

EdSource Report: Similar Students, Different Results

This EdSource report summarizes the Initial Findings issued in October 2005 from a two-year study conducted by EdSource, Stanford University, University of California–Berkeley, and American Institutes for Research (AIR). In addition, this report, *Similar Students, Different Results: Why Do Some Schools Do Better?*, includes information collected during the study but not previously reported (from superintendent interviews and principal open-ended questions) as well as the results of an additional analysis conducted on curriculum program choice and association with California’s Academic Performance Index (API) scores.

Edsource states “The initial findings (October 2005) identified four interrelated practices associated with higher API scores and suggested implications for district and principal leadership. Further analysis (April 2006) examined whether a school's API performance related to use of particular curriculum program.” This 20-page EdSource report summarizes all of the study's findings, pulling together in one place key findings documented in the separate reports and materials. For more information on the EdSource report, click on the URL link below.

Report findings include:

In schools with higher API scores, it is more likely:

- School sets measurable goals for exceeding the mandated API student subgroup growth targets.
- School uses statewide and similar schools API rankings to influence instructional improvement.
- Teachers ensure that curriculum and instructional materials are aligned closely with state academic standards by frequently mapping those standards onto weekly lesson plans.
- Teachers ensure instructional consistency within grades by using a grade-level pacing calendar.
- Teachers ensure curricular alignment from grade to grade by examining the scope and sequence of curriculum topics.
- School uses curriculum programs that, among other qualities, support ease of teacher implementation of curriculum coherence.
- School ensures that every student has a copy of the current English language arts and math textbooks.
- Principals and teachers have access to CST data in a variety of formats: for all students in their grade level; disaggregated by specific skills for all students in

their classrooms; and disaggregated by student subgroup for students in their classrooms.

- Principals frequently review, discuss, and use student assessment data from multiple sources— annual CSTs, regular curriculum program diagnostic tests, teacher- and district-developed tests to:

- address with teachers the academic needs of students;
- develop strategies to help selected students reach goals (moving them from below basic to basic to proficient) and to follow up on their progress;
- examine schoolwide instructional issues and compare grades within a school;
- evaluate teacher practices and identify teachers needing instructional improvement.