



NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Independent Evaluation of Massachusetts Implementation

Key Findings from 2009 Report

The Massachusetts Department of Education hired the Meristem Group to conduct an independent multi-year evaluation study of the implementation of the National Institute for School Leadership's (NISL) Executive Development Program. The most recent report was released in June 2009, based primarily on data gathered during 2008. This is the most in-depth study of NISL results that has been completed to date.

The Participants

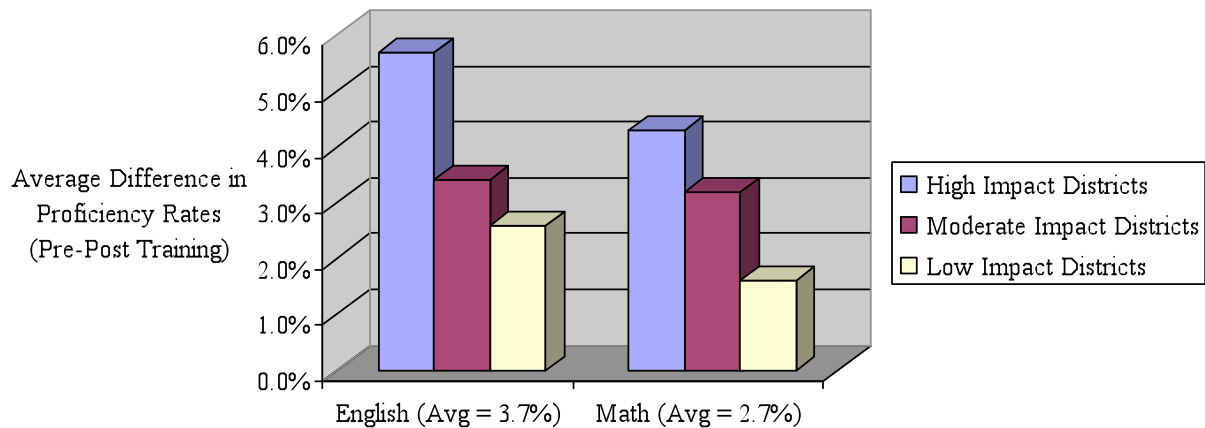
- ❖ Massachusetts focused its implementation on high-need urban districts including Boston, Brockton, Chelsea, Fall River, Fitchburg, Holyoke, Lawrence, Leominster, Lowell, Lynn, Malden, New Bedford, Pittsfield, Revere, Somerville, Springfield and Worcester.
- ❖ Massachusetts' statewide implementation began in 2005 with the NISL national faculty conducting the training for a group of local Massachusetts educational leaders to become NISL certified trainers.
- ❖ The First Rollout of NISL training for school leaders began in 2006 and was completed in early 2008. The group included 132 principals and 115 other school and district leaders from 20 school districts across the state.
- ❖ The Second Rollout of NISL training for school leaders began in 2007 and was completed in early 2009. The group included 143 principals and 253 other school and district leaders from 21 school districts across the state.

Key Findings

1. Student Test Scores Went Up: The 132 NISL-trained schools included in the First Rollout increased proficiency rates faster than schools that did not participate in the training in both English (3.7 percentage points) and Math (2.7 percentage points). The improvement rates on the state tests were even higher for schools that implemented more of the NISL concepts (see graph on next page). These results are particularly encouraging given the fact that the post-test date was just a few months after the training had been completed.



Meristem: Schools with NISL-Trained Principals Outperform Other Schools



2. Time Spent on Instruction Increased: One of NISL’s primary goals is to increase the focus on student instruction. The Meristem Group found “consistent and compelling evidence that NISL participation succeeded in changing administrators’ allocation of their time to place greater emphasis on student instruction and related activities.”
3. Principals Took Action to Improve Instruction: The vast majority of NISL participants in the First Rollout reported that they were motivated by their NISL training experiences to begin to implement NISL concepts in their school. A majority reported working on the implementation of multiple concepts. Participant action was most prevalent with regards to establishing or strengthening leadership teams; disseminating effective instructional practices; and promoting better use of student data.
4. Participants Gave NISL High Marks: Approximately 80% of the participants from the First Rollout rated the NISL Training Program higher than comparable professional development programs on overall quality, value and relevance. The participants from the Second Rollout were also very positive – with 85% rating the NISL program as high on both quality and relevance.