Initiating and Sustaining School Improvement: A Summary of Research-Based Strategies

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|  | ***To initiate improvement, school community members begin to address core instructional issues by:*** | ***To sustain improvement, school community members dig deeper on challenging questions of student learning by:*** |
| **Strong leadership and shared ownership** | • Developing a student-centric vision among the members of the school community  • Identifying a cadre of teachers for leadership roles in the school | * Establishing collective responsibility for a vision for student learning * Engaging teachers in school improvement and building their leadership capacity * Facilitating participation for all educators in the building through teacher leaders * Teachers and all staff actively participating in decision-making |
| **Meaningful teacher collaboration** | • Outlining expectations for feedback (e.g., educators will regularly receive feedback and modify classroom practices)  • Setting aside time for educators to collaborate on issues affecting classroom instruction | • Fostering a professional culture that values continuous learning for all educators  • Establishing collaborative work routines among teachers that focuses on student learning priorities  • Adopting and routinizing peer feedback opportunities |
| **Effective use of data** | • Utilizing grade-level-appropriate assessments  • Reviewing student performance to identify gaps in student mastery | • Using data to guide school-wide decisions on instruction  • Identifying classroom practices that are, and are not, working to improve student learning  • Developing pedagogical approaches aligned with gaps in student mastery |
| **Academic rigor and student support** | • Establishing a safe and orderly environment  • Endorsing ambitious behavioral and academic expectations for all students | • Internalizing a culture of high expectations for teachers and students • Identifying specific annual student learning priorities (aligned with school vision) • Developing instructional materials and resources that align with expectations |
| **Effective family and community partnerships** | • Communicating regularly with parents about school priorities | • Investing the entire school community—including students, parents, and families—in the vision for the school • Linking student performance and school improvement goals in a manner accessible to families |