Throughout the partnership, AISD and SRN co-constructed a process that was respectful of the unique needs and culture of each school. Each school plan was specifically tailored to meet the Board of Trustees' stated dual goals of narrowing the achievement gap and providing all students access to college and career.

The following activities reflect the AISD and SRN contractual agreement as defined by their partnership.

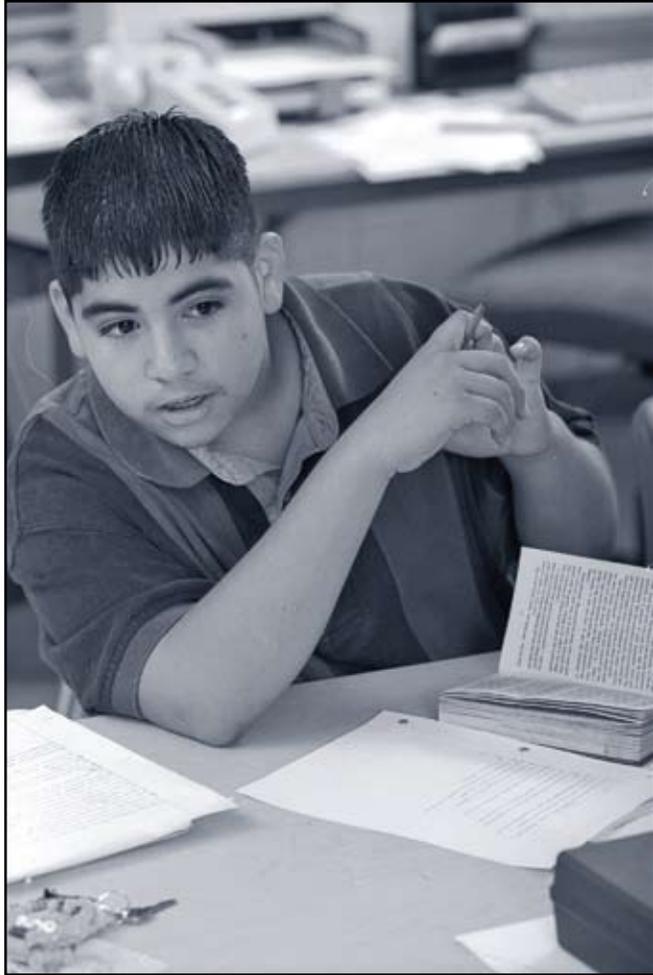| Contracted Activity	Evidence of Completion	Date of Completion
Development and Release of AISD RFD and consultation advice to 11 Austin high schools	• Joint planning workshop with district and high school leadership and central office	• August 2005
	• SRN Coaching Plan	• August 2005
	• AISD/SRN Technical Assistance and Coaching Model	• August 2005
	• RFD Released	• September 2005
	• Evaluation of Talent Development	• February 2006
	• Public Engagement Activities Log	• May 2006
	• AISD/SRN Activities Timeline	• May 2006
	• AISD/SRN Executive Summary	• April 2006
	• AISD High School Redesign Executive Summary and Plans	• April 2006
	• SRN Individual Coaching Logs	• June 2006

Table continues on next page

Contracted Activity	Evidence of Completion	Date of Completion
Participation by leading high school redesign scholars and professors from Stanford University in a redesign seminar to be held with AISD, local high education colleagues, and business/civic leaders.	• AISD School Board minutes • AISD School Board minutes • AISD School Board minutes	• December 2005 • January 2006 • April 2006
Technical review by SRN redesign experts of each of the 11 AISD comprehensive high schools' RFD proposals during the weeks of March 3 to March 20, 2006.	• Request for Design • SRN Report: AISD Guiding Principles, Essential Elements, and High School Redesign • Expert review panel summaries • AISD/SRN Snapshots in Time • AISD/SRN Recommendations and Commendations • AISD Implementation matrix • High School Design Plan Executive Summary • SRN external reviewers RFD feedback notes and rubrics • SRN Report: Phase II AISD/SRN Redesign Revisions	• August 2005 • March 2006 • March 2006 • March 2006 • April 2006 • April 2006 • April 2006 • April 2006 • April 2006

Contracted Activity	Evidence of Completion	Date of Completion
Summary analysis of the 11 high school design plans prepared by SRN redesign experts during the week of April 14 to April 21, 2006.	• SRN Snapshot in Time • SRN Final Executive Summary • AISD/SRN School Board Presentation • AISD School Board Minutes • AISD Implementation Matrix • High School Profiles	• April 2006 • April 2006 • April 2006 • April 2006 • April 2006 • April 2006
Summary presentation on major features of high school design plans to AISD school board of trustees provided by SRN, and dialogue/seminar with school board members and nationally recognized/Stanford University redesign experts on April 26, 2006.	• AISD School Board Presentation by SRN Co-executive Director, Raymond Pecheone • AISD School Board Minutes • AISD Implementation Priorities Matrix • Essential Features of AISD Priorities: Advisory and Professional Learning Communities	• April 2006 • April 2006 • April 2006 • April 2006
Examination of Central Office	• SRN Summer Institute: 10 Challenges • Key events: Formulation and Participation in High School Redesign Steering Committee • Creation of High School Redesign Executive Committee • SRN Publication *District Office Support of High School Redesign: 10 Challenges* • SRN Summer Institute: 10 Challenges of High School Reform	• July 2005 • September 2005 • September 2005 • April 2006 • June 21-22, 2006
District Leadership and Principal Retreat	• High School Redesign Implementation Strategic Planning Session	• June 9-10, 2006

Appendices

AISD reports and grant applications written by Geoff Rips served as source data for these appendixes.

Appendix 1
AISD Background and Demographics

Austin Independent School District (AISD) is the 37th largest school district in the nation. It operates 107 campuses serving 80,000 students from all economic levels and many racial and ethnic backgrounds.

The school district serves the urban core of a rapidly growing Central Texas Metropolitan Statistical Area of more than 1.25 million people. Hispanic students comprise 53 percent of students in the district, 30 percent are White, 14 percent are African American, and 3 percent are Asian. Almost 58 percent of its students come from low-income families, and 20 percent enter school as English-Language Learners. The number of recent immigrant students has tripled over the last five years, and the percentage of students coming from low-income families has grown from 48 percent to its current 58 percent over a six-year period. Just as the city's under-18 population is growing at a faster rate than national trends, the school district is experiencing new growth, with the largest enrollment in its primary grades in history. AISD serves high school students in 11 comprehensive schools and one alternative school.

As the data presented here demonstrate, there is diversity and great achievement disparity among schools, but there are also significant achievement disparities within schools. In particular, it is noteworthy that typically high-performing schools have significant numbers of low-performing students and relatively modest numbers of students who have scored at the commended level on Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). Both indicators – showing need at both the high end and low end of achievement – highlight the need for redesign in all of the district's high schools. In addition, the diversity of need among campuses also clearly indicates why campus redesign plans must be tailored to meet the unique needs of students on each campus.
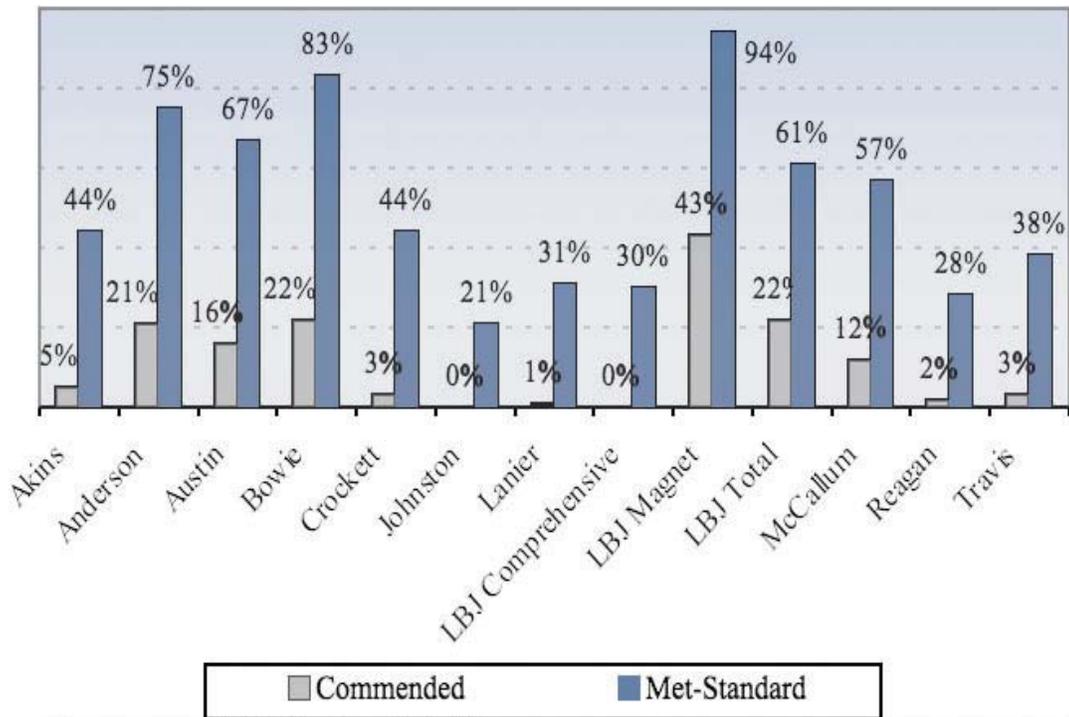
The following table and chart present examples of the gaps in student achievement and graduation rates and provide indicators that link student need with the redesign strategies that have been proposed by campuses.

Percentage of Students Who Met TAKS Standard — 2006

	State	Dist	Cam-pus	Af Am	Hisp	W	Na. Am.	As/PI	Spec Ed	Econ Dis	LEP
Akins	62	60	43	34	37	65	29	66	20	34	7
Anderson	62	60	83	52	70	88	67	81	58	55	31
Austin	62	60	65	40	43	80	-	85	33	32	12
Bowie	62	60	76	62	66	80	75	75	40	49	30
Crockett	62	60	45	29	36	63	60	53	20	35	8
LBJ	62	60	61	31	46	94	-	94	16	37	12
Johnston	62	60	22	14	23	44	-	-	7	19	2
Lanier	62	60	34	28	31	56	-	47	9	31	10
McCallum	62	60	65	42	44	82	-	-	41	39	24
Reagan	62	60	29	24	30	25	-	-	13	28	14
Travis	62	60	32	24	32	48	-	29	22	30	8

(Note: Numbers in blue represent campus percents lower than State and/or District and subgroup percents lower than State, District, and/or Campus.)

Percentage of Grade 9 Students at Standard and Commended Levels on TAKS — 2006

(Source: AISD Gates Planning Grant, 2006)

AISD's high schools can be described as a tale of two districts. Four AISD high schools and the Liberal Arts and Science Academy (LASA) can compete with any urban or suburban high school in the country in terms of overall performance. In each of these comprehensive high schools, however, not all students are performing at high levels; there are significant achievement gaps between most students and those from Economically Disadvantaged families. At Austin High School, for example, 89 percent of the white 11th grade students passed all the state TAKS tests required for graduation in 2005, while only 46 percent of low income students passed all tests. Six other schools, while making progress, are still not serving many of their students adequately.

Appendix 2

Summary of Southwest Regional Education Board and University of Texas Reports on Secondary Education in AISD

In 2004, the Southwest Regional Education Board (SREB) and the University of Texas (UT) conducted independent in-depth audits of AISD's high school performance. The reports highlighted the need for AISD to redesign its high schools and led to the launching of the AISD High School Redesign Initiative.

The key recommendations from these reports are as follows:

- Give all students access to a rigorous academic core curriculum and a focused area of in-depth study (SREB, 2004).
- Improve transitions from middle grades to high school and from high school to college and careers (SREB, 2004).
- Improve the quality of instruction and raise classroom standards and expectations (SREB, 2004).
- Expand career/technical education offerings aligned to post-secondary programs, industry standards and labor market demands and enroll more students in these programs (SREB, 2004).
- Create a strengthened education and career advisement program through a teacher advisement system (SREB, 2004).
- Strengthen the support system to help struggling students (SREB, 2004).
- Develop strong building-level leadership teams involving principals, assistant principals and teacher leaders (SREB, 2004).
- Redefine leadership roles (UT, 2004).
- Provide targeted support for English language learners and other students with special needs (UT, 2004).
- Relieve tension at the school level resulting from attempting to accommodate the unique needs of students while adhering to district policies and mandates (UT, 2004).
- Improve communication and relationships (UT, 2004).

(Source: AISD web site: Audit Review and Benchmarking Study Final District Report September 2004)

Appendix 3
SRN's 10 Features of Good Small Schools

Eric Nadelstern, the experienced founder of a number of successful small schools, notes that "high school redesign is intended to provide a more powerful educational experience for students and school staff via a change in structure and orientation to allow small groups of teachers to be responsible for educating manageable groups of students over sustained periods of time." Among those engaged in school redesign, it is common to hear of the "new Three Rs" that are expected of our schools: rigor, relevance, and relationships. Below, we go beyond these principles and outline a summary of key features identified by research on extraordinarily effective small high schools (Darling-Hammond, 2002; Darling-Hammond, Ancess, & Ort, 2002; Lee & Smith, 1995; Newmann, Marks, & Gamoran, 1996; Wasley et al., 2000).[9]

Personalization

Effective schools personalize education so that students are well-known by adults and student needs are addressed. Successful high schools have accomplished this in many ways: by creating advisory systems in which each teacher works as an advocate and family point of contact with a small group of students, or by providing teachers with smaller classes for longer blocks of time so that they can get to know students well and have a reduced student load—ideally less than 80 students. To make this happen, schools may offer fewer electives and use longer blocks of time for each class period. In addition, teachers may teach more than one subject, or schools may rely on more student internships, service learning opportunities, or community college classes. Changes in staffing patterns, budget allocations, and scheduling are typically needed to create the personalization that is not a part of the design for traditional factory-model schools.

Continuous Relationships

The benefits of personalization are often realized when teachers stay with the same students over multiple years through "looping" with them from grade to grade and through long-term advisory relationships. Sustained relationships foster improved motivation, maximize engagement in meaningful teaching and learning, and

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[9]Appendix 3 is adapted from a forthcoming SRN publication by Michael Milliken, Peter Ross, Ray Pecheone and Linda Darling-Hammond entitled "District Support for High School Redesign: 10 Challenges."

minimize the "getting to know you" phase that hinders productivity in the first quarter of every year.

High Standards and Performance-Based Assessment

Successful schools have a shared understanding of what they want all their students to know and be able to do. Teachers clearly articulate these "habits of mind" and work together to help students achieve them. Assessments reflect these standards in meaningful ways and provide a critical feedback loop to inform future instruction. For example, student portfolios may provide concrete evidence that certain standards have been reached, or committees may evaluate student exhibitions in meaningful ways that promote motivation and accountability.

Authentic Curriculum

Successful schools avoid the trap of superficial content coverage. They selectively engage critical concepts and skills in depth, challenge students intellectually, and motivate them by connecting the curriculum to students' lives and real-world issues. An authentic curriculum emphasizes active learning, critical thinking, and extensive writing and revision, all in real-world contexts that culminate in meaningful student demonstrations of what they know and can do.

Adaptive Pedagogy

Students' background knowledge and learning styles vary considerably. In successful schools, teachers diagnose what students know and how they learn so that they can provide students with explicit scaffolding and successful avenues for learning. Adapting instruction to students' needs requires that teachers know their students well and that teachers possess an array of instructional strategies, employing different strategies appropriately to differing students and situations. To meet the needs of students who are struggling, successful schools provide additional supports, not pull-out programs, to help students catch up academically.

Multicultural and Anti-Racist Teaching

To promote individual attachment and cross-cultural understanding, all students need opportunities to see their own experiences reflected in the life and work of the school and to learn about other individuals, cultures, and communities. It takes an active effort on the part of a school staff to provide culturally responsive instruction and to develop a supportive and integrated school community. Successful schools work on this by maintaining common academic expectations and experiences for all students while connecting with students as individuals and

members of differing cultures and actively involving families and the community in the life of the school.

Knowledgeable and Skilled Teachers

Teachers' expertise provides one of the most significant school-based influences on student learning. In addition to strong and flexible knowledge of the content they teach, expert teachers have an understanding of the learning process, a familiarity with the needs of diverse learners, a substantive repertoire of instructional strategies, the judgment to know when to use different strategies, and the ability to analyze assessment data to drive instruction. Successful schools recruit well prepared teachers, facilitate their development, and work to retain them.

Collaborative Planning and Professional Development

Teachers do not begin their careers as instructional experts. To develop their skills and work in concert as colleagues, teachers in effective schools plan together, learn from one another, and engage in meaningful professional development. Collaborative planning encourages teachers to share expertise, revise and improve their practice, develop powerful lessons, create a coherent curriculum, and build a culture of continuous learning and high professional expectations.

Family and Community Connections

Successful schools involve students' families and the community by reaching out to them, investing in sustained relationships, and providing multiple opportunities for engagement. When parents or guardians have regular opportunities to meet with advisors and other teachers, the home and school can work more productively together. By treating parents as experts on their children's needs, clearly articulating school goals and expectations, and inviting parents to examine student work alongside teachers, schools can learn from parents, earn their trust, and engage them in actively support student learning.

Democratic Decisionmaking

Good schools engage teachers in shared decision-making about critical school issues, along with parents and students wherever appropriate. Effective small schools are communities of commitment that are created through choice, shared culture, and meaningful participation. Democratic decision-making can promote a respectful, participatory school and classroom culture and can improve decisions by involving those with the most intimate knowledge of students, teaching, and learning.

Appendix 4

SRN Key Learning Events by Month

September 2004

Audit Review and Benchmarking Study Final District Report: SREB

The Future of Austin's High Schools: University of Texas Study

March 2005

Research Review: NYC Small School Task Force Report (March 7)

Akins High School Study Tour Participation (March 11)

Austin High School Study Tour Participation (March 11)

Student Meetings with Board of Trustees (March 3)

High School Principals Redesign Meeting (March 23)

April 2005

Community and Public Engagement Workshop (April 25)

Johnston High School SLCs Presentation, Dr. Hernandez, High School Principals
     Redesign Meeting (April 13)

Akins High School Study Tour Participation (April 26)

May 2005

Community Leaders Meeting: High School Redesign Initiative Kick-off with Linda
     Darling-Hammond. Presentation: Community Engagement Workshop
     (May 23)

Meeting with Faculty from the University of Texas: Linda Darling-Hammond
     (May 23)

AISD School Board High School Redesign Conference (May 23)

Meeting with High School Redesign Teams (May 5)

Public Forum at Akins High School (May 12)

Campus Public Forums on Redesign (May 9-11)

June 2005

Community Forums hosted by AISD, Austin Voices, and Austin Partners in
     Education (June 14-15)

Improving Our High Schools: Barriers and Challenges to Redesign at the School
     and Central Office Levels (June 9)

June 2005, cont'd

SRN Summer Institute: "Rigor & Relevance: Reinventing America's High Schools"
(June 27th and July 1)

Crockett High School Study Tour Participation (June 11th)

LBJ High School Study Tour Participation (June 11)

July 2005

SRN High School Redesign Workshop: Redesigning the Central Office
(July 1)

Request for Design (RFD) Process Initiated (July 20)

SRN Principal in Residence (July 18)

SRN Research Review on SLCs (July 11)

AISD, High School Redesign Initiative RFD DRAFT by SRN (July 20)

AISD/SRN Central Office Questions to Consider DRAFT (July 25)

Focus Group on Redesign with Leadership of Capital City African American
Chamber of Commerce (July 29)

August 2005

AISD High School Redesign Initiative meeting (August 3)
Attendees: SRN/building administration and district leadership team

AISD High School Redesign Vision and Purpose meeting (August 4)

AISD High School Redesign Initiative RFD Final Draft (August 3)

AISD/SRN Partnership For High School Redesign DRAFT Status Report
(August 17)

Focus Group on Redesign with leadership of Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of
Commerce (August 10)

High School Principals Redesign Meeting (August 24)

September 2005

RFD Released to AISD High Schools (September 6)

SRN Technical Assistance Coaches Activated (September 27)
- Don Leydig-former high school principal at Hillsdale High School
- Sue Showers, technical assistance provider from West Claremont School
  District

Follow-up on Proposal Submitted to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
(September 14)

SRN Leadership Study Tour: New York City (September 25)

SRN Review of Campus Improvement Plans (September 11)

AISD Campus Public Forums on Redesign (September 17 – 19)
Community Forums hosted by AISD, Austin Voices and Austin Partners in
     Education (September 27 & 29)
AISD Executive Committee for High School Redesign Meeting (September 7)
AISD High School Redesign Transformation Team Meeting (September 14)
AISD/SRN Principals' High School Redesign Meeting (September 21)
AISD Publication on High School Redesign Initiative Released (September 2005)
SRN Study Kit Resource and Research Dissemination (September 19)
Portfolio of Schools concept discussed and explored (September 21)
LBJ High School Study Tour Participation (September 23)
Reagan High School Study Tour Participation (September 23)

October 2005
AISD High School Redesign Public Engagement Activities Timeline Completed
     (October, 15)
AISD Principles Review: Improving the Lives of Children and Their Families (2003
     Child Trends) (October 18)
Ongoing Campus Planning and Engagement Activities with Campus
     Constituencies
Ongoing Expert Coaching for AISD High School Principals by SRN
AISD Executive Committee for High School Redesign Meeting (October 4)
AISD/SRN Request for Design Rubric Constructed (October 11)
Austin High School Study Tour Participation (October 11)
AISD High School Redesign Transformation Team Meeting (October 12)
AISD/SRN Principals' High School Redesign Meeting (October 18)
LBJ High School Study Tour Participation (October 22)
Anderson High School Study Tour Participation (October 24)
Bowie High School Study Tour Participation (October 24)
Johnston High School Study Tour Participation (October 24)
McCallum High School Study Tour Participation (October 24)
Reagan High School Study Tour Participation (October 24)

November 2005
AISD Executive Committee for High School Redesign Meeting (November 3)
AISD/SRN Principals' High School Redesign Meeting (November 9)
AISD High School Redesign Transformation Team Meeting (November 11)
AISD/SRN RFD Disseminated to AISD Campuses (November 11)

November 2005, cont'd
Austin High School Study Tour Participation (November 22)
LBJ High School Study Tour Participation (November 11)
Travis High School Study Tour Participation (November 11)

December 2005
AISD Board of Trustees Development on High School Redesign: SRN Expert Panel
	Discussion (December 5)
Executive Committee for High School Redesign Meeting (December 6)
AISD High School Redesign Transformation Team Meeting (December 13)
AISD/SRN Principals' High School Redesign Meeting (December 14)
Austin High School Study Tour Participation (December 2)
Community Forum with Austin Leaders: Fishbowl Discussion of Essential
	Questions on High School Redesign (December 1)

January 2006
AISD High School Redesign Public Forums (January 15)
Executive Committee for High School Redesign Meeting (January 5)
AISD High School Redesign Transformation Team Meeting (January 12)
AISD/SRN Principals' High School Redesign Meeting (January 25)
AISD School Board Presentation and Public Meeting on Redesign: National Panel
	of Redesign Experts (January 9)
AISD/SRN Quality Review of High School Redesign Process (January 10 & 12)
Johnston High School Study Tour Participation (January 8)
McCallum High School Study Tour Participation (January 8)
Travis High School Study Tour Participation (January 8)

February 2006
Community Engagement Director Patti Everett Selected
District Leadership Teams for High School Transformation Charge and Charter
	created (February 8)
AISD/SRN Spring 2005 TAKS Gap Analysis (February 6)
AISD High School Redesign Public Forums (February 15)
AISD Executive Committee for High School Redesign Meeting (February 8)
AISD High School Redesign Transformation Team Meeting (February 14)
AISD/SRN Principals' High School Redesign Meeting (February 15)
Akins High School Study Tour Participation (February 8)

Anderson High School Study Tour Participation (February 12)
McCallum High School Study Tour Participation (February 12)
Bowie High School Study Tour Participation (February 8)
Crockett High School Study Tour Participation (February 8)

March 2006

Principal Seminar on High School Redesign (March 1)
AISD Executive Committee for High School Redesign Meeting (March 3)
SRN Protocol for AISD High School Redesign Superintendent's Cabinet:
      Departmental response to school site-generated plans for redesign
      (March 3)
AISD/SRN Principals' High School Redesign Meeting (March 4)
AISD High School Redesign Transformation Team Meeting (March 5)
AISD First Draft of High School Redesign Submitted (March 3)
SRN Review Process (March 6 – April 4):
     ~ Summary Feedback on draft proposals provided by AISD Cabinet
       (March 6)
     ~ AISD/SRN Guiding Principles, Essential Elements and High School
       Redesign document crafted (March 17)
     ~ AISD/SRN High School Redesign Proposal Feedback and Revision Sessions
       (March 29-30 & April 4)
     ~ SRN Analysis of Department Evaluations of Key Challenges and/or
       Opportunities (March 28)
     ~ Independent Expert Review Panel Evaluations of High School Redesign
       Plan Technical Review by SRN
Crockett High School Study Tour Participation (March 8)
SRN Essential Documents on Key Elements of 9th Grade Academy, Smaller
      Learning Communities, Advisory, and Professional Learning Communities
      (March 15)
SRN Executive Summary of Review of AISD High Schools' First Redesign Plan
Drafts (March 17)
AISD/SRN Request for Redesign Revisions Rubric (March 21)
Phase II AISD/SRN Redesign Revisions Process (March 28)
LBJ High School Study Tour Participation (March 27)
Reagan High School Study Tour Participation (March 27)
Travis High School Study Tour Participation (March 27)
AISD/SRN Campus Follow Up and Revisions meetings (March 28-29)
Community Partners Task Force on High School Design (March 30)

April 2006

SRN High School Redesign Profiles: A Snapshot in Time (April 2)

AISD/SRN in-service day with Linda Darling-Hammond: Superintendent Cabinet, High School Principals, and AISD School Board (April 3)

AISD School Board Presentation and Public Meeting: Public Input and Dialogue with Linda Darling-Hammond (April 3)

AISD Teacher Forum on High School Redesign: Knowledge Building and Dialogue with Linda Darling-Hammond (April 3)

AISD Executive Committee for High School Redesign Meeting (April 6)

Akins High School Study Tour Participation (April 6)

AISD/SRN American Education Research Association Conference Presentation (April 8)

School Board Resolution in Support of Partnership with First Things First (April 10)

AISD/SRN High School Redesign Follow Up Conversations about RFD Feedback and Revisions (April 10-12)

AISD/SRN Principals' High School Redesign Meeting (April 11)

AISD High School Redesign Transformation Team Meeting (April 11)

Final High School Redesign Proposals Submitted from nine AISD Campus Design Teams (April 13)

2006 Campus Implementation Priorities Matrix (April 17)

SRN Executive Summary of AISD High Schools' Redesign Plans (April 17)

SRN Cross-Case Analyses of Central Office RFD Reviews (April 18)

AISD Community Partners Task Force on High School Redesign (April 20)

SRN Summary Analysis of AISD High School Redesign Plans (April 24)

AISD High School Redesign Professional Development Priorities (April 24)

AISD School Board High School Redesign Presentation on Key Elements and Essential Features of Redesign Plans (April 24)

AISD Community Partners Task Force on High School Redesign (April 26)

May 2006

Crockett High School Study Tour Participation (May 3)

AISD School Board Presentation by High School Principals on Key Elements and Essential Features (May 8)

AISD Community Partners Task Force on High School Redesign (May 11)

A Portfolio of Schools: Expanding Secondary Education Options in AISD by
Creating Small Learning Communities, Small Schools, Charters/Choice,
and New Specialized Schools (AISD Briefing Paper, May 12)
Bowie High School Study Tour Participation (May 13)
Gates Foundation Planning Grant Report Submitted (May 31)
AISD Gates Foundation Implementation Grant Submitted (May 31)

June 2006

Review, assist, and construct AISD High School Redesign planning grant report for
the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (June 5-8)
Plan, organize, and assist with the facilitation of the AISD High School Redesign
Seminar for AISD High School Principals (June 5-7)
Review, assist and construct AISD High School Redesign implementation grant for
the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (June 19-21)
SRN Summer Institute: "Reinventing the Central Office: 10 Challenges of High
School Reform" (June 21-22)

Appendix 5:
The Redesign Process by School

The Austin Independent School District (AISD) redesign initiative consisted of two distinct periods. The first included an active inquiry and examination period of high school redesign concepts and models. During this inquiry and learning stage, AISD personnel attended summer institutes sponsored by the School Redesign Network (SRN) at Stanford University and participated in SRN-directed study tours. During the initial stage of the AISD High School Redesign Initiative, an atmosphere of investigation, planning, and development emerged.

The second period consisted of the construction of a High School Redesign Plan and the completion of the Request for Design (RFD). At this point, each high school formed a High School Design Team that led the redesign process, completion of the RFD, and community engagement. The High School Design Plan was developed based on an analysis of school and student needs at each campus. The SRN technical assistance team led by Paul Tytler, former Principal of Clover Park High School in Washington state, provided deliberate and on-demand assistance in examining campus needs, redesign theories, and authentic models of redesigned high schools. Through a series of on-campus meetings with the High School Design Teams, AISD high school principal meetings, and community engagement activities, the SRN technical assistance team supported, guided, and played the role of critical friend. The SRN technical assistance team was routinely available by phone contact and regular e-mail conversations to the High School Design Team members.

The needs of each campus were taken into consideration when the AISD leadership and SRN technical assistance team planned for the redesign activities for each individual campus. The district leadership organized the 11 high schools into three tiers — low, middle, and high — based on student performance needs and accountability measures of each campus. Campuses were classified as follows:

- Tier One: Johnston, Travis, Lanier, Reagan, and LBJ High Schools
- Tier Two: Akins and Crockett High Schools
- Tier Three: McCallum, Anderson, Austin, and Bowie High Schools

Table 1. Snapshot of AISD High Schools, 2006
Percent of Students in Each Subgroup

School/Enrollment	African American	Hispanic	White	Native American	Asian Pac. Is.	Econ. Dis.	LEP	At Risk
**Akins(2,234)	12.6	62.1	22.7	.6	1.9	51.4	7.2	77.2
*Anderson(1,989)	6.5	18.5	68.0	.6	6.5	13.4	2.9	40.0
*Austin(2,209)	5.6	35.8	56.8	.3	1.6	25.8	5.0	51.4
*Bowie(2,583)	4.1	22.9	68.9	.4	3.7	7.4	1.3	41.9
**Crockett(1,928)	8.9	55.5	34.1	.3	1.2	48.0	7.5	77.4
***LBJ(1.638)	31.0	32.6	30.0	.2	6.2	45.1	6.7	66.7
***Johnston(1,028)	15.7	81.6	1.9	.0	.8	80.4	32.6	92.0
***Lanier(1,733)	17.9	69.5	8.9	.3	3.4	74.4	27.6	86.4
*McCallum(1633)	20.2	24.2	54.6	.2	.7	26.2	3.2	58.1
*Reagan(1,041)	32.6	63.5	3.0	.1	.9	77.5	29.0	87.4
*Travis(1,647)	11.2	80.6	7.5	.2	.5	78.8	20.2	86.3

Tier levels for each high school
*** = urgent priority
** = high priority
* = deliberate priority

Each school was assigned a dedicated SRN school coach who offered targeted and timely technical assistance to school redesign teams and faculty as they developed their proposal in response to the RFD. The SRN coaches assisted each campus in developing research-based, but context-specific, strategies to address the specific needs of its students. The role of the coach was multi-faceted, acting as both critical friend to the team working on the school redesign plan, and as brokers as well as deliverers of the professional learning needed to build school capacity and understanding around this work. Additionally, the SRN coaches provided timely resources on best practices in the area of high school transformation and resource guidance to support the tools in the SRN Study Kit.

Table 2. Core Design Elements for Tier 1 Schools

High School	Student Enrollment	Core Design Elements

Johnston	1,000 students	• Three interdependent academies:
		    -Global Enterprise and Informational Technology
		    -Scientific Inquiry and Design
		    -Arts and Humanities
		• Teachers work with the same students across grades 9-12.
		• Students voluntarily select academies based on interest.
		• Students can take classes across academies to take advantage of diverse course offerings (e.g., AP, fine arts).

Lanier	1,730 students	• Four 9th-grade academies focused on students' transition to high school. • Four small learning communities (SLCs) aligned with 9th-grade academies. • Teachers work with same students across grades 10-12. • Pending funding (STEM) a Science/Technology/Engineering/Math academy will be added in the future.
LBJ	1,640 students	• First Things First
Reagan	1,040 students	• First Things First
Travis	1,650 students	• Four 9th-12th grade interdependent SLCs. • Teachers stay with the same students across all four years of high school (i.e., looping). • In future years students will be enrolled in "majors" within each pathway that are supported by the prospective academy.

In Tier I schools, there exists a sense of urgency to conduct wall-to-wall redesign in order to immediately address the severe student learning gaps at each campus (See Appendix 1). SRN technical assistance coaches worked closely with Johnston High School, Travis High School, and Lanier High School. The SRN technical assistance coaches served as critical friend, broker of knowledge building activities, and organizer of learning events.

Johnston High School had initiated the redesign planning phase the prior year and was entering its first year of implementation of three separate academies in August 2005.

AISD selected Reagan and LBJ High Schools for adoption of the First Things First model and began immediate public engagement to obtain community support of the First Things First redesign model. The immediacy was deemed necessary given the significant student performance issues facing the district and schools (see Appendix 1).

Guided by the SRN technical assistance team, Travis High School openly engaged in the critical conversation pertaining to high school redesign. The Travis High School Design Team actively pursued a deeper understanding of how to effectively mesh the immediate learning needs of their students with the key concepts of high school redesign. Prior to the entrance of SRN, Travis High School had initiated redesign with resources from the U.S. Department of Education Smaller Learning Communities grant. However, technical assistance from SRN challenged the school's comfort zone and pushed it to a deeper understanding, as evidenced in the Travis High School Design Plan (see chart above).

The campus leadership team at Lanier High School was intentionally focused on instruction and increased personalization of the 9th-grade class. SRN technical assistance coaches engaged in critical conversations in an attempt to expand the scope of understanding and emphasis to a full-scale high school transformation. The Lanier High School Design Team participated in all RFD development, evaluation, feedback, and revision sessions. The Lanier High School design goals are to strengthen and expand an existing 9th-grade academy and the school's student advisory program. Additionally, the school is geared up to implement a block schedule.

Table 3. Core Design Elements for Tier II Schools

High School	Student Enrollment	Core Design Elements
Akins	2,200 students	• 9th grade academies focus on students' transition to high school. • Four 10th-12th grade SLCs consist of approximately 400 students each. • Focus on using technology as a tool for learning, communication and collaboration (i.e., New Tech High).
Crockett	1,930 students	• Three 9th and 10th grade academies. Upper Division (11th and 12th grades) to be added in the following years. • Teachers of core courses (English, math, history, and science) work in teams with the same students (grade-level teams). • Extended instructional periods provide time for in-depth exploration and student learning (block scheduling).

Tier II schools consisted of Akins High School and Crockett High School. Although the needs of students in Tier II schools presented a sense of urgency, the schools were performing better than Tier I schools and thus had more time to implement their redesign.

Akins High School had been awarded a Texas High School Project grant the previous year. This outside resource allowed Akins High School to begin its redesign in a cluster model. Akins adopted the 9th-grade academy strategy, coupled with grades 10 through 12 in SLCs. Additionally, Akins High School received a replication grant to create a New Tech High on campus. Akins High School is similar to Johnston High School in that external funding had allowed it to initiate its redesign planning and implementation one year in advance of most AISD high schools.

Crockett High School elected to invest its energies into a partnership with the Austin Community College (ACC). Crockett students will attend classes at the ACC campus currently under construction adjacent to the Crockett High School campus. The school's inquiry process led it to prioritize the implementation of block scheduling and relationships.

<div align="center">**Table 4. Core Design Elements for Tier III Schools**</div>

High School	Student Enrollment	Core Design Elements
Anderson	2,000 students	• Five 9th and 10th grade academies of approximately 240 students each. • Teachers of core courses (English, math, history, and science) work in teams with the same students (i.e., grade-level teams). • Teachers work with the same students for more than one year (i.e., looping). • Upper Division (11th and 12th grades) academies added in subsequent years.
Austin	2,200 students	• Teachers of core courses (English, math, history, and science) work in teams with the same students (i.e., grade-level teams). • Teachers work with the same students for more than one year (i.e., looping). • Upper Division (11th and 12th grades) focuses on college and career awareness. • All Upper Division students focus on college preparation through AP and dual credit courses (ACC and UT).
Bowie	2,600 students	• Six 9th and 10th grade academies of approximately 125 students each. • Teachers of core courses (English, math, history, and science) work in teams with the same students (i.e., grade-level teams). • Upper Division (11th and 12th grades) academies added in subsequent years.
McCallum	1,635 students	• Four 9th and 10th grade academies of approximately 120 students each. • Teachers of core courses (English, math, social studies, and science) work in teams with the same students (i.e., grade-level teams). • Upper Division (11th and 12th grades) academies added in subsequent years. • Creation of a fine arts academy to be explored.

Tier III schools are considered to be some of the best high schools in the nation (AISD web site). These schools produce high numbers of graduates and college-bound students each year. Yet, certain subgroups within the schools perform

at a lower level than their peers, and this is unacceptable to district and school leadership. A sense of urgency exists for the subgroups; however, the overall focus is making a high performing high school more distinguished by eliminating the existing achievement gap.

For Tier III schools, there currently does not exist a proven model for high school redesign. Consequently, these High School Design Teams examined various small schools, SLCs, and isolated intervention design elements to ascertain how to best meet the learning needs of their students. One model that was considered was the Talent Development Model developed by Johns Hopkins University. Guided by SRN, Tier III schools closely examined the program elements of Talent Development and participated in Study Tours that examined this model.

Each Tier III school expressed deep concern for its students and the achievement gap between them. One campus leader from a Tier III school stated, "The fact that we have economically disadvantaged students and minorities who are not performing at the same level as our Anglo population is not acceptable to our standards." Each Tier III school fully embraced their responsibility to reduce and significantly close their achievement gaps and achieve a distinguished rating from the state of Texas (High School Design Plans, 2006). The high schools in Tier III collectively sought interventions to strengthen the transition between middle and high school. They will all initiate a 9th-grade academy and student advisory program. Additionally, they will expand and enhance their Professional Learning Communities by focusing on instruction and student achievement and the level of collective responsibility for every student. Ultimately, the goal for Tier III schools is to move from recognized to exemplary status, as measured by the Texas Education Agency.

Appendix 6
SRN LEARNING TOOLS

In its work with AISD, SRN used the following tools:

- *Redesigning Schools: What Matters and What Works. 10 Features of Effective Small Schools.* By Linda Darling-Hammond with Matt Alexander and Donielle Prince.
- *Solving the Puzzle: Redesigning Large High Schools Together.* A collection of resources to support the redesign of large high schools. SRN trained AISD's principals and teacher-leaders on the use of this extensive kit and its supporting online guide.
- *The Julia Richman Education Complex: The JREC Story.* By NCREST, SRN, and JREC's Urban Academy.
- *Windows on Conversions* by SRN. A video and print case study of four redesigning high schools in Maine, California, Illinois, and Washington.
- Small School Study Tours and Leadership Study Tours. Established professional development activities for school and district leaders interested in in-depth study visits to established small schools and redesigned large schools.
- *District Office Support of High School Redesign: Ten Common Challenges.* By Michael Milliken, Peter Ross, Raymond Pecheone, and Linda Darling-Hammond.
- *The Right To Learn, Authentic Assessment in Action,* and dozens of other publications by Linda Darling-Hammond.
- The Resources of Stanford University. SRN provided AISD with access to the world-class resources of Stanford University. SRN draws significantly on the expertise of Linda Darling-Hammond and other internationally renowned scholars at the School of Education. In addition, through its partnership with the Stanford Educational Leadership Institute (SELI), SRN also made available to AISD the expertise of Tony Bryk and other scholars in the Graduate School of Business to assist AISD in addressing issues around the change process, leadership and finance.
- *AISD/SRN Essential Elements of Personalization*
- *AISD/SRN Essential Elements of Small Learning Communities*
- *AISD/SRN Essential Elements of Teacher Collaboration*
- *AISD/SRN Essential Elements of 9th Grade Academies*
- *AISD/SRN Essential Elements of Student Advisory Program*

Appendix 7:
School Redesign Network Core Team

Linda Darling-Hammond

Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Education at Stanford University and Co-executive Director of the School Redesign Network (SRN) at Stanford University. Darling-Hammond is the founder of the Stanford Educational Leadership Institute and SRN and former faculty sponsor for the Stanford Teacher Education Program. Previously, Darling-Hammond was the William F. Russell Professor in the Foundations of Education at Teachers College, Columbia University, where she was founding Executive Director of the National Commission for Teaching and America's Future, the blue-ribbon panel whose 1996 report, "What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future," catalyzed major policy changes across the United States designed to improve the quality of teacher education and teaching. Her research, teaching, and policy work focus on issues of teaching quality, school reform, and educational equity. Among her more than 200 publications is *The Right to Learn,* which received the American Educational Research Association's Outstanding Book Award for 1998, and *Teaching as the Learning Profession* (co-edited with Gary Sykes), which received the National Staff Development Council's Outstanding Book Award for 2000.

Raymond Pecheone

Co-executive Director of the School Redesign Network at Stanford University and Director of the Performance Assessment for California Teachers program, a consortium of 17 California universities working to develop a reliable and valid measure of teacher quality. Formerly, Pecheone was the Connecticut Bureau Chief for Curriculum and Teacher Assessment and developed the first performance-based licensure and induction system for teachers in the nation. In addition, he cofounded the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), and co-directed the first Assessment Development Laboratory for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Pecheone helped develop the design for revamping the New York State's Regents Examinations, served as a consultant to the Council of Chief State School Officers and Educational Testing Service for the development and validation of a performance-based assessment for school administrators, which is currently used by 15 states, and has consulted with numerous state education departments. Pecheone has published widely in the area of teacher and student assessment.

Ash Vasudeva

Deputy Director of the School Redesign Network (SRN) at Stanford University. Vasudeva is helping to develop SRN's partnerships with school districts, intermediaries, and charter management organizations to enhance and build local capacity for administrative and instructional leadership. Vasudeva also served as Associate Director for Policy Research at SRN, where he focused on how district and state policies can support and sustain redesigned high schools. Prior to joining SRN, Vasudeva conducted a longitudinal evaluation of WestEd's Western Regional Educational Laboratory (WREL), which focused on its impact on policy and infrastructure development in four states. Vasudeva received his BS from Carnegie Mellon University and his Ph.D from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Olivia Lynch

Director of Professional Learning for the School Redesign Network (SRN) at Stanford University. As an educator for almost 30 years, Lynch served as teacher, founding principal of two small schools, director of new small high schools, and a local superintendent in New York City before beginning her tenure at SRN. She also served as adjunct professor for Bank Street College of Education. Educational leadership, instructional practice, and the structures and practices of successfully redesigned schools and districts are her primary areas of interest and expertise.

Diane Friedlaender

Research Coordinator for the School Redesign Network (SRN) at Stanford University. Friedlaender led SRN's project, "Windows on Conversions: A Multimedia Exploration of Redesign at Four Comprehensive High Schools." Her research interests include educational equity, school change, and instructional quality. Friedlaender has taught courses on the sociological and multi-cultural foundations in education and conducted anti-racism trainings for teachers. She has also worked as an evaluator of arts education, after-school, and Department of Labor programs and has evaluated foundations' grant-making strategies.

Paul Tytler

Director of Districtwide Redesign for the School Redesign Network (SRN) at Stanford University. Tytler guided the high school redesign process at the Austin Independent School District in Austin, TX. Prior to joining SRN, he served as the Principal at Clover Park High School and Assistant Principal at Mountlake Terrace High School. He played a key leadership role in each school's redesign initiative. Prior to his administrative experience he was a special education teacher. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree from SUNY-Geneseo.

Peter Ross

Doctoral student in the Administration and Policy Analysis program at the Stanford University School of Education. Ross taught elementary school in New York City and was a founding teacher at the Muscota New School, a small school modeled after Central Park East Elementary School. He has managed educational projects in Maine and Oakland and served as a Project Manager for the School Redesign Network at Stanford University.

Al Rogers

Founder and CEO of Great Schools Workshop. Rogers has also served as a classroom teacher, principal, central office administrator, and superintendent. He has done extensive work with professional development both as a mentor principal and coach, as well as working to transform high schools and district offices around smaller learning environments. Additionally, Rogers has designed and implemented several specialized charter schools as part of public school district initiatives to raise student achievement.

Richard Owen

Consultant and Former Associate Superintendent of the Sacramento City Unified School District.

Appendix 8:
AISD SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE ON HIGH SCHOOL REDESIGN

AERA Annual Conference, San Francisco, CA
April 8, 2006

Speech by Pascal D. Forgione, Jr., Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Austin Independent School District
Written by Pascal D. Forgione, Jr. & Geoff Rips
http://www.austinisd.org

Thank you for asking me to join you. I wanted to start out by talking a little bit about outcomes. There's no real reason for you to listen to me about reforms if I can't show you positive results. This school year, my district received a very positive set of academic results. On the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA), the Austin Independent School District (AISD) scored first or second with Charlotte-Mecklenburg among 11 participating urban school districts across the country. Professor Uri Treisman of the University of Texas Dana Center conducted an independent analysis of the NAEP data. He found that out of 72 comparisons of Austin's performance on NAEP to large central cities, the State of Texas, and the nation as a whole, Austin students' average scale scores were statistically comparable to or better than the other scores as many as 68 times. On the higher Proficiency level, our students scored at or better than Texas and the nation on 20 out of 24 possible comparisons. In mathematics at Grade 4, our Hispanic students scored at the top, some two grade levels better than their counterparts in other urban districts, and our African American students were second in the nation and well ahead of national and large city averages. Our Hispanic students were the top scorers on 8th-grade math and our African American students were second only to Charlotte-Mecklenburg. We still have a long way to go, but with this standard we think we now have the right to "TUDA" our own horn, and, most important, we have real evidence that we are moving in the right direction. Professor Treisman made a compelling statement based on his analysis of the 2005 NAEP data. He pointed out that, in the 1960s, James Coleman's findings about non-school factors dominated the explanations for student achievement, but these new results show where you go to school does matter. Public schools can make a difference.

This work is representative of where we're trying to go as a school district. But if I'm going to talk about reforms that make a difference, I need to talk about what I believe to be the most important action that a school district can take so that you can make a long-lasting and significant difference in student performance. That action is to create a strong, long-term foundation for change. That foundation must include a school district culture based on the right set of values and community trust; it must include a data-driven, long-term plan of action, in which change is scaffolded so that it doesn't overwhelm your teachers and schools; and it must include the ability to adapt and adjust to a changing world.

Rome wasn't built in a day. A school district can't be turned around in a day. Uri Treisman told our Board that you can't get the Queen Mary turned all the way around in a day, but every small change you make to get you going in the right direction will produce positive results. At the same time, parents and students can't wait decades for you to make their schools better. Every student goes through the first 18 years of his life only once. We have to get it right for that individual student as we work to make it right for all students.

To do that, we need to make continuous progress in a stable environment. If you look at the TUDA results for Austin, Boston, and Charlotte-Mecklenburg, you see stability in district leadership. When I was hired in August 1999, I was the seventh Austin superintendent in ten years. No wonder Austin was falling farther and farther behind. It had no direction. Or it changed direction every year. The teachers and principals would just hunker down and wait for the next superintendent. I'm now in my seventh year in Austin, and I'm signed up for four more years. People know we're not going away. Our 5,500 teachers and 5,000 other district staff members know we intend to follow all the way through on the changes we are making. Our parents and grandparents and community members know that as well. That makes a big difference.

But you have to be ready for change. As Hamlet said, "Ripeness is all." In Austin, we are making major changes in our schools today. We would not have been ready for these same changes six years ago or even three years ago. But all the scaffolded changes we did undertake over the last six years have been necessary to get us to this important moment in the educational history of Austin. I want to talk briefly about how we've now arrived at this point. And then I want to talk about lessons we've learned at this stage in our development.

High School Redesign: Setting the Stage for Change

The day I stepped off the plane in August 1999, I was greeted by a newspaper headline announcing that my district had been declared unacceptable by the Texas Education Agency due to our bad data submitted to the state. We had been placed on the "negative watch" by the national bond rating companies. I also found out that, in the middle of this high-technology capital, our information and financial systems were outdated and dysfunctional. From that first day, I decided the best approach was to drill down until we got to the bottom of our bad news. We shared everything we learned with the Austin community. In that way, we developed public trust, which we would need as we rebuilt the district from the ground up. Within that first month on the job, the public backed our call for a three-cent property tax increase to create the information infrastructure we would need. We set up a new accountability department to scrupulously oversee our use of data. These were the relatively easy reforms. I knew our greatest challenge would be to reform teaching and learning in our more than 5,000 classrooms.

But even more serious as we transitioned to the 21st century was the declining academic performance of many of our students and the large achievement gaps between groups of students. Without stable leadership, this district had no proven system to support increasing student achievement for all students. I've often said, our district was all *e pluribus* and no *unum*. Our schools were peacocks on the prairie, strutting off in different directions because they'd had no district leadership for so long. In public education leadership, you cannot "run in place" if you expect to progress over time.

The first thing we did was to establish the state's Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards as our content standards. These standards became our first nonnegotiable—the "unum." We will have the same high standards for all our classrooms. It doesn't matter what part of town you grow up in—we'll have the same high expectations and high standards for you in every classroom. The second non-negotiable was a core belief in an effort-based education system. We teamed with the Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh to develop a professional development program for all our administrators and teachers so that we would have a common language of teaching and learning. In this way, we became an effort-based, standards-based school system. We believe that effort creates ability. You become smarter by working harder in a system set up for high achievement. This is our responsibility as a public school system.

We were also becoming data-driven, using data to guide instruction and to focus interventions on targeted student needs. Our results began to show progress early on.

Between 1999 and 2002, every group of students showed significant gains in reading, math, and writing on the TAAS test. Our number of exemplary and recognized schools tripled from 16 to 48. For the first time they included schools from neighborhoods in which the students came from low-income families. Our number of low-performing schools declined from 14 to 3.

So what happened? Texas moved forward to upgrade its state accountability system to incorporate more rigorous academic content and harder passing standards. In 2003, AISD entered a second stage of development. Our data systems were now in place. Our bond rating had risen from Unacceptable to AA. We were making academic progress, but it was time to shift to the next gear. Our students were also facing the high stakes consequences of the new, more rigorous Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) tests. To strengthen teaching and learning, our curriculum and instruction department teamed with master teachers to write Instructional Planning Guides to guide the curriculum in the core academic areas based on the TEKS standards. Like the districts around us, we lose about 14 percent of our teachers (one in seven) each year for various reasons. The Instructional Planning Guides (IPGs) are crucial for teachers in their first five years and serve as an additional resource for our more experienced teachers. We have now also developed Advanced Planning Guides (APGs) for our pre-AP and AP courses and Magnet Planning Guides for our Magnet secondary schools programs.

We also decided it didn't make much sense to wait until the end-of-the-year TAKS tests to find out if our students had learned to the more rigorous standards. We developed Beginning-of-the-Year and Middle-of-the-Year benchmark assessments to help us monitor student achievement growth. These benchmark tests, as well as formative six and nine-week tests (made available to teachers for their use) provide the basis for data-driven professional development and intervention with struggling learners. We now have a three-tiered system to support our struggling students in class, outside the classroom, and after school during the summer. In addition, we are bringing rigor and consistent delivery to our bilingual instruction, requiring knowledge of Academic English and Academic Spanish for all our English-Language Learners.

Once again, the results show that we are moving in the right direction. Between 2002 and 2005, our student achievement on the TAKS test has increased for all groups of students as we continue to close the achievement gaps. For example, our Hispanic students gained 16 points in Math, our African American students gained 24 points in Science, our Hispanic and African American students gained 16 points each in Reading and 15 points in Social Studies. Other indicators mark our progress as well. Our four-year graduation rate for the class of 2004 increased by more than ten percent between 1999 and 2004, rising from 72.5 percent to 80.1 percent. Simultaneously, we have increased our high school students graduating on the State Recommended Plan—the good stuff—from 24.1% in 2000 to 73.6% in 2005! And then, of course, there are the NAEP scores I talked about earlier.

High School Redesign: First Steps

With this foundation to build on, we are now ready to move into a third stage of district development. It is only possible because we have built an education infrastructure that is effort-based and standards-based and has penetrated every classroom. It is only possible because we are involving our community in the redesign process. Once we had a strong foundation, we knew we could take important risks to better our schools. We recognized that we needed to make major changes, which would require us to be brave enough to look squarely at the problem of redesigning our traditional American public high school.

So, where do you begin if you are a standards-based, effort-based, and data-driven school district? Three years ago, we asked the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) to help us look at our strengths and weaknesses by analyzing all 11 of our comprehensive high schools. This analysis produced a report showing a common set of challenges for all our high schools. This soul-searching led to district-wide discussions and conversations within each high school. The SREB report showed us change was absolutely necessary. It might be different in kind or degree in each school, but change would be necessary at every one of our 11 comprehensive high schools. While our high school graduation rate in 2004 was 80 percent for all students, it was only 72 percent for Economically Disadvantaged Students and 53 percent for our LEP students. Thus, we knew we needed to change how we are doing education in our comprehensive high schools.

The SREB report produced a set of recommendations applicable to all our high schools and generated serious discussions in each high school about change. The

seven major SREB recommendations were:

1. Give all students access to a rigorous academic core curriculum and a focused area of in-depth study.
2. Improve transitions from middle grades to high school and from high school to college and careers.
3. Improve the quality of instruction and raise classroom standards and expectations.
4. Expand career/technical education offerings aligned to post-secondary programs, industry standards, and labor-market demands and enroll more students in these programs.
5. Create a strengthened education and career advisement program through a teacher advisement system.
6. Strengthen the support system to help struggling students.
7. Develop strong building-level leadership teams involving principals, assistant principals, and teacher leaders.

These seven challenges represent what our "4Rs"—rigor, relationships, relevance and results—of our AISD high school redesign initiative. (We've added the Texas results orientation to the 3Rs of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.)

We took every one of these to heart. Then we asked our high schools to begin thinking about different ways of working to address the challenges identified by the SREB report.

Last fall, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation recognized the potential for dramatic change for student improvement in Austin and awarded us a $1.5 million public engagement and planning grant for our high schools.

AISD has committed itself to building a portfolio of high school options as the core reform strategy for our high school redesign initiative. Our lowest performing high school received special funding from the state and already began this year to launch three distinct small academies on its campus. We are examining, through an individual campus redesign planning process, how we can convert our large comprehensive high schools into smaller learning communities, or in a few cases, new small schools. Each high school is developing its own campus redesign plan, which is to be finalized by April 2006. The Stanford School Redesign Network (SRN) is serving as our intermediary partner. SRN's role is to support and

challenge us to be innovative and true to our data and vision to change our current high school processes to better meet the needs of our students. Thus, this focus on conversion and simultaneously going to scale (with all 11 high schools) presents a significant reform commitment for our district. In addition, we are planning to create several new small high school models in our district. Our Board of Trustees has approved a Young Women's Leadership School for Grades 6-12 to open in August 2007 and dedicated to serving girls from low-income families. We are also working with the Asia Society to open a Global Studies High School. We want to create a portfolio of secondary school opportunities so that all our students become engaged and successful in their academic careers.

If the Gates Foundation likes our plans, it will consider supporting a much larger grant to implement these plans over the next four years. This is an exciting opportunity. We could be a district that redesigns all its middle and high schools to better serve students, and in the process redesigns the central administration to better serve our schools.

The Michael and Susan Dell Foundation is also offering major support. It annually funds an extra college counselor at every high school and extra teachers to act as tutors for struggling Algebra students. Next year, for instance, it will also provide staff development and incentives for teachers and students in seven of our high schools that haven't had many students taking and passing the Advanced Placement exams. We believe this will dramatically increase student AP enrollment and student performance on AP exams.

These changes would not have been possible without our development of the strong foundation to stand on. Our continuous improvement has made believers out of our teachers and our community. Both are ready to support further change because they've seen the results of earlier reforms. Success breeds more success.

I do want to mention that we have made this progress despite the fact that we are looking at our fifth year with no new revenue. Our legislature will grapple with school finance in a special session this spring and in future sessions. To continue our progress, we do need more resources. That's why the Gates and Dell foundations have been so important developing new initiatives. But we've squeezed all the blood we can get out of the state school funding formula. We've set the stage for reform, but in order to play upon that stage and to make sure all our students are reached by reform, we need adequate resources.

High School Redesign: Lessons Learned

Lesson One: It Takes Time

As we all know in the school business, we feel a great sense of urgency to solve problems quickly so that challenges we've identified as having an adverse impact on current students are addressed in time to help those very students and not the cohorts coming after them. Also, as the debates about school performance grow more heated, pressure increases from parents, from the community, from local state and national governments, from taxpayers and from businesses.

The difficulty we find is that in order to fix the problem as a system, we have to take the time to become smart and be flexible. The genius of successful school reform lies in the system's capacity to be flexible, responsive, and data driven. This requires a great deal of time to begin the change process on our campuses. This process requires hard conversations around student performance data and classroom practices. It requires building the understanding on campuses around the need for change.

You also need time to develop leadership at all levels. The Superintendent's role is to jumpstart and steer the work, keeping it on course. Then you need to develop leadership for redesign in your central administration and, of course, on your campuses. You have to engage your principals before they engage their teachers and parents. And some of these principals are fairly certain that they are doing a pretty good job already. In the same vein, many of your central administrators think all the change has to occur on the campuses but not in their support for the campuses. They're convinced the campuses are just not making the right decisions with the resources they've been given.

It's important that you have the time to sequence and stage your reform efforts so you don't overwhelm your campuses and your central support capacity. You can't outrun your principals and teachers. No matter how good your ideas may be, nothing will change if you don't have the support of your administrators and teachers.

That's why we've tried to pace the reform in Austin. To do this, we've created structures, capacity, and expertise so that we could be successful in undertaking major innovation.

Lesson Two: It Requires External Validation and the Capacity to Respond

External events also helped drive significant change. During the winter of 2002-

2003, AISD had to declare financial exigency due to a downturn in the projected revenues for the following school year based on the state's school finance formula. This did, surprisingly, give us a unique opportunity to restructure. We commissioned a reorganization study, whose findings provided support for a more effective and efficient organization. This included cutbacks in our central office staffing and supported my vision of horizontally aligned supervision of schools. We went from five Area Superintendents to three associate superintendents, including one Associate Superintendent for High Schools. Previously, our five Area Superintendents had a span of control that included two or three high schools for each with all the middle and elementary schools feeding those high schools. Now we can get all our high school principals in one room and have deep discussions about high schools. That was my first step.

The reorganization study also recommended that we consider outsourcing leadership of our CATE program. It found that our CATE program could not keep a critical mass of students in its program. Less than one-quarter of its students who entered a CATE strand at the beginning level finished that strand by the time they graduated. No one was getting the training needed to enter a trade or even to transition into a post-secondary program at a community college or trade school. Our CATE wasn't working. These data convinced us to dissolve our School-to-Career office as part of the $42 million downsizing of our school district created by economic circumstances. This is one of those times when crisis creates opportunity. I asked our Board to give us the authority to go out for bid to secure expertise with the capacity to change the AISD CATE program, bringing us a new vision and alignment. Austin Community College won the bid to develop our CATE program in a way that would serve our students well and connect with real jobs projected for the future of Austin. We now have outsourced with the best experts on CATE in Central Texas. I also convinced the Board to put out for bid a district-wide audit of our high schools. Gene Bottoms of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) thought that the Austin School District might be a place to expand the SREB reach. It had never looked at all the high schools in an urban district. SREB ended up winning the contract. It produced the recommendations and vision I mentioned earlier. I had a leadership team, a structure, and independent validation that we needed to change our high schools dramatically. We used the data and recommendations from this external expert to jumpstart our journey to district-wide redesign. Even our most successful high schools were shown where change was needed.

Lesson Three: Mining the Expertise of Critical Friends

We have been spending this school year seriously planning as a district for district-wide high school change. We convinced the Gates Foundation that we were serious about redesigning our entire district to serve high school redesign. At the same time, we asked Gates not for a five-year grant, but for a one-year planning grant to see if we had the capacity to make real change and if Gates would want to invest in our plans once they were developed. We also wanted to use part of that money to build community engagement around the change process—including students, parents, teachers, and the greater Austin community. We looked at the experience of other school districts and knew from the outset that for change to be meaningful and long-lasting, it had to have teacher and community support. A crucial part of this Gates grant for planning and public engagement is our partnership with the Stanford School Redesign Network (SRN).

This partnership has served us well. Stanford is our critical friend. Not only has it helped us develop our public engagement strategies, but also it has worked with every high school and the central administration to prod us to produce innovative ideas and push for significant outcomes. We need these critical partners to help us think through the challenges of redesign. These challenges include:

- Maintaining interdependence versus the desire to be autonomous;
- Sequencing change;
- Building deep and broad public engagement in our schools and in our community as a whole;
- Making the theoretical "real" through visits to best practices models around the country;
- The limitations of time and resources;
- Job titles and compensation levels for new high school leaders;
- Continuous use of data to guide reform, including mid-course corrections; and, perhaps most important,
- The most effective use of professional development.

Conclusion

We have a long way to go. But with the help of Stanford, the work of our dedicated and innovative principals and staff, community buy-in, and support from Gates and Dell, we have stayed together on this journey. What makes Austin unique in this effort is our desire to go "wall-to-wall" with high school redesign, creating

a portfolio of schools while emphasizing the conversion of comprehensive high schools. The Austin school district has four of the best high schools in America as well as an academic magnet that can compete with any in the country. We also have four high schools that need a big push and three others on the critical list. In each of these high schools are a number of students who won't make it in the 21st-century economy if we don't change our ways. That's why we have determined to redesign all our high schools so we can better serve all our students. We can't do any less.

Appendix 9:
AISD Request for Design Rubric

All responses should include the following:

1) Specific details on how each aspect of your plan will address the following directive from the AISD Board of Trustees Strategic Plan:

> "We firmly believe that all of our students should be as well educated as any in the world, and that all of our students have the capacity to be high achievers. By 2010, all AISD students will be achieving at consistently high levels in all subject areas, and achievement gaps between student groups will be eliminated."

2) Specific details on how each aspect of your plan will directly lead to improved teaching and learning for all students. In particular, how will it deepen teachers' capacity to provide rigorous curriculum and instruction to all students and how it will support those students in meeting high expectations?

Rubric begins on next page

PROPOSED DESIGN STRUCTURES

	Recommend	Needs Revision	Unacceptable
1) Vision	• Clear and consistent data-based evidence for each subgroup demonstrating why there is a need for change. • Clear and consistent evidence that the vision is student-centered and supports high standards for all members of the school community. • Outcomes clearly state expectations for what all graduates will be expected to know and do. • The vision is clearly embedded throughout the entire plan.	• Partial and clear data-based evidence for each subgroup demonstrating why there is a need for change. • Partial evidence that the vision is student-centered and supports high standards for all members of the school community. • Evidence is present for some, but not all, members of the school community. • Outcomes partially state expectations for what graduates will be expected to know and do. • The vision is partially embedded throughout the entire plan.	• Little or no data-based evidence for each sub-group demonstrating why there is a need for change. • Little or no evidence that the vision is student-centered and supports high standards for all members of the school community. • Outcomes do not state expectations for what graduates will be expected to know and do. • The vision is embedded in few parts of the entire plan.

Comments:

PROPOSED DESIGN STRUCTURES

	Recommended	Needs revision	Unacceptable
2) Community Engagement	• Clear and consistent evidence of meaningful engagement of all stake-holder groups, including the full faculty (including teachers in each foundation subject area, enrichment teachers, Special Education teachers, ELL teachers, Gifted and talented teachers, etc), all staff, students, families, the CAC, the PTA, community members, and the vertical team (i.e., middle and elementary schools). • Engagement activities allow stakeholders to give feedback and shape the redesign process. • Plan provides clear evidence of multiple opportunities for engagement by stakeholders.	• Partial and clear evidence of meaningful engagement of all stakeholder groups. • Plan demonstrates the engagement of some, but not all, groups. • Engagement activities allow some, but not all, stakeholders to give feedback and shape the redesign process. • Plan provides some evidence of multiple opportunities for engagement by some stakeholders.	• Little or no evidence of meaningful engagement of all stakeholder groups. • Plan demonstrates the engagement of few or no groups. • Little or no opportunity for stakeholders to give feedback or to shape the redesign process. • Plan provides little evidence of multiple opportunities for engagement by stakeholders.

Comments:

	Recommend	Needs Revision	Unacceptable
3) Strategies for Smallness	Clear and consistent evidence of small schools/SLCs: • that are phased in for all students in grades 9-12 according the guidelines of the RFD; • that have sustained, personalized relationships for all students in grades 9-12 and a student-teacher ratio in the core subject areas (including world languages) of 75:1; • in which individual teachers are assigned to one small school/SLC in at least a minimum of the foundation subject areas (including world language); and • in which students are assigned to one SLC for a minimum of the foundation subject areas (including world languages).	Partial and clear evidence of small schools/SLCs: • that are phased in for some, but not all, students in grades 9-12 according the guidelines of the RFD; • that have sustained, personalized relationships for most, but not all, students, in grades 9-12; most, but not all, teachers in the core subject areas (including world languages) have a student-teacher ratio of 75:1; • that have some, but not all, individual teachers assigned to one small school/SLC in at least a minimum of the foundation subject areas (including world languages); • that have some, but not all, students assigned to one SLC for a minimum of the foundation subject areas (including world languages).	Little or no evidence of small schools/SLCs: • Plan does not phase in small schools/SLCs for all students in grades 9-12 according the guidelines of the RFD; • Plan does not have sustained, personalized relationships for all students, grades 9-12; few or no teachers in the core subject areas (including world languages have a student-teacher ration of 75:1; • Plan has few or no individual teachers assigned to one small school/SLC in at least a minimum of the foundation subject areas (including world language); • Plan has few or no students assigned to one SLC for a minimum of the foundation subject areas (including world languages).

Comments:

PROPOSED DESIGN STRUCTURES

	Recommend	Needs Revision	Unacceptable
4)Personalization	• Clear and consistent evidence that individual students have sustained, personalized relationships with individual teachers through personalization structures (e.g., advisories, looping, block scheduling, etc.). • Clear process that provides each student with a primary adult advisor. • Evidence that structures are clearly designed to focus on supporting student learning and personal development for all students and each student subgroup.	• Partial and clear evidence that most students have sustained, personalized relationships with some individual teachers through personalization structures (e.g., advisories, looping, etc.). • Partial and clear process that provides most, but not all, students with a primary adult advisor. • Partial evidence that structures are designed to focus on supporting student learning and personal development for all students and each student subgroup.	• Little or no evidence that individual students will have sustained, personalized relationships with individual teachers through personalization structures (e.g., advisories, looping, etc.). • Little or no evidence of a process that provides all students with a primary adult advisor. • Little or no evidence that structures are designed to focus on supporting student learning and personal development for all students and each student subgroup.

Comments:

	Recommend	Needs Revision	Unacceptable
5) Leadership	• Clear and consistent evidence of a plan to select small school/SLC leaders and to clearly delineate responsibilities of campus site leadership and small school/SLC leadership. • Clear demonstration of who is accountable for student outcomes at the campus and the small school/SLC level and of how campus-wide and small school/SLC decisions will be made. • Clear and consistent evidence of teacher involvement in leadership. • Clear and consistent evidence that individual small schools/SLCs will have primary responsibility over hiring future teachers and leaders.	• Partial and clear evidence of a plan to select small school/SLC leaders and to delineate responsibilities of campus site leadership and small school/SLC leadership. • Partial demonstration of who is accountable for student outcomes at the campus and the small school/SLC level and of how campus-wide and small school/SLC decisions will be made. • Partial and clear evidence of teacher involvement in leadership. • Partial and clear evidence that individual small schools/SLCs will have primary responsibility over hiring future teachers and leaders.	• Little or no evidence of a plan to select small school/SLC leaders and to delineate responsibilities of campus site leadership and small school/SLC leadership. • No clear demonstration of who is accountable for student outcomes at the campus and the small school/SLC level and of how campus-wide and small school/SLC decisions will be made. • Little or no evidence of teacher involvement in leadership. • Little or no evidence that individual small schools/SLCs will have primary responsibility over hiring future teachers and leaders.

Comments:

PROPOSED DESIGN STRUCTURES

	Recommend	Needs Revision	Unacceptable
6) Staffing	• Clear and consistent evidence of a fair and equitable teacher assignment process to each small school/SLC that includes provisions for teacher input. • Clear and consistent evidence that individual small schools/SLCs have primary responsibility over hiring future staff. • Evidence that the plan includes a listing of all intended staff positions and student-teacher ratios.	• Partial evidence of a fair and equitable teacher assignment process to each small school/SLC that includes provisions for input from most, but not all, teachers. • Partial evidence that individual small schools/SLCs have primary responsibility over hiring future staff.	• Little or no evidence of a fair and equitable teacher assignment process to each small school/SLC that includes provisions for teacher input. • Little or no evidence that individual small schools/SLCs have primary responsibility over hiring future staff.

Comments:

	Recommend	Needs Revision	Unacceptablee
7) Student Assignment	Clear and consistent evidence of a fair and equitable student assignment process to each small school/SLC for all students, with attention to the balanced distribution of students in each student subgroup across all small schools/SLCs.	Partial and clear evidence of a fair and equitable student assignment process to each small school/SLC for all students, with attention to the balanced distribution of students in most, but not all, student subgroups across all small schools/SLCs.	Little or no evidence of a fair and equitable student assignment process to each small school/SLC for all students; little or no attention to the balanced distribution of students in each student subgroup across all small schools/SLCs.

Comments:

PROPOSED DESIGN STRUCTURES

	Recommend	Needs Revision	Unacceptable
8) Curriculum and Instruction	• Clear and consistent evidence of a curriculum and instruction plan that is well-defined, detailed, and aligned with district and state standards and that prepares all students to graduate on the recommended or distinguished plan, prepared for college and career. • Plan clearly details how all students, including students with disabilities, English language learners, gifted and talented students, and all subgroups will be engaged by the curriculum and instructional methods. • Plan clearly indicates how subgroups who were previously not achieving at proficient levels will benefit from improved learning through the redesign. • Plan clearly demonstrates how achievement gaps will be closed and how each subgroup will be proportionately represented in advanced courses at each grade level. • Plan clearly demonstrates how strategies and provisions will be put in place so that all students have access to the core recommended curriculum (including world languages) and how instructional supports will be put in place to ensure that all students will succeed in that curriculum.	• Partial and clear evidence of a curriculum and instruction plan that is well-defined, detailed, and aligned with district and state standards and that prepares most, but not all, students to graduate on the recommended or distinguished plan, prepared for college and career. • Plan partially and clearly details how all students, including students with disabilities, English language learners, gifted and talented students, and all subgroups will be engaged by the curriculum and instructional methods. • Plan partially and clearly indicates how subgroups who were previously not achieving at proficient levels will benefit from improved learning through the redesign. • Plan partially and clearly demonstrates how achievement gaps will be closed and how most, but not all, subgroups will be proportionately represented in advanced courses at each grade level. • Plan partially and clearly demonstrates how strategies and provisions will be put in place so that most, but not all, students have access to the core recommended curriculum (including world languages) and how instructional supports will be put in place to ensure that most, but not all, students will succeed in that curriculum.	• Little or no evidence of a curriculum and instruction plan that is well-defined, detailed, and aligned with district and state standards and that prepares all students to graduate on the recommended or distinguished plan, prepared for college and career. • Plan provides little or no evidence of how all students, including students with disabilities, English language learners, gifted and talented students, and all subgroups will be engaged by the curriculum and instructional methods. • Plan provides little or no evidence of how subgroups who were previously not achieving at proficient levels will benefit from improved learning through the redesign. • Little or no evidence of a plan that demonstrates how achievement gaps will be closed and how each subgroup will be proportionately represented in advanced courses at each grade level. • Little or no evidence of a plan that demonstrates how strategies and provisions will be put in place so that all students have access to the core recommended curriculum (including world languages) and how instructional supports will be put in place to ensure that all students will succeed in that curriculum.

Comments:

	Recommend	Needs Revision	Unacceptable
9) Assessment	• Clear and consistent evidence of an assessment plan that is well-defined, detailed, and aligned with district and state standards. • Evidence of a clearly defined assessment plan that includes multiple opportunities for measuring student progress (including performance assessments such as portfolios, senior exhibitions, etc.). • Evidence that the plan indicates how all students in each student subgroup will graduate on the recommended or distinguished plan.	• Partial and clear evidence of an assessment plan that is well-defined, detailed, and aligned with district and state standards. • Evidence of a partial and clearly defined assessment plan that includes multiple, but insufficient, opportunities for measuring student progress (including performance assessments such as portfolios, senior exhibitions, etc.). • Evidence that the plan partially and clearly indicates how all students in each student subgroup will graduate on the recommended or distinguished plan.	• Little or no evidence of an assessment plan that is well-defined, detailed, and aligned with district and state standards. • Little or no evidence of a clearly defined assessment plan that provides multiple opportunities for measuring student progress (including performance assessments such as portfolios, senior exhibitions, etc.). • Little or no evidence of how all students in each student subgroup will graduate on the recommended or distinguished plan.

Comments:

PROPOSED DESIGN STRUCTURES

	Recommend	Needs Revision	Unacceptable
10) Teacher collaboration and instructional improvement	• Clear and consistent evidence of a plan to meaningfully engage all teachers in a sustained, collaborative effort to improve instruction. • Clear evidence of a plan to organize teacher time in such a manner as to create personalized teacher learning communities. • Clear evidence of a plan to prepare and sustain teachers for new responsibilities in small schools/SLCs (e.g., learning to teach in advisory). • Clear evidence of an induction plan to support new teachers.	• Partial and clear evidence of a plan to meaningfully engage all teachers in a sustained, collaborative effort to improve instruction. • Partial and clear evidence of a plan to organize teacher time in such a manner as to create personalized teacher learning communities. • Partial and clear evidence of a plan to prepare and sustain teachers for new responsibilities in small schools/SLCs (e.g., learning to teach in advisory). • Partial and clear evidence of an induction plan to support new teachers.	• Little or no evidence of a plan to meaningfully engage all teachers in a sustained, collaborative effort to improve instruction. • Little or no evidence of a plan to organize teacher time in such a manner as to create personalized teacher learning communities. • Little or no evidence of a plan to prepare and sustain teachers for new responsibilities in small schools/SLCs (e.g., learning to teach in advisory). • Little or no evidence of an induction plan to support new teachers.

Comments:

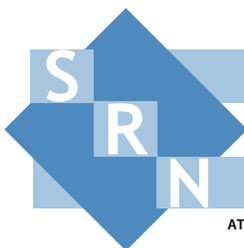|	Recommend	Needs Revision	Unacceptable
11) Facilities	• Clear and consistent evidence of a plan for the use of facility space. • Plan clearly indicates what spaces will be shared by the campus and which will be dedicated to individual small schools/SLCs. • Plan clearly indicates how the following will be used: classrooms, labs, libraries, athletic facilities, arts facilities, offices, cafeterias, bathrooms, and entrances/exits. • Plan includes a clear plan for "traffic" flow, indicating how students will travel from space to space and how this travel will affect the use of dedicated space.	• Partial and clear evidence of a plan for the use of facility space. • Plan partially and clearly indicates what spaces will be shared by the campus and which will be dedicated to individual small schools/SLCs. • Plan partially and clearly indicates how the following will be used: classrooms, labs, libraries, athletic facilities, arts facilities, offices, cafeterias, bathrooms, and entrances/exits. • Plan includes a partial and clear plan for "traffic" flow, indicating how students will travel from space to space and how this travel will affect the use of dedicated space.	• Little or no evidence of a plan for the use of facility space. • Plan provides little or no evidence of what spaces will be shared by the campus and which will be dedicated to individual small schools/SLCs. • Plan provides little or no evidence of how the following will be used: classrooms, labs, libraries, athletic facilities, arts facilities, offices, cafeterias, bathrooms, and entrances/exits. • Plan includes little or no evidence of a plan for "traffic" flow, indicating how students will travel from space to space and how this travel will affect the use of dedicated space.

Comments:

PROPOSED DESIGN STRUCTURES

	Recommend	Needs Revision	Unacceptable
12) Budget	• Clear and consistent evidence of a detailed draft budget that includes campus expenditures as well as small school/SLC expenditures. • Budget is clearly and consistently aligned with the key elements of the overall proposal.	• Partial and clear evidence of a detailed draft budget that includes campus expenditures as well as small school/SLC expenditures. • Budget is partially and clearly aligned with the key elements of the overall proposal.	• Little or no evidence of a detailed draft budget that includes campus expenditures as well as small school/SLC expenditures. • Budget is somewhat or not at all aligned with the key elements of the overall proposal.

Comments:

	Recommend	Needs Revision	Unacceptable
13) Timeline	Clear and consistent evidence of a phased-in plan in which all students and faculty are in redesigned schools that are consistent with the guiding principles of the RFD and the High School Redesign Initiative.	Partial and clear evidence of a phased-in plan in which all students and faculty are in redesigned schools that are consistent with the guiding principles of the RFD and the High School Redesign Initiative.	Little or no evidence of a phased-in plan in which all students and faculty are in redesigned schools that are consistent with the guiding principles of the RFD and the High School Redesign Initiative.

Comments: