

Research and Development Work of the National Center on Scaling Up Effective Schools

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THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL



Big Question:



How can the capacity of school districts be enhanced so that they can

- identify effective practices
- adapt them to the contexts of schools and their communities, and then
- implement them in ways that will lead to an increase in learning for all children?

Some challenges to scaling up effective programs in education



- **Lack of teacher buy-in and participation** (Datnow, Hubbard, and Mehan, 2002; Glennan, Bodilly, Galegher, & Kerr, 2004; Nunnery 1998)
- **Inadequate attention to the organizational context in which the practices are to be implemented** (Bodilly et al., 1998; Elmore, 1996; Fullan, 2001; Stringfield & Datnow, 1998)
- **Conflicts between designs and other district programs or mandates** (Berends, Bodilly, & Kirby, 2002; Datnow, McHugh et al., 1998; Stringfield, Datnow et al., 2000).

Our approach



- Use value added models to identify schools that “beat the odds” for minority, ELL, and low income students
- Study both high and low value added schools to understand how they are enacting what research suggests are essential components of effective schools
- Facilitate district participation in conducting needs analyses, then design innovations, that capture systematic differences between high and low value added schools
- Support district and school design teams in adapting to local context and implementing interventions
- Gradually withdraw support as the districts take ownership of scaling up

What is unique about this approach?



- Not just about the what—it is also about the how
- District and school participation in the design work will help ensure that design innovations are aligned with the goals, strengths and initiatives already under way in each district.
- Leveraging teachers and school leader's unique expertise in the design and implementation process will design innovations address the needs of their respective schools and help bring legitimacy when it comes to implementation and scale up.

Collaboration



- **Five Research Universities**
 - Vanderbilt University, University of North Carolina, Florida State University, University of Wisconsin, Georgia State University
- **Developer**
 - Education Development Center (EDC)
- **Two large urban districts**
 - Broward County Public Schools (FL)
 - Fort Worth Independent School District (TX)

Phase 1—What makes schools effective?



- Use value added models to rank high schools
 - To what extent do students from traditionally low performing groups do better than their prior achievement would predict?
- Intensive data collection to uncover what the high value added schools are doing that contribute to their success and distinguish them from lower value added schools in the same district
 - Interviews: Administrators, core-subject teachers, support staff
 - Surveys: Principals, teachers, students, parents
 - Observation/video taping of classroom instruction
 - Focus groups: Non-core subject teachers; Student activity Leaders; Students
 - Shadowing of students
 - Observation of leadership meetings/professional development

Research Lens: Essential Components of Effective Schools



- ***Rigorous and Aligned Curriculum***
- ***Quality Instruction***
- ***Learning-centered Leadership***
- ***Systematic Use of Data***
- ***Personalized Learning Connections***
- ***Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior***
- ***Systemic Performance Accountability***
- ***Connections to External Communities***

How do the practices that high schools implement create and sustain the essential components

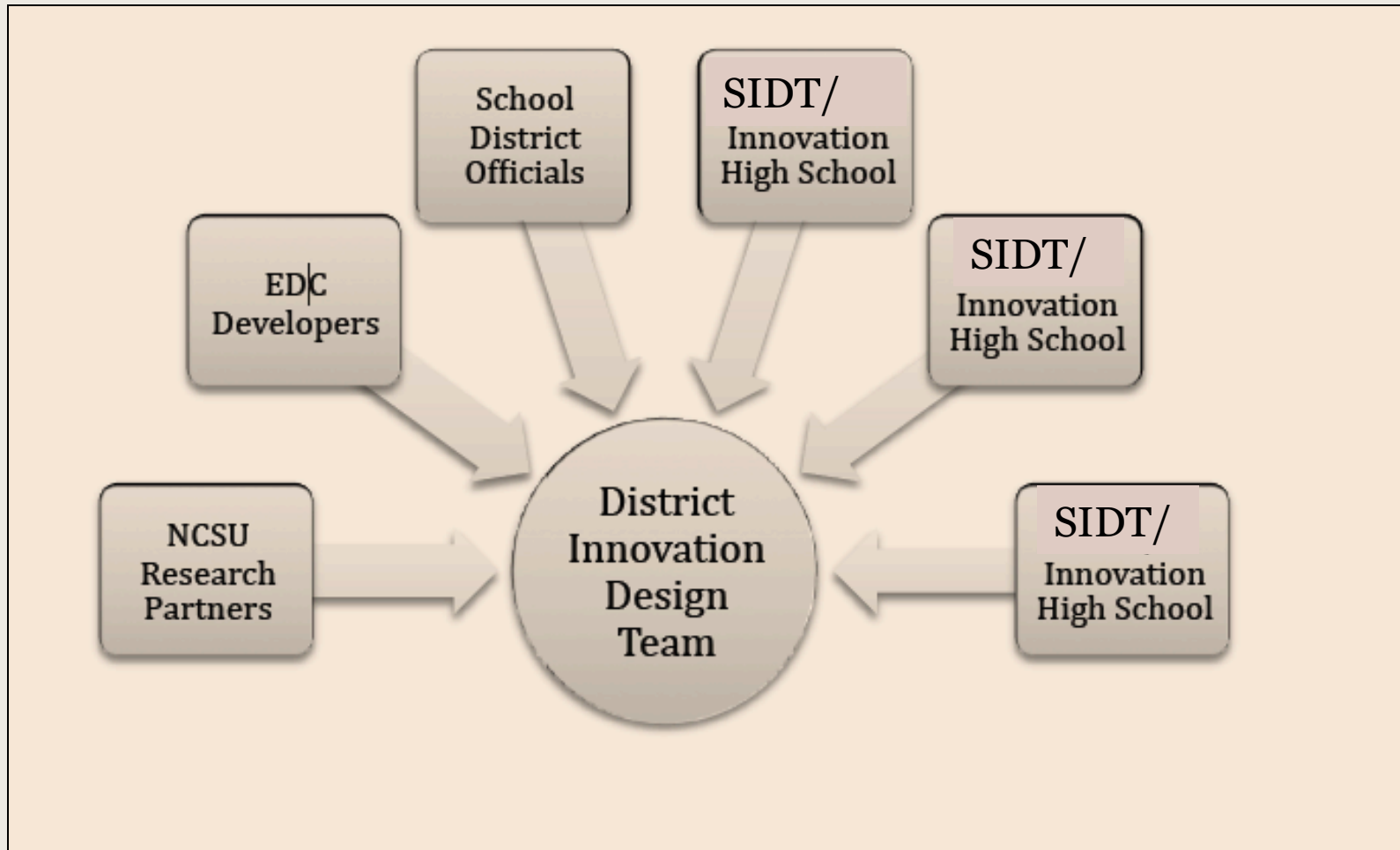
General Findings from Broward County Public Schools

- Three main areas of difference between our HVA and LVA schools in BCPS
 - 1) *Personalization for Social and Academic Learning*
 - 2) A professional culture versus an audit culture
 - 3) A culture of high expectations (across five components)

General Findings from Fort Worth ISD

- The primary area of difference between our HVA and LVA schools in FWISD
 - *Enacting Student Responsibility for Learning*
 - *High expectations for student learning*
 - *For students and teachers*
 - *Daily “learning time” where students falling behind can get assistance*

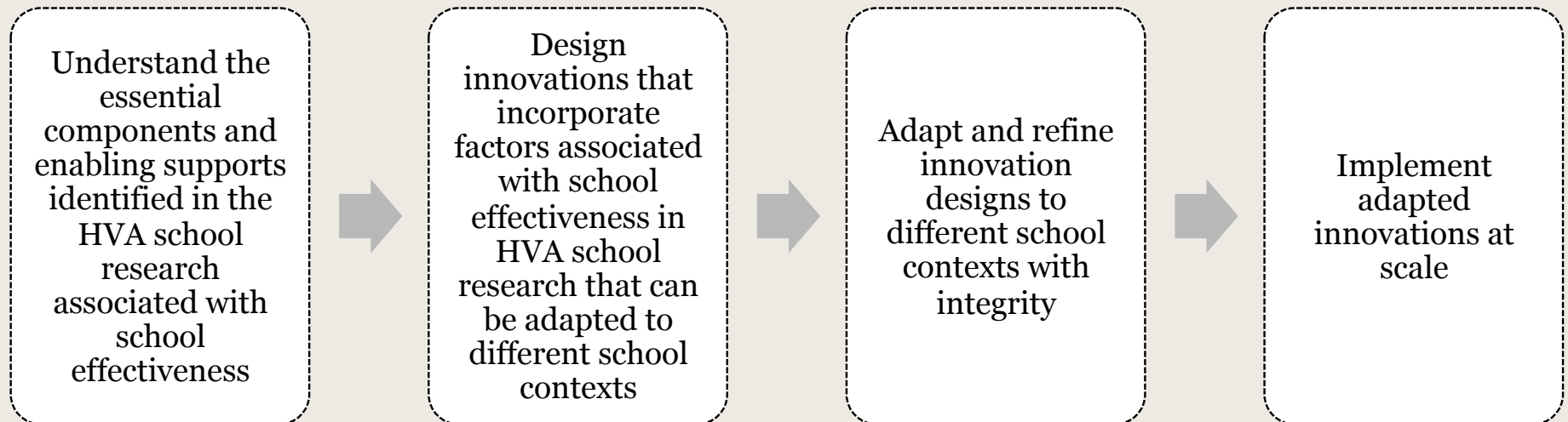
Phase 2—Collaboration to develop an intervention



Phase 2



District Innovation Design Team develops innovations based on research from their within their



While designing and implementing integrated structures of support for the work

TWO LEARNING AGENDAS

1. Build team capacity for innovation design, transfer, implementation, and scale-up

2. Deepen teams understanding of the differentiating practices of effective high schools

Content/Process

Content/Process

- Effective Use of Data
- Innovation Design
- Managing Change
- Shared Leadership
- Implementation & Transfer
- Accountability & Evaluation

- Components of Effective High Schools
- Differentiating practices
- Evidence base from the literature
- Evidence from the local setting
- Key components of the innovation
- Supporting and/or hindering contextual factors

The work that is coming—Phase 3



- Assess the implementation of design innovations and provide feedback to design team
 - Continuous feedback loop
- Build capacity in the partner districts to implement the design innovations in additional schools
 - Success: District taking up the what and the how
- Monitor outcomes to assess effectiveness of the design, implementation, and scale-up
 - Short, medium, and long term outcomes
- Develop tools that can help other districts transfer effective practices from currently effective to less effective schools