

# Leading Early Learning in "High-Need" Settings

Professional Association of Oregon  
School Administrators

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# Chicago Public Schools

**“the worst school system in America.”**

**--U.S. Secretary of Education William Bennett,  
1987**

## Chicago Schools Lead Country in Academic Growth, Study Finds

By Sarah D. Sparks Nov. 9, 2017

2008-2014:  
96<sup>th</sup> %ile in  
growth  
among all  
districts; 6  
yrs. of  
growth for  
5 yrs.  
grades 3-8



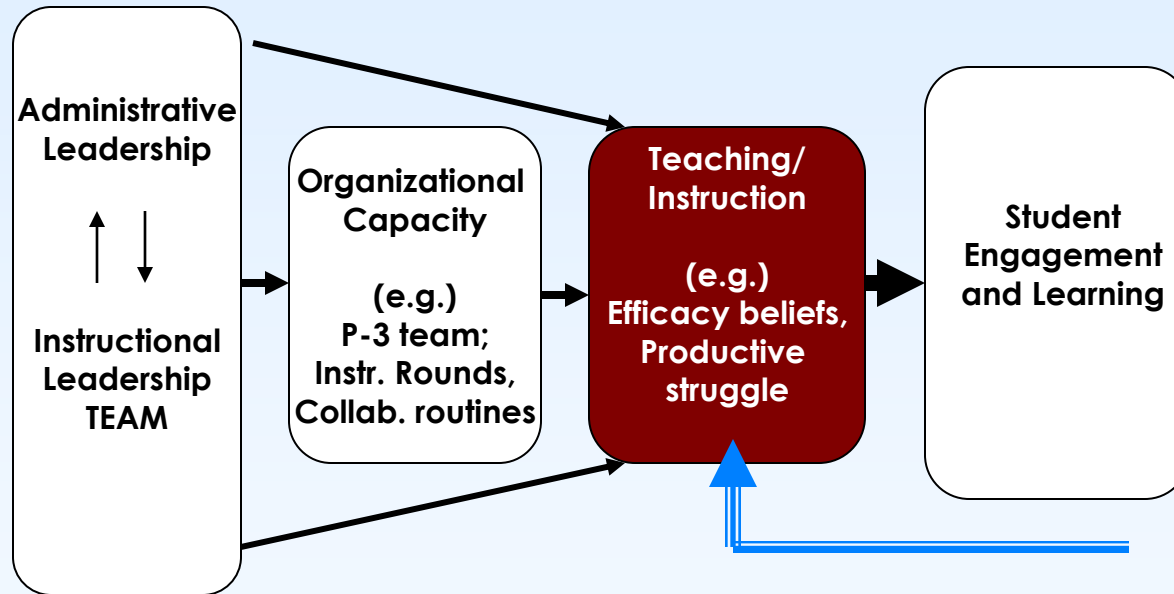
Reardon:  
“a real and  
sustained  
pattern of  
above average  
learning rates  
and  
performance  
Improvement.”

## A Central Problem of Practice

- Socio-economic influences have systemically greater impact on student learning than in-school influences
- Some schools & districts show much greater success with in-school influences than others
- **We are not learning from those outliers at scale**



# Within-school Improvement of Student Learning (explicit theory of impact)



# What is School Organizational Capacity?

- Bryk, Sebring, et al (2010) *Organizing Schools for Improvement* (assessed yearly in every Illinois school)
- **School Leadership**
- **Professional Capacity**
- **Parent Community School Ties**
- **Student Centered Learning Climate**
- **Instructional Guidance**

**NOTE the role of LEADERSHIP in each**

**UIC program completers  
placed as school leaders  
since 2003**

**94% (UIC Principals & APs)**

**77% (UIC Principals)**

**15% (Illinois avg.)**



## Continuous Improvement/Encouraging results

- Improved school performance on CPS indicators
- 110 current CPS leaders at school & district level are UIC program grads: CEO, Principal Supervisors, Chiefs of ECE and Language & Culture, Principals, APs.
- National recognition: Council of Great City Schools, UCEA, Bush Institute, PBS, U.S. News, etc.



# Next edge for improvement: Leadership of high-churn urban schools



## Dismal record improving the lowest-performing schools

Massive federal resources (School Improvement Grants, Race to the Top, Turnaround Initiatives)

Little to no impact (e.g., SIG evaluation of \$3 billion invested)



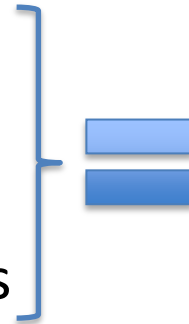
# Inventing an alternate way to identify high-need schools

## CATEGORIES

Mobility Rates

Chronic Truancy Rates

Homeless Student Rates



Stable Schools: 62%

High Churn Schools: 30%

Borderline Churn: 8%

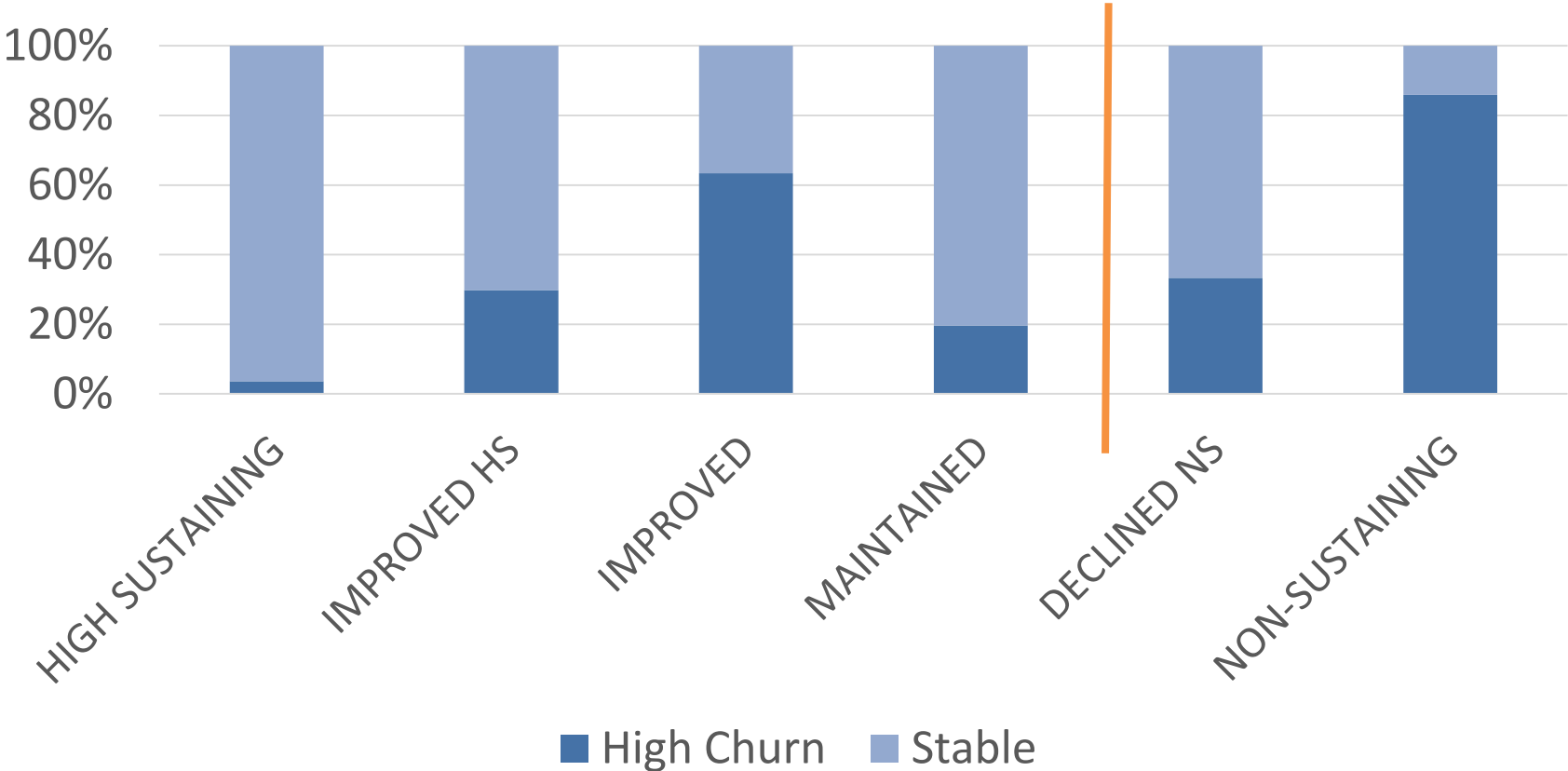


## Factors in Educational Experience

INDICATORS	STABLE (median)	DIFFERENCE	HIGH CHURN (median)
Mobility	7%	3.4 times	24%
Chronic Truancy	15%	2.7 times	41%
Homeless Students	2%*	5 times	10%



# 5-YR ACCOUNTABILITY CHANGES



## How to improve early learning in high-churn schools?

### Organizational and Instructional Capacity

**Vision:** the moral imperative; the science of reading; the gap between early learning and adult learning; families as allies

**Systems:** Routines of collaboration to empower adults to learn how to learn together—and to improve organizational and instructional practices

**People:** Preparing and developing leaders and teachers at preservice and inservice levels: an LEA/IHE challenge



## A Short Bookshelf of Resources for Literacy Leaders (First, the Science)



- **Allen, L. & Kelly, B.** eds. (2015) *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*. Committee on the Science of Children Birth to Age 8—Board on Children, Youth, and Families. Institute of Medicine and National Research Council. Washington, DC: National Academies Press. ([www.nap.edu](http://www.nap.edu))
- **Ericsson, A.** (2016) *Peak: Secrets from the New Science of Expertise*. Houghton Mifflin.
- **Shonkoff, J. P. & Phillips, D. A.** eds. (2010) *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*. Board on Children, Youth, and Families, National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

## Bookshelf: Organization and Leadership as Foundations for Learning

- **Bryk, A. S., Sebring, P. B., Allensworth, E., Luppescu, S., & Easton, J. Q.** (2010). *Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lessons from Chicago*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- **Bryk, A., Gomez, L.** et al. (2015). *Learning to improve: How America's schools can get better at getting better*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- **Dewey, J.** (1936) *Experience and Education*. Kappa Delta Pi.
- **Takanishi, R.** (2016). *First Things First! Creating the New American Primary School*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- **Leading PreK-3 Learning Communities: Competencies for Effective Principal Practice** (2014) Alexandria, VA: National Association of Elementary School Principals.



## Four Sources for Leadership Learning

- **Bryk, Gomez, et al (2015)** *Learning to Improve (again)*. Harvard.
- **Donaldson, G.** (2008) *How Leaders Learn: Cultivating Capacities for School Improvement*
- **Forman, Stosich, Bocala** (2017) *The Internal Coherence Framework*.
- **William, D.** (2016) *Leading for Teacher Learning*



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