



The National Center on Scaling Up Effective Schools: Design-Based Implementation Research and School Leadership

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This paper presents the framework, approach and initial findings from the National Center on Scaling Up Effective Schools, a project supported by the US Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. The Center focuses on identifying programs, practices, and processes that make some high schools in large urban districts particularly effective with at-risk student populations, and developing an approach to transferring and implementing these practices to less effective schools. The Center's approach to implementation is rooted in 'Design-Based Implementation Research' (DBIR). DBIR interacts with the local context through ongoing collaboration and negotiation with practitioners, where program implementation is an iterative process of design, data collection, and refinements.

The initial findings from The Center suggest that a set of practices around *Personalization for Social and Academic Learning* differentiated between higher and lower achieving high schools in one district, and in the other district, the distinguishing characteristic was an approach around *Increased Rigor by Students Taking Increased Responsibility for their own Learning*. In both cases school leadership played unique roles in developing, supporting and implementing the practices that help explain particular schools' greater than expected learning gains for at-risk students. The paper will develop and explain the leadership approaches in these schools, and the importance of leadership in the Center's current work to develop, transfer and implement these findings in a set of schools in the same locale.

