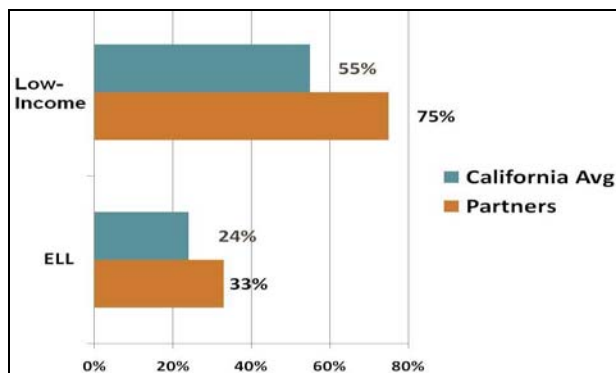
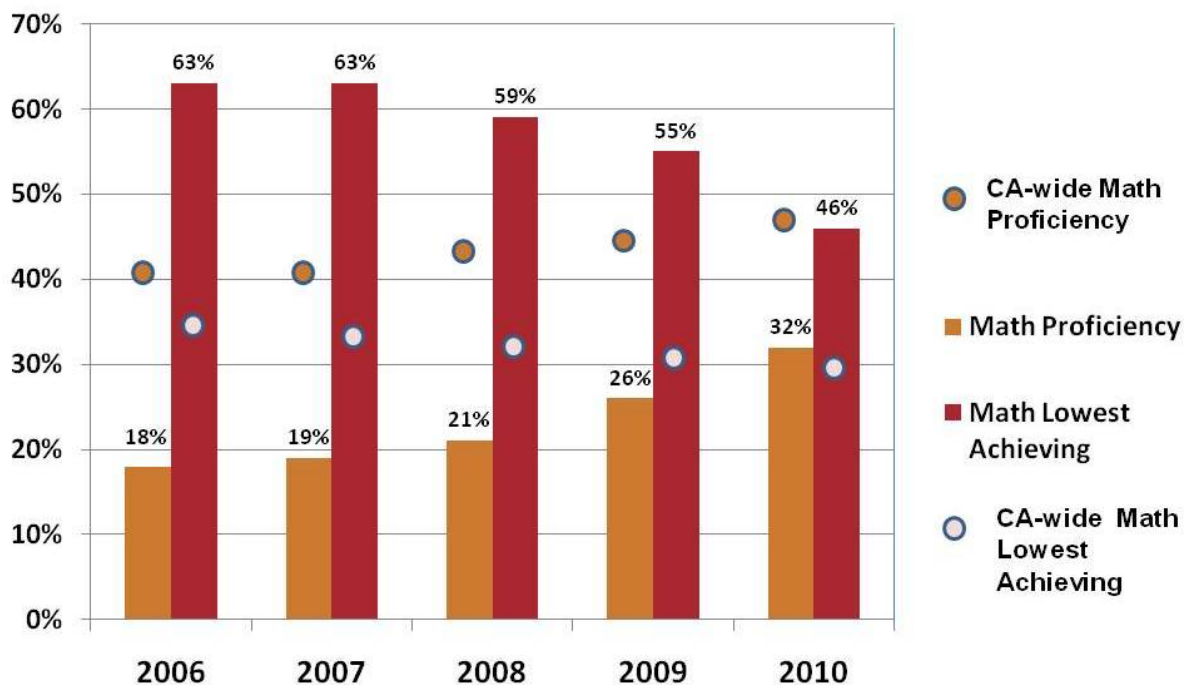




Partner Schools Closing Gaps

The chart below shows progress made in math achievement over the past five years among the 24 partner schools with whom we have worked the most over the past decade.* In 2006, the average math proficiency gap between partners and the state average was 23%, and last year that gap had been reduced to 16%. The gap between the portion of students who were low performing in math also shrank from 28% to 18% – despite the fact that partner schools have higher rates of students living in poverty and English Language Learners.

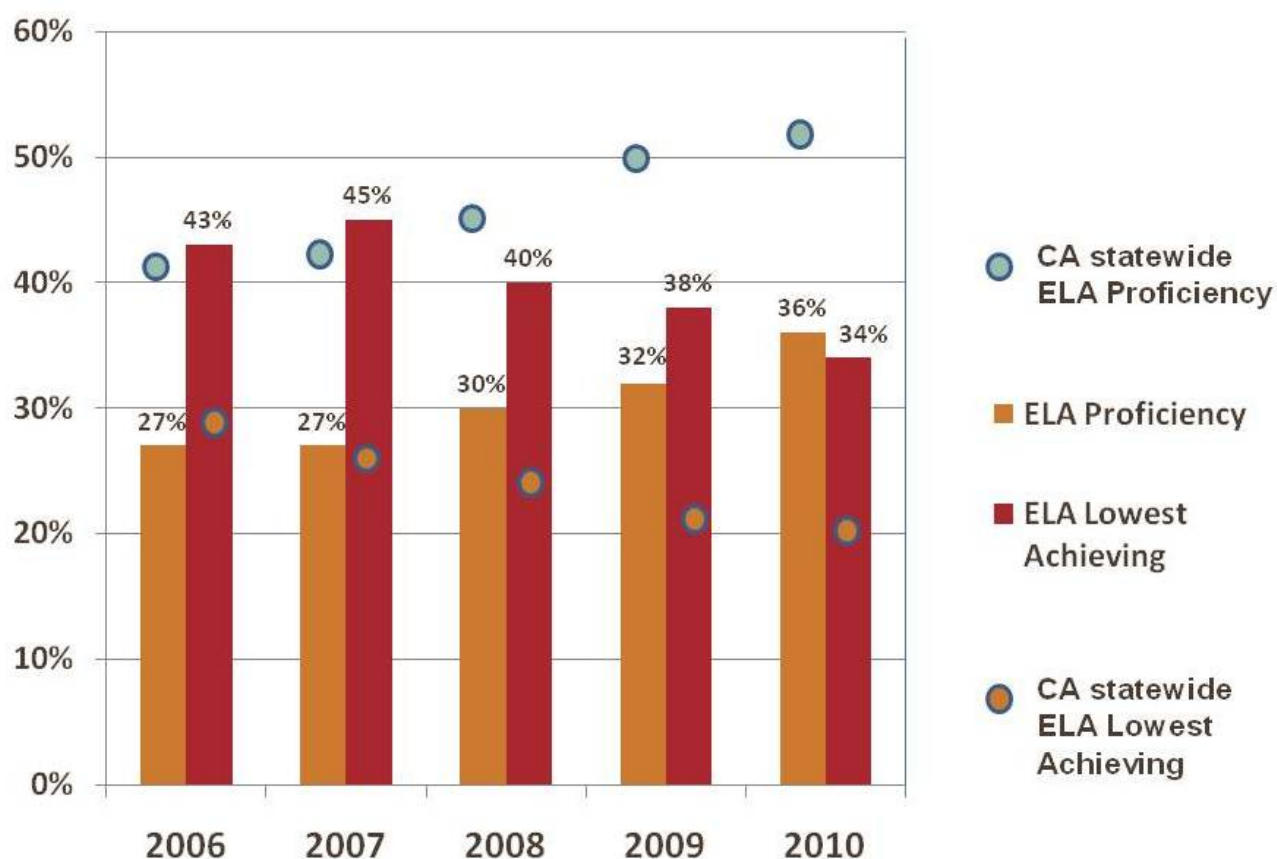
Closing Gaps: Dramatic Math Gains Among Major Partners



The next chart shows progress made in English Language Arts achievement over the past five years among the 24 partner schools with whom we have worked the most.* The gaps between these schools and state averages have not narrowed significantly, but these schools have improved at a pace that matches the state average rate, despite being some of the highest poverty schools in vulnerable urban communities in the state.

In 2010, these schools reversed a decades-old trend: for the first time, a greater portion of their students were meeting proficiency standards than were low-achieving.

Significant English Language Arts Gains Among Major Partners



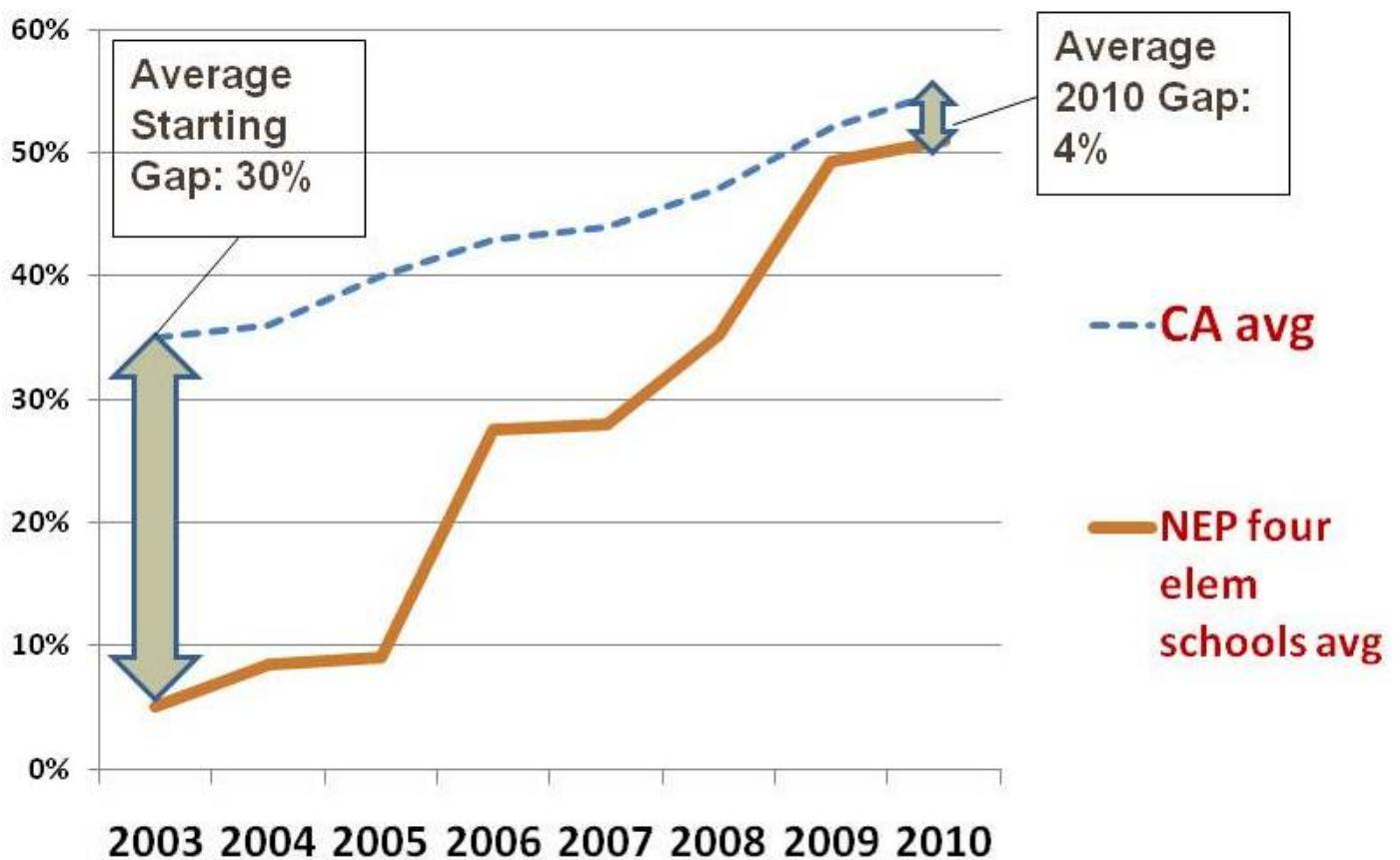
* Included in calculations are 24 partner K-12 schools that received coaching for at least three of the last five years or at least five of the past 10 years with some coaching in the past five years. Includes 8 elementary, 6 middle, and 10 high schools. Alternative schools and schools within schools were excluded. These schools received an average of 5.6 years coaching in the past decade and 3.13 years in the past five years.

Data represents proportion of students performing at relevant levels of the California Standards Test. Low-performing students are those ranked in the Below Basic and Far Below basic levels.

REPORT on RESULTS: Partner Schools Closing Gaps

The National Equity Project has a track record of success with a wide variety of partner schools serving significant populations of vulnerable students. Our external evaluations demonstrate a strong pattern of improvement in educator effectiveness and student achievement. The four Oakland schools in the following chart are our longest term elementary school partners, and we coached the design, opening, and implementation of each school.

Closing Gaps: Dramatic Literacy Gains in Elementary School Partners



These four Oakland elementary schools (Acorn Woodland, Encompass, Manzanita SEED, and Think College Now) serve a student population that is over 90% low-income, African American or Latino, and over 50% English Language Learners. Each was launched as a new small school to replace a large low-performing school that was closed.

Principal Testimonies

From these four transformed elementary schools

“This school would not exist if it were not for the National Equity Project. If someone tells me they want to start or redesign a school, I tell them they have to work with the Project. They helped us build a community that was the foundation of our academic success – they create the conditions for success.” - **David Silver, Founding Principal (2003-10), Think College Now Elementary** (California Distinguished School, 2008)

“I don’t think we’d be where we are today without the ongoing support of the Project. They have been a completely committed and vital partner from the very beginning. The Project has helped us tackle incredibly challenging issues and my Project coach has helped me personally be a more transformative leader.” - **Kimi Kean, Principal (2003-9), ACORN Woodland Elementary**

“The Project is the real deal. They have helped us develop teacher leadership teams, collaboration structures and processes to build trust, shared responsibility, and higher teacher buy-in. They bring a clear understanding of who we are and who we want to be.” - **Minh-Tram Nguyen, Founding Principal, Encompass Academy**

“What was most critical in the support we got from the National Equity Project was the big vision. It was more than ‘every child can learn,’ it was more than building a better school, it was doing school differently. It was thinking outside the box to create a transformative school... We didn’t see increases in student achievement until after several years, and in that time I was not always evaluated as an ‘effective’ school leader. Once the test scores started to rise, then I got positive evaluations, but I was not a different leader. What was different was that the process was bearing fruit. That takes time: to build a school community and culture, to attract and develop great people, to get all the pieces to work together in our unique context. The process is messy, there is no easily replicable template, what you need are approaches that are based in a vision of distributed leadership and collaboration, it can’t be top down.” - **Katherine Carter, Founding Principal, Manzanita SEED** (National Title I Distinguished School Award, 2010)





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Selected Partner Testimonies

In my role as Superintendent, I attend many conferences and training sessions. Many are good. Few are life-changing. The National Equity Project training was one of the few. You challenged my assumptions and caused me to examine what I truly believe about educating all children. You provided me with knowledge and gave me skills in developing leaders and teams who can change the conversation and transform instruction in our schools. Thank you for a creative, visionary approach. - **Mary Jane Burke, Marin County Superintendent of Schools, CA**

The Equity Project team quickly gained the confidence of our small school principals, district staff, and Board of Directors. They asked the 'tough' questions, helped us find solutions, and guided our work in aligning small school structures with the interests of staff, students, and parents. Their wisdom and suggestions have given us renewed confidence as we move forward in this very challenging work. - **Dr. Paula A. Radich, Superintendent, Newberg School District, OR**

Best professional development I have experienced throughout my teaching career. It was both a process of self-discovery and acquisition of practical skill facilitated by caring and knowledgeable professionals. - **Michelle Estekantchi, Consultant, Diversity Management; Halifax Regional School Board, Canada**

The work we've engaged in with the National Equity Project has accelerated a shift in how we look at our student population. Our school had done quite a bit of data analysis prior to this, but the data you provided was so deep and thorough it provided new insights into more specific areas. I felt we were very well coached in analyzing the data, which helped us have more meaningful conversations about groups of students and their relative levels of achievement. - **Jesse Boise, Teacher, Hillsdale High School (CA Distinguished School), San Mateo, CA**

Partnerships for Learning really changed my classroom in a positive way that wasn't difficult to do. Students now understand assessment as a time for me to learn from them. Traditionally, they try to hide what they don't know. But they're much more comfortable now with really showing me where they need help. My classroom has changed from "teach and test" to a true partnership of learning. - **Liz Little, 7-8th Grade Math Chair, MLK Jr. Middle School, Berkeley, CA**

This is the hardest work I've ever done around race and equality. Yet, the most effective, valuable, and even life-changing experience I've ever had in the realm of teacher development. - **Marva McInnis, Teacher, Encompass Academy, Oakland CA**

Anti-racist approaches to education leadership require constant learning and re-training. I do not know of a more effective, progressive, and professional organization from which to draw practical learning on this topic that can be used "real time" in the field. - **Salomé Portugal, School Support Manager, New Leaders New Schools**

If you are an educator really ready to get started addressing educational equity, then the Equity Project Institute is an excellent starting point. - **Jennifer Obidah, Director, Education Evaluation Centre, University of the West Indies**

Bring your leadership team and be ready to take your good school to the next level by building cultural competence amongst staff and meaningful learning partnerships with students. I feel energized and armed with tools to be an equity champion! - **Darron Evans, Dean of Students, Aspire Centennial College Preparatory Academy, Huntington Park, CA**

Partner School Profile:
Think College Now
Elementary School, Oakland CA



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In 2002, the National Equity Project began working with Think College Now (TCN) Founding Principal David Silver and a team of teachers and parents to design a new elementary school focused on closing the achievement gap and giving students an equal opportunity to attend college.

Demographics

- 266 K-5 students
- 88% low-income
- 63% Latino
- 18% African American
- 68% English Language Learners

Think College Now features:

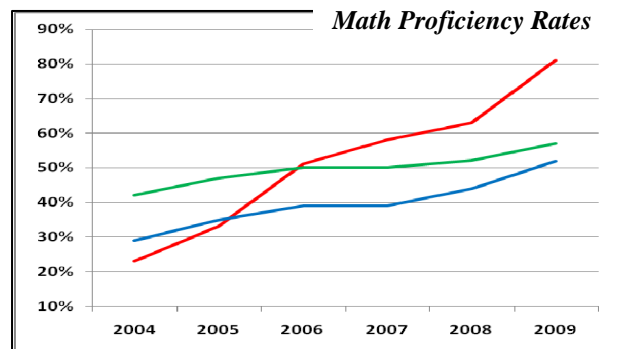
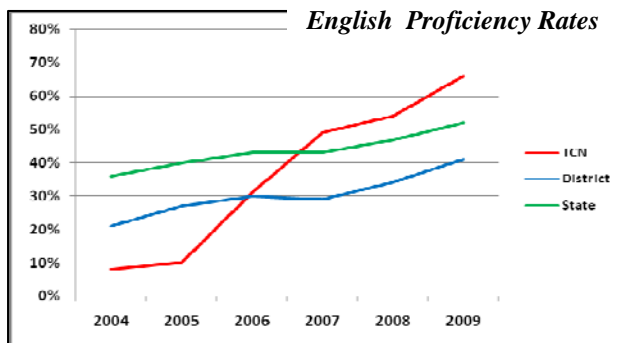
- A unique college focus for a K-5 school: parent education, college visits, college scholarships.
- Small class sizes, high expectations, teacher collaborative planning.
- Standards-based, data-driven instruction and assessment.
- Strong family and community involvement, active Family Resource Center.

National Equity Project coaching services at TCN (2002-8):

- New school design team incubation
- Principal executive and instructional leadership coaching and tools
- School and teacher professional learning community development
- Professional development planning with an equity focus
- Data-based inquiry to improve instruction
- Instructional coaching of individual teachers

Results:

- One of three Oakland schools to receive a **California Distinguished School Award** in 2008.
- **Title I Academic Achievement Award** winner for closing achievement gaps in 2007.



Founding Principal David Silver on TCN's partnership with the Project:

"This school would not exist if it were not for the Project. If someone tells me they want to start or redesign a school, I tell them they have to work with NEP. The Project helped us build a community that was the foundation of our academic success – they create the conditions for success. A big value-add is that their coaches' expertise and experience are at a really high level. I always knew when I wasn't sure about something, that they were the people I trusted who I could turn to for help."

Partner School Profile: Leadership Preparatory High School, Oakland CA



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Castlemont Small Schools principals and student.

*NEP coached the design and launch of Leadership Prep HS (LPHS) in Oakland CA, one of three new small schools formed on the campus of a low-performing large school in a very high-poverty neighborhood. Since 2008 it has participated in our **Partnerships for Learning** program, with a team of ninth grade teachers working on literacy gaps, developing learning partnerships with students, and using literacy assessment data to improve instruction.*

School Demographics EDIT

- 400 students
- 35% Latino
- 95% low-income?
- 60% African American

Leadership Prep HS features:

- Advisory programs, project-based learning, and other small school approaches.
- Improvement since launch in attendance and dropout rate (39% in 2007, 28% in 2008).
- 2009 API score was 516, placing it among the lowest performing high schools in the state.
- The three small schools will be combined into a large school starting in 2011 due to declining enrollment.

Partnerships for Learning (PFL) Activities and Results:

- The 9th grade faculty team consisted of eight teachers including English, Algebra, Biology, Drama, and ROTC.
- The principal recruited teachers and clarified goals early on but then resigned from the school, and the project was carried out by the teachers and coach.
- The remarkable progress in 9th grade student achievement and culture of learning has led to PFL being one of two major initiatives in the new campus wide 9th grade program that will launch the new single school.

California Standards Test 2009-10 – English Language Arts

School/District	% Students scoring Far Below Basic/Below Basic			% Students scoring Proficient/Advanced		
	2008-9	2009-10	Rate of Change	2008-9	2009-10	Rate of Change
School Wide	65%	62%	-5%	8%	11%	38%
9 th graders ¹	53%	35% ²	-34%	9%	23%	156%
OUSD district	34%	31%	-9%	37%	41%	11%
OUSD 9 th graders	44%	37%	-16%	27%	34%	26%

1. The Inquiry Team focused on 9th grade ELA and was composed of 9th grade faculty. 2. Only 2% scored Far Below Basic (FBB)

- LPHS 9th graders **more than doubled proficiency** over previous year, against a district avg gain of 11%.
- LPHS reduced rate of low-performing 9th graders at nearly **four times** the rate of the district (-34% v -9%).
- In 2009-10, **only 2%** of 9th graders scored in the very lowest CST score band, Far Below Basic (FBB).

Administrator Feedback:

“We want to preserve and build on what has been working in the small schools as we return to a larger school, and Partnerships for Learning is working remarkably. As we build a new program using the College Board Springboard curriculum, we need PFL to ensure that teachers know how to do formative assessment and RTI interventions, build partnerships, and help students access rigorous content.”

– Matt Duffy, Oakland Unified High School Network Officer

Partner School Profile:
M. L. King, Jr. Middle School, Berkeley CA



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*The NEP has worked with King Middle School in Berkeley CA since 2009 in our **Partnerships for Learning (PFL)** program. We coached the principal Jason Lustig on leading a school-wide inquiry program, coached department heads to become instructional leaders, and coached department teacher teams to practice focal student inquiry, assessments, and data-based instructional planning. The school is the most improved in its district.*

School Demographics

- 930 students
- 45% low-income
- 21% African American
- 21% Latino

King Middle School features:

- Large school with traditional comprehensive secondary school department structures.
- Department chairs had history and culture of administrators and managers, not instructional leaders.
- Low-income students of color perform academically far below other students.
- School had been engaged in curriculum mapping and aligning content with standards.

Activities and Results:

- In a “train the trainers” model that scaled quickly, department chairs conducted an initial inquiry cycle in the fall in their classrooms, then led their dept. colleagues in 1-2 cycles in the spring.
- The principal identified PFL as a process for developing instructional leadership of teacher leaders.
- He also credits PFL with dramatically increasing formative assessment practices of teachers.

California Standards Tests, 2009-10

School/District	% Students scoring Far Below Basic/Below Basic			% Students scoring Proficient/Advanced		
	2008-9	2009-10	Rate of Change	2008-9	2009-10	Rate of Change
English Language Arts						
School Wide	22%	14%	-36%	58%	66%	14%
Berkeley district	22%	19%	-14%	56%	60%	7%
Algebra I						
School Wide	32%	24%	-25%	30%	54%	80%
Berkeley district	55%	44%	-20%	25%	39%	56%

Feedback on Working with the National Equity Project:

“PFL really changed my classroom in a positive way that wasn’t difficult for me to do. Students now understand assessment as a time for me to learn from them. Traditionally, they try to hide what they don’t know. But they’re much more comfortable now with really showing me where they need help. My classroom has changed from ‘teach and test’ to a true partnership of learning.” - **Liz Little, 7-8th Grade Math Chair, King Middle**

“I think the inquiry work did impact student performance, particularly African American and Latino students, because the focal students and formative assessment made a big impact on teachers. They are talking about those students, designing lessons with those students in mind, and following up with those students. At the secondary level, it is common for conversations with individual students to never take place. This was important as a spur for those kinds of conversations, which I think helped lead to these gains.” - **Jason Lustig, Principal**

Partner School Profile:
Washington High School
Fremont, CA



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The Project worked with Washington High School Principal Linda Fernandez and her Leadership Team on the design and implementation of smaller learning communities (SLC) to provide personalized academic and emotional support for every student and close achievement gaps.

School Demographics

- 2,000 students
- 20% low-income
- 11% English Language Learners
- 38% White
- 27% Asian
- 18% Latino

Washington High features:

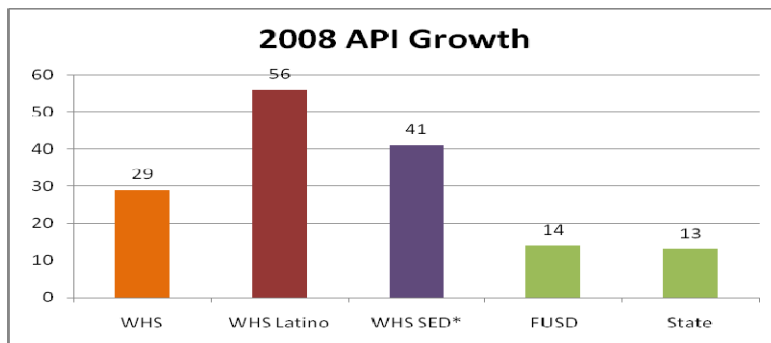
- Clusters freshmen and sophomores into families of about 120 pupils for certain core subjects.
- Small-learning communities keep students engaged.
- Staff identifies at-risk students and develops individual success plans for those pupils through feedback from the students' previous and current teachers.

National Equity Project coaching services at WHS (2005-2008):

- New school design and leadership team incubation
- Instructional leadership coaching and tools
- School and teacher professional learning community development
- Professional development planning with an equity focus
- Data-based inquiry to improve instruction

Results:

- One of only 260 secondary schools to receive a **California Distinguished School Award** in 2009.
- One of three Fremont schools awarded federal Smaller Learning Community (SLC) grant funds.



Washington High API growth far outpaced the district (Fremont Unified) and the state, both school-wide, for Latino students, and for socio-economically disadvantaged (SED) students.

Vice Principal Vinh Lam on WHS's partnership with the Project:

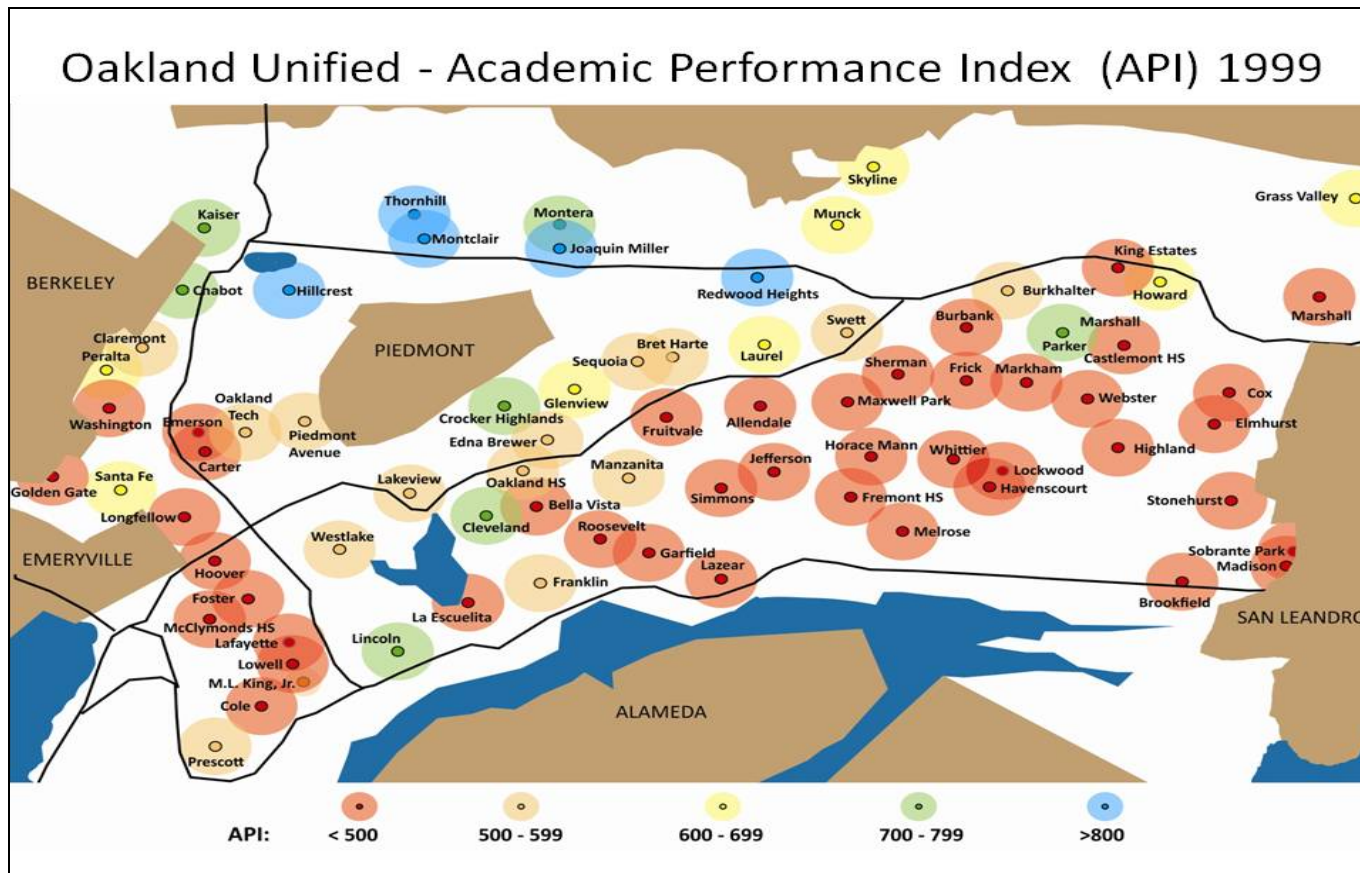
“I’ve enjoyed working with [NEP coaches] Stephen and Chin the last couple of years. They are both very knowledgeable and experienced with helping to guide schools to greener pastures. They have brought light to some dark spots in our school and have given us much to think about. They have helped us develop structures to build upon, and they are patient with us as we undergo these changes. ...Change is not something that is easily received but we are making progress - hence, our distinguished school recognition.”

Impact on Student Outcomes: *Oakland's Small Schools Movement*



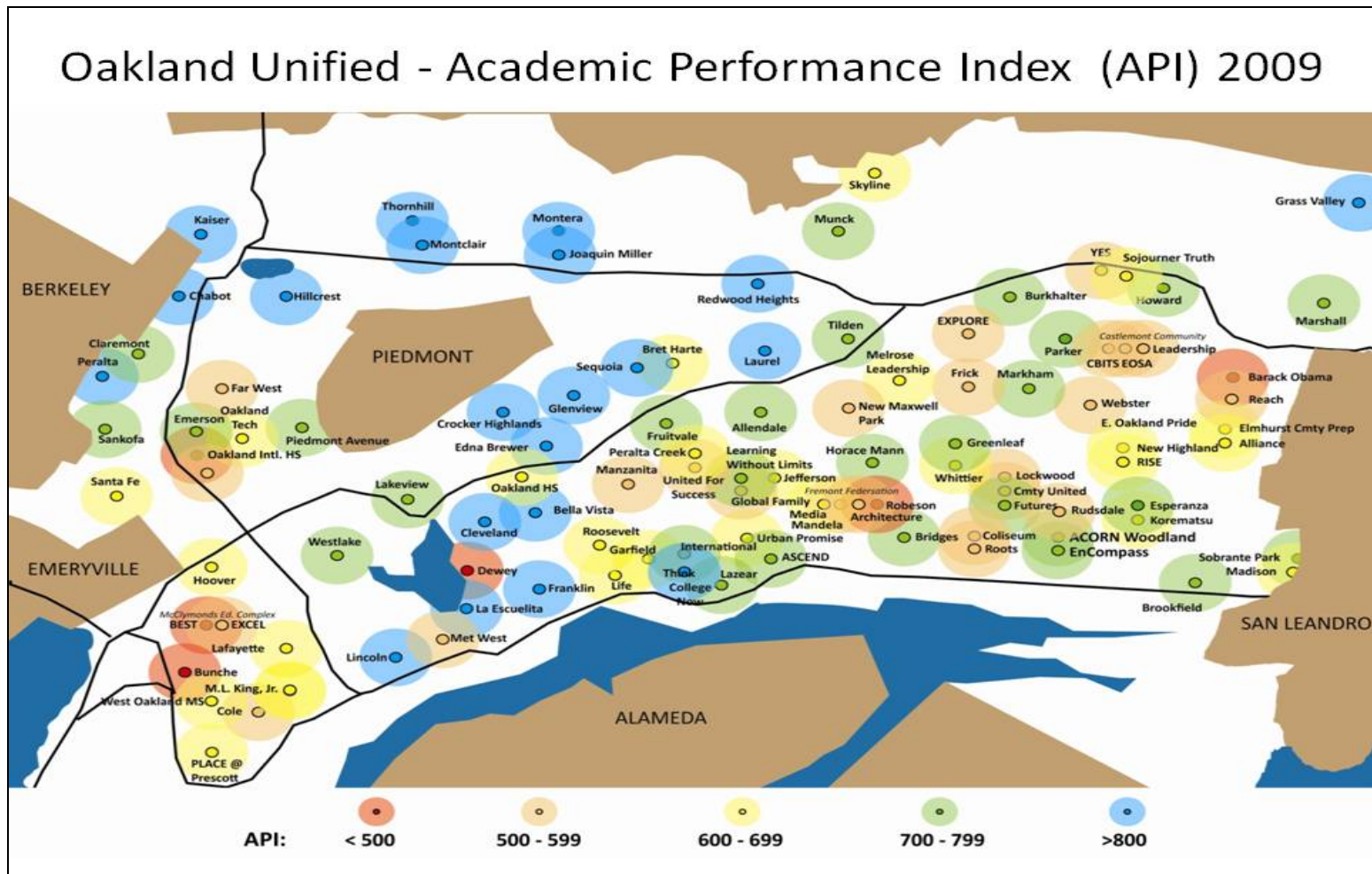
Mapping a District's Transformation

In 1999 in Oakland, California, students in the "flatlands," the impoverished neighborhoods of East and West Oakland where mostly African American and Latino families live, as opposed to the affluent, largely White and Asian American "hills," attended schools in deplorable conditions. The schools reflected decades of policy abandonment and disinvestment that had devastated neighborhoods. They were overcrowded with portables covering playgrounds. No new school had been built in 30 years. Students had very low literacy rates and very high dropout rates. At high schools in the most challenged neighborhoods, truant students roamed campuses and violence and open drug use were routine. Student, family, and staff morale was low. These conditions were reflected in the California state assessment, the **Academic Performance Index (API)**, which measures student literacy and math skills and is a key indicator of achievement gaps. In the following map, the flatlands from west to east are a sea of red - the lowest rating possible.



Oakland's New Small Schools

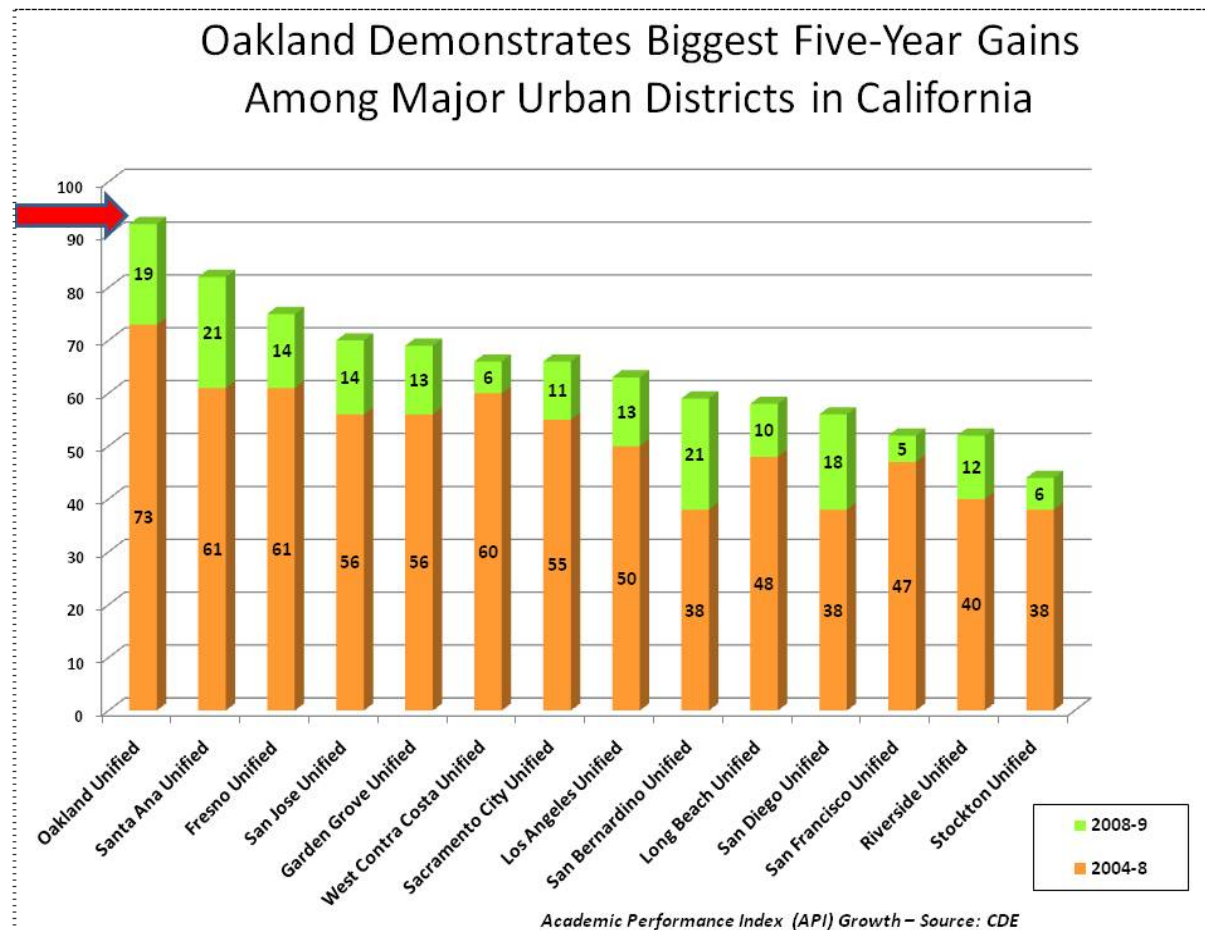
The National Equity Project (then BayCES) and the Oakland Community Organizations (OCO) worked with the school district's central office to develop a district redesign strategy with small schools at the center. Project staff drafted the New Small Autonomous Schools Policy, which was passed by the school board in 2000. We coached over 30 school design teams comprised of educators and parents to create and launch small schools to replace over 25 flatlands schools with new "small by design" schools featuring a learning focus, a commitment to meeting the needs of every child, relationships with students and families, staff collaboration and continuous improvement. The Project also provided pass-through Gates Foundation grants, technical assistance, and principal and teacher coaching to 38 of these schools averaging four years of support per school. A decade later, the map shows a complete transformation, with many higher performing schools in the flatlands.



Oakland's Rapid Academic Improvement is Led by Nat'l Equity Project Partners

In 2009, schools in Oakland Unified continued to demonstrate some of California's fastest academic improvement. In that year, 15 of 107 district schools improved API scores by 70 points or better, five times the statewide average of 14 points. **Most of these schools (13/15 or 87%) are National Equity Project affiliates. All recent partners (29 schools) made an average API gain of 33 points, more than twice the state average.**

- Out of 67 **elementary schools**, only **eight** posted API gains over 70 points: **five** are recent Project partners and one is affiliated.
- Out of 18 **middle schools**, only **three** posted API gains over 70 points: **one** is a Project partner and two others are affiliated.
- Out of 26 **high schools**, only **four** posted API gains over 70 points: **all four** are Project partners.



National Equity Project Partner School Survey Data Shows Progress in School Community Culture and Practices

School Climate and Relationships

- **More than four of five teachers (86%) in Project partner schools reported that “teachers in their school treat each other with respect.” This represented a dramatic 41 point increase.**
- Large majorities of students (71%), parents (83%), and teachers (87%) report that their school feels like “a caring and supportive environment.”
- More than four of five students (81%) agreed that “there is at least one adult at their school they can go to for good advice and support.
- More than nine in ten students (93%) report that their teacher expects them to do their best.
- Almost four of five parents (79%) reported that they collaborate with their child's teachers to help set and review his/her learning goals.

Professional Learning Communities and Data-Driven Practice

- **As many as 83% of teachers agreed that they had observed a colleague or colleagues teach at least once in that year in Partner schools, a 40 point gain.**
- More than nine of ten teachers (92%) reported that they have a good understanding of the state standards for the grades or courses they teach.
- More than four of five teachers (85%) reported that their teaching has improved as a result of colleague collaboration.
- **More than four of five teachers (81%) reported that they regularly use data on student performance to guide their teaching.**

Staff-Principal Relations

- **Seven of ten teachers (70%) in partner schools said they receive relevant and timely feedback about their work from their principal.**
- More than four of five teachers (82%) in partner schools reported that they are satisfied overall with their principal.

Data source: Use Your Voice on-line survey administered by Oakland Unified School District. National Equity Project partner schools are 17 schools with which the Project had a coaching relationship in both 2007 and 2008.

September 20, 2010

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Chris Perrius
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The National Equity Project has been recognized as “a high-impact Bay Area nonprofit” in the field of **middle and secondary education** by a panel of 96 education experts convened by Philanthropedia (myphilanthropedia.org). Only 15 nonprofits received this distinction among over 130 reviewed, and the Project is the only coaching organization.

Philanthropedia is a nonprofit that helps donors make smarter donations by connecting them with the highest-impact nonprofits in a cause. To identify high-impact nonprofits, they survey experts including foundation professionals, nonprofit senior staff, researchers, and others in a fair and anonymous rating system.

The National Equity Project believes that every child has the right to a quality education and coaches people to become the leaders who make good on that promise. It has a track record of success with a wide variety of partner schools, districts, and nonprofits who are working to improve education and life outcomes for vulnerable students.



Feedback on the National Equity Project by experts convened by Philanthropedia include:

“The National Equity Project facilitates deep change in school and community settings. By investing in long-term and deep relationship-building and structured, reflective conversations with educators and community members, NEP is able to guide participants to identify deep-seated problems, often ones that are difficult to discuss, and find solutions. The collective solutions are prioritized into a strategy for communities to use on a path to improvement and excellence.” – *Foundation Professional*

“The National Equity Project] possesses deep expertise in educational theory, pedagogy, cultural competency, racial justice, and facilitation/mediation. They have a solid infrastructure, built and supported by inspired, super-competent leadership.” – *Foundation Professional*

“Their leadership is diverse, forward-thinking, non-hierarchical--modeling the best of what we want in schools. They also have an equity focus for all decisions.” – *Researcher*

“I think their leadership coaching model and the leading for equity approach are strengths. They have fabulous leadership, a solid track record for supporting positive, lasting changes in the districts, and schools where they work.” – *Nonprofit Senior Staff*

“The National Equity Project provides outstanding professional development and coaching of school leaders around issues of equity. These are critical issues to address if we are serious about closing the achievement gap.” – *Nonprofit Senior Staff*

To visit the site where the National Equity Project is ranked with other high-impact nonprofits in middle and secondary education, please go to www.myphilanthropedia.org.