

2011 Program Report Card: **University of Connecticut CommPACT Schools Project**

CommPACT = Comm(unity), Parents, Administrators, Children and Teachers

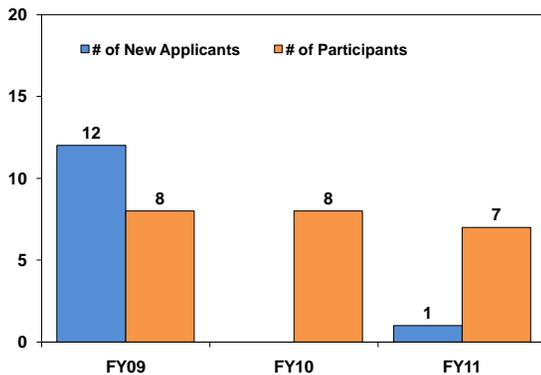
Quality of Life Result: Project is designed to turn chronically underperforming schools in Connecticut’s priority school districts into high performing schools within five years.

Contribution to Result: The Neag School serves as the research, development and support center providing on-site reform facilitators for each school, professional development in evidence based practice, management of data gathering and analysis, priority setting, and dissemination of best practices garnered from the research across the state.

Total Program Funding for FY11: \$1,744,000 State: \$695,000 Federal: \$650,000 Other: \$399,000

Partners: Collaboration among the American Federation of Teachers-Connecticut, Connecticut Education Association, Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents, Connecticut Association of Urban Superintendents, Connecticut Federation of School Administrators, and the University’s Neag School of Education.

Performance Measure 1: Identify and gain commitment to become a CommPACT School.

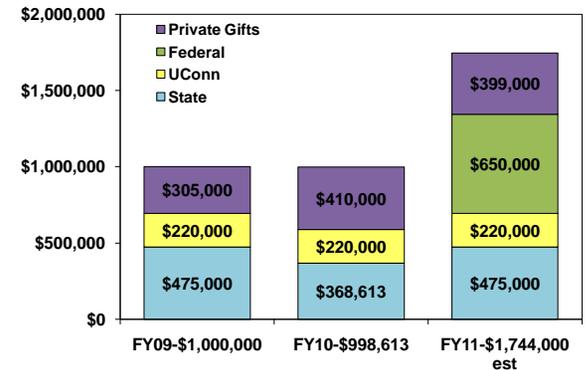


Story behind the baseline: 12 Schools applied and 8 were selected in the first year (Waterbury-2, Hartford-1, Bridgeport-2, New Haven-2 and New London-1). All but one of the schools selected were on the No Child Left Behind watch list. All sites require votes from the faculty, parents, administrators and school board approval to be

accepted. Of the original 8 schools, 6 have continued participation in the program and 1 new school has been added in FY11.

Proposed actions to turn the curve: Implementation of a comprehensive assessment/evaluation system to ensure accountability of the project. Continued acceptance by parents, teachers, community members and administrators will ensure project success on a larger scale. With additional funding, we would hope to expand this program.

Performance Measure 2: CommPACT Schools Project funding.



Story behind the baseline: Upon implementation of this program, the Legislature promised \$720,000 per year in funding. Due to budget cuts, the program received a significantly reduced allotment. This drastic reduction has seriously hurt the speed of reform as money advocated for site based professional development and curricular change has been eliminated. UConn provides direct and indirect support to this program via administrative staff and

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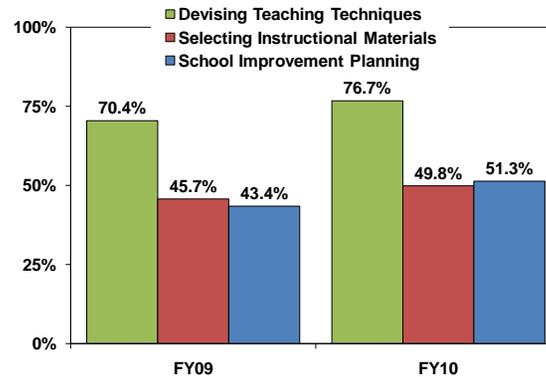
technical services from faculty in the Neag School of Education.

Proposed actions to turn the curve:

All efforts are being made to garner additional support to fill the gap in state support to keep the program moving forward. Unless the budget is increased, the project will be forced to eliminate support to schools in order to do the least harm to the overall program.

Performance Measure 3:

Increased Teacher Leadership improves motivation, retention and can lead to fundamental change in schools.



Story behind the baseline: Teachers in FY10 reported greater involvement in decision-making. The examples shown above are reflective of the proportion of teachers reporting that they played a moderate to primary leadership role. As a whole, the findings are to be expected, given the ambitious and counter-cultural nature of efforts to increase teachers' authority and influence in schools. Given the barriers to teacher leadership and the difficulty of brokering new ways of sharing authority and new models of

making decisions in schools, modest increases in teacher involvement over one year represent substantial growth in practical terms.

Proposed actions to turn the curve:

The survey and interview data suggest that CommPACT schools should spend considerable time developing effective processes for making decisions that realize the goal of broadening stakeholder--including teacher--involvement. Without these processes in place, teacher leadership will not truly flourish. Moreover, it is recommended that key stakeholders, including district leaders with direct authority over CommPACT schools, principals, and teachers themselves regularly and reflectively revisit what it means to increase teacher leadership and involvement in decision-making.