

East Providence
Public Schools

Findings and Recommendations
from the

Central Office Review for Results & Equity

conducted in partnership with the
Annenberg Institute for School Reform and the
Rhode Island Department of Education

prepared by the



**Annenberg
Institute for
School Reform**

AT BROWN UNIVERSITY

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Central Office Review for Results and Equity

In spring 2003, the East Providence School Department (EPSD) entered into partnership with the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University and the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) to conduct a Central Office Review for Results and Equity, or CORRE.

CORRE is a five-step process developed by the Annenberg Institute's School Communities that Work task force to help district communities determine the current state of student results; assess the effectiveness of district policies and practices that deal with those results; and develop action steps to strengthen their capacity for supporting schools. The process is also designed to build the capacity of a team of district stakeholders to seek and examine data and to work together more collaboratively and effectively. (A more detailed description of the CORRE process appears in Appendix A.)

The CORRE Process in East Providence

CORRE in East Providence was conducted by a team consisting of representatives from central office, schools, parents, the school committee, the community, RIDE, and the Annenberg Institute (see Appendix B). The CORRE Team selected as its primary area of focus *teaching and learning tools and resources*, with an emphasis on those tools and resources that support literacy learning. Examples of such supports include: curriculum frameworks based on content standards, textbooks, trade books, equipment such as Internet-accessible computers, basic materials and supplies, and people such as central office staff and others offering professional development and guidance related to literacy instruction.

To deepen collective understanding of how teaching and learning are supported in EPSD, members of the CORRE Team conducted interviews and focus groups that included school committee members, central office staff, principals, teachers, faculty, and students. In these sessions, questions were asked about four areas: the district's instructional framework; the nature and availability of instructional resources and supports; the relationships within the district, especially with central office, that affect teaching and learning resources and opportunities; and the availability and use of time. The team also reviewed a limited set of state and district data, district plans and reports, and other relevant documents. Annenberg Institute staff compiled and categorized the findings on behalf of the CORRE Team.¹

¹ The compilation of the findings was presented to and discussed with available members of the CORRE Team in mid-June 2003. It was agreed that the findings themselves would not be shared beyond the team until the end of the process, after some action planning to address the findings had been completed.

The Scope of the Process

The CORRE Team's review of documents and artifacts in East Providence was informative for the focus area chosen, but it was not exhaustive. While the data-collection effort included most key roles within the system and representatives of critical stakeholders (e.g., teachers and parents), the number of interviews and focus groups was limited (see Appendix B), and no broadly administered surveys were conducted.

Further, the timing of the process itself – near the end of the school year – meant that many team members' time, particularly that of the small central office staff and school-based practitioners, was consumed with necessary year-end activities. In addition, the time commitments of the process were demanding on non-EPSD employees such as school committee members and parents, and their participation was limited.

The Institute characterizes CORRE engagement as being of varying degrees of intensity. We would characterize East Providence CORRE as being at a relatively low level of intensity. It should also be noted that EPSP and RIDE were kind enough to enter into this partnership at an early stage, when the Institute had limited experience in the implementation of CORRE and its related tools. There was, however, no limitation on the kindness and cooperation afforded Institute staff by the leadership of EPSP and the CORRE Team members.

District/Community Context

EPSP serves 6,566 students and employs 504 teachers. There are eight elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school in the district. East Providence High School, with 1,900 students, is the largest high school in the state. The district also has a high school annex, a vocational school, and two early childhood centers. With the exception of two “high-performing” elementary schools (15 percent), all schools are either “moderately performing” or “low-performing” (46 percent and 38 percent, respectively), as indicated in RIDE's *Information Works!* data for the 2001–2002 school year. Five schools (or 38 percent) demonstrated improvement from 2000 in the 2001 and/or 2002 school year.

At the elementary level, about 49 percent of (eligible) students met or exceeded the mathematics standard, while 63 percent met or exceeded the English/language arts standard. At the middle school level, about 31 percent of (eligible) students met or exceeded the mathematics standard, while 38 percent met or exceeded the English/language arts standard. At the high school level, 26 percent of (eligible) students met or exceeded the mathematics standard, while 34 percent of students met or exceeded the English/language arts standard. The district had recently been reorganized into an elementary, middle, and high school configuration (K–5, 6–8 and 9–12) from a junior high school configuration (K–6, 7–9 and 10–12). Since the reorganization, the number of students leaving EPSP for private schools in grade 8 has reportedly decreased.

There are twelve staff in central office of EPSP. Five of those positions appear to have significant responsibility related to providing instructional support to schools: deputy

superintendent, assistant superintendent, director of special education, and two supervisors – an ESL supervisor, who reports to the assistant superintendent, and an early education supervisor, who reports directly to the superintendent. The assistant superintendent bears most of the responsibilities for instructional guidance and support. The deputy superintendent also serves as director of secondary education.

The EPSD school committee has five members: four elected from areas of the city and one at large. At least three of the five board members have held leadership positions in the district.

EPSD does not have taxing authority. The district's annual budget proposals are submitted to the city manager, where they may be altered before going before the city council. The council has ultimate responsibility for approving the budget. Fifty-four percent of the district's revenue last year came from local (city) sources, 42 percent from the state, and 4 percent from the federal government.

The public school participation rate for East Providence is 85.7 percent, so over 14 percent of school-aged students living there attend parochial or private school. According to the 2000 Census, East Providence, with a population of more than 48,500, had the second-highest proportion of older residents of any Rhode Island municipality. The percentage of residents 65 and older is 18.9 and the percentage over 60 is 24.2.

Key Findings by the East Providence CORRE Team

In the interviews, focus groups, schools visits, and reviews of state and district data, CORRE Team members sought findings specifically related to supports for literacy instruction. Interviews, focus groups, and school visits surfaced many positive comments about the EPSD's climate and programs. Among the highlights mentioned were increased curriculum supports available during the past two years, the presence of dedicated teachers (many of whom are themselves products of East Providence's public schools), and "townie pride" in some of the district's innovations (e.g., Talent Development) and signature programs (e.g., band).

Virtually all interview and focus group participants indicated that there were recent positive developments in the schooling provided in East Providence. Participants cited the genuine hard work of many district leaders and school staff, as well as some specific initiatives and examples. Among them were: the focus on literacy across content areas; the positive working relationship between the teachers union leader and the superintendent; the assistant superintendent's efforts to provide curricular and instructional support; and greater recent attention to teachers' professional development. Some cited activities had unrealized potential at the time of our work, such as a mentoring program that was not sufficiently implemented and a solid district strategic plan that was not effectively communicated or broadly understood.

During interviews, focus groups, and school visits, it was clear that most East Providence stakeholders had a sense of performance variation across schools: although no performance data were shared in the interviews and focus groups, participants knew which schools were “better” and which were “worse.” The CORRE Team’s review of demographic and performance data revealed gaps based on race, ethnicity, primary language, and gender, as well as a progressive decline in overall achievement at increasing grade levels. Because of the age of the data (1999–2001 data were the most recent available), several CORRE Team members were concerned that any potential impact from recent initiatives would not be reflected.

Several patterns emerged from the CORRE Team’s conversations with school committee members, central office staff, principals, teachers, faculty, and students that are relevant to the specific focus on tools and resources for teaching and learning and the larger question of the district’s overall effectiveness in supporting results and equity in student achievement. The findings are summarized below.

Instructional Framework

- Significantly more instructional guidance is now available from central office than was the case just two years ago. Examples include a standards-based instructional framework and core curricular guidance in key subjects.
- Opinions vary as to depth and reach of these frameworks and curricula into classrooms; variance occurs from school to school and even teacher to teacher. No one indicated that adoption was yet widespread.
- There is a lack of clarity and agreement about who is ultimately responsible for what is taught to students in East Providence.
- It is widely acknowledged that one senior district official (the assistant superintendent) is directly responsible for most of the instructional guidance and support. That individual is perceived as being stretched too thin. Instructional support for schools is still considered inadequate.
- The availability of instructional guidance for educating special needs students is especially limited.
- Parents’ focus group participants were eager for more information on what students should be learning. For example, what are the expectations by grade level?
- While standards drive the instructional framework in theory, the budget drives it in reality.

Instructional Resources and Supports

Books and Materials

- Increased instructional guidance from central office has brought some specific instructional resources to schools (e.g., *KITES*, *Chicago Math*).
- The district has a four-year textbook-replacement cycle; many new standards-based texts are available in core subjects.

- Still, parents raised concerns about students using old textbooks and about the availability of technology.
- Recent instructional changes (e.g., the use of guided reading) require other resources beyond textbooks, such as trade books. Provision of these is seen as insufficient.
- Some materials for ESL teachers (such as *SRA*) arrive too late in the year to be useful.
- An enrollment-based formula drives distribution of district resources for instructional materials and supplies to schools, but several other factors affect what supplies and materials are actually available at the school and classroom level. Specifically:
 - ✧ Some teachers use personal resources to supplement what the district provides with books and other supplies.
 - ✧ At some schools, the PTO plays a major role in providing instructional supports and materials.
 - ✧ Concerns were expressed over availability of more discretionary money (for books, resources, and supplies) in Title I vs. non–Title I schools.
 - ✧ A limited amount of the money distributed by central office for instruction materials and supports is distributed according to the discretion of senior central office staff.

Human Resources

- The EPSD organizational chart does not include positions common to other districts of comparable size related to providing supports for classroom instruction. For example, there are no content-area supervisors (such as mathematics or English/language arts).
- Some central office positions that are on the organizational chart are unfilled. The key post of director of human resources is one example.
- It is not clear where/who instructional leadership should come from at the school level (e.g., principals, department chairs, house leaders).
- Instructional guidance and professional development for ESL teachers are insufficient.
- Although provision of materials has improved for the special education student population, little or no instructional guidance and professional development are provided to teachers at all levels.
- Roles and responsibilities of reading specialists are not clear to school-based leaders and staff. Reading specialists and teachers do not receive enough instructional guidance and support from central office, and principals feel insufficiently involved or informed to provide it.

Professional Development

- More attention is being paid to professional development than was the case a few years ago, but it is not enough and is not necessarily matched to teacher and student needs (e.g., schoolwide reform or literacy).
- There are not enough professional development dollars or time to provide the level of development deemed necessary to support teachers' learning needs.

- Central office expectations for what teachers will do with limited professional development and for “turnkey” training are seen as unrealistic.
- Some professional development decisions are made at the building and individual teacher levels. Views on the effectiveness of “pool days” vary.² Some see them as valuable opportunities to pursue knowledge and skills of benefit to an individual teacher and, potentially, his/her students and peer teachers. Others see them as time (the teacher’s) and money (for substitutes) that could be better used if the professional development experience was more directly connected to the district’s instructional framework.

Fiscal Resources

- There is universal agreement that there are insufficient resources behind key priorities that ultimately affect students’ learning and development (e.g., books, laboratories, computer technology, and teachers’ professional development).
- But there is little agreement about the causes of the problem (teachers’ salaries too high, ineffective budget management at central office level, not enough advocacy by the school committee, inadequate contribution from the local tax base, the high cost of special education, state mandates).

Relationships as Resources

- There is no systematic effort to use talents of staff, especially teachers, well.
- The relationship between the district leadership and the teachers union head is seen as unusually positive.
- Communications and supportive relationships between central office and school-level staff are seen as differing by level.
- Within schools, it is not clear who is responsible for leading instruction.
- Across schools, there are few formal collaboration opportunities.
- The varying understandings of who is responsible for what play a significant role in how policies are translated to and implemented in schools.
- Parents in the focus groups saw themselves as untapped resources for East Providence.
- Several interviewees suggested that a grant writer could help bring outside resources to support outstanding individual and collaborative ideas.
- Interviewees perceive disconnects in the overall organizational structure of the district that affect both relationships and accomplishment of student-achievement goals.

² The collective bargaining agreement states that the school committee agrees to establish a pool of professional leave days per school in accordance with the size of the school. “Teachers shall be granted two professional leave days per year for every ten teachers or portions thereof in the school of their assignment.”

Time

- Availability and use of time (e.g., for professional development) is largely defined by the teachers' contract.
- Common planning time is available in some schools and not in others.
- Some teachers expressed concerns about missing class time for professional development during the school day.
- Central office staff and some administrators felt constrained by lack of funding and the teachers' contract in not being able to make enough time available for professional development.

Reflections from the Annenberg Institute

Clearly, there are successes to celebrate and strengths on which to draw in the East Providence School Department. In addition to those represented in the CORRE findings, there were many other anecdotal indications. The Annenberg Institute team also saw significant skill and commitment on the part of the small senior staff, particularly the superintendent, deputy superintendent, and assistant superintendent, with whom we worked most closely. The East Providence community's pride in some of the accomplishments of its schools, students, and teachers is understandable and justifiable. EPSD has made many strides under serious fiscal, facility, and political constraints. But the fact remains that overall performance and racial, ethnic, language, and income achievement gaps are at unacceptable levels.

As external partners spending limited time in the district, the Annenberg Institute's knowledge of the community is necessarily circumscribed. Further, the CORRE process is designed so that all the partners, not just the external reform support organization, plan and own the action steps to be taken. However, given the expressed desire of all parties to learn from one another, we offer a number of observations and suggestions related to the strengths and challenges facing the East Providence School District.

Based on our observations, the most productive avenues for improving instructional resources and supports in East Providence are three: instructional leadership, internal and external communications, and community engagement.

Instructional Leadership and Support

More instructional leadership and support is the district's most glaring educational need identified by the CORRE Team's review. A related issue is the lack of clarity over who is responsible for what. That lack of clarity is understandable when one person (the assistant superintendent) is attempting to do a job that should be spread among three or more leaders with significant content-area expertise and when building-level instructional leadership is uneven.

Since the addition of central office positions is unlikely, East Providence may need to take a nontraditional approach to making essential content-area expertise available to schools while continuing efforts to bring clarity to the roles of instructional leaders, particularly at the middle and high school levels. One obvious potential source of expertise is the schools themselves, through “teacher on special assignment” arrangements that might include full- or part-time assignment to central office or a group of schools. The teachers union would be a logical partner in designing such arrangements. Another option is to deploy RIDE staff with specific content expertise on an as-needed basis.

Lack of human resources to support new frameworks, curricula, standards-based texts, and other instructional tools will likely increase cynicism and burnout on the part of building-level staff. Those already positioned to use the tools effectively without support will do so, and inequities in instruction will likely increase rather than decrease. East Providence has little choice but to pursue creative strategies, perhaps with assistance from RIDE.

Internal and External Communication

As we reviewed data collected by the team, we were struck by how often perceived barriers to central office, school, and parent collaboration were caused by ineffective communication – between central office and schools, among schools, among central office leaders, and among the school committee, superintendent, and community.

This review suggests that conversations with an instructional focus are paramount. (What does good instruction look like? Where do we see it? What are the implications for how we spend our day-to-day time?) Central office undertook some steps before this writing to foster conversations focused on instruction and students among administrators and principals. Realistically, however, central office is stretched too thin to support much more in this regard, particularly at the building and teacher-to-teacher levels. Engaging teachers in instructional conversations is a logical and legitimate activity for the teachers association and should be given serious consideration. In addition, the Institute could help central office establish norms of communication for general practice and offer limited consulting on using communications strategies to foster instructional conversations within and across roles and levels.

Community Engagement

Taking communications a giant step further leads to the need for EPSD to foster greater community and, particularly, parent engagement. It was clear from the limited data gathering that there are voices that need to be heard more loudly and fully if central office and school committee decision making is to appropriately reflect their concerns about and contributions to EPSD. The district should build on parents’ expressed interest in more explicit grade-level expectations and in having opportunities to more effectively support their children’s schools.

The CORRE Team (including its RIDE representatives) is well equipped to identify short-term steps in these areas and, indeed, has already begun to do so and to implement some

of these steps. The team's business is unfinished, and the relationships built and good ideas already documented could be lost in the shuffle of day-to-day work pressures (such as the district strategic plan and budget deadlines that loomed during our last meetings).

EPsD administrators and teachers have shown interest in applying for external grants to support learning needs and innovative practices. Without access to a grant writer, these avenues of potential support are closed off. RIDE might consider whether it has internal expertise that might be made available on a cost-sharing basis to a district or group of districts to support this function.

It is also important to note that addressing some of the problems faced by East Providence in its efforts to support equitable and effective access to good instruction is beyond the purview of the school department, RIDE, and the Institute. In effect, the school department is just that, a department of city government. The district's budget has often been used to balance the city's budget or reduce its deficit. At the state level, the law requiring local school districts to provide textbooks and transportation for parochial schools in grades K–6 has significant budgetary implications in a community with a higher-than-average number of parochial school students. (These dollars artificially inflate the district's budget, making it appear that more is being spent on East Providence public school students than is actually the case.) In other states, recourse in such circumstances is usually found in the courts or in state legislatures. And, when such recourse is sought, the resulting decisions must be supported and enforced. Without significant political leadership and organizing and advocacy on the part of citizens, organizations, and elements of state government itself, it is unlikely that these systemic issues will ever be addressed.

Priority Action Steps and Implementation Plans

Recognizing the harsh reality of the city's budget deficit and mandated cuts, the CORRE Team decided to focus on activities in response to the findings that would require no new funds at this juncture. Developing an initial action agenda that met this criterion led the team to look at findings related to roles and responsibilities for instructional support and at several issues related to communications that appeared in different places throughout the findings. The team also attempted to connect this work to existing district priorities: K–12 curriculum guidelines (beginning with K–5), aligned grade-level expectations, school-improvement plans, and standards-based report cards.

In addition, the initial meetings about CORRE action planning coincided with the requirement to submit an updated districtwide strategic plan to RIDE. While this placed additional time pressures on people who were members of both the CORRE and the strategic planning teams, it also surfaced some opportunity for coordination and focus. The two teams, both headed by CORRE Team members, became appropriate venues for addressing CORRE findings, as did several other district planning teams. A further benefit was the involvement of RIDE colleagues in both processes.

The following steps were undertaken in the area of communications (as of mid-October 2003):

- Initiation of meetings with secondary principals to discuss instructional issues.
- Changing administrative council meetings to the week after School Committee meetings (still needed: minimize talk focused on administrative issues).
- The district's Webmaster, assisted by a volunteer, was scheduled to begin updating the operating system used to manage the EPSD Web site once the fiscal year 2003–2004 budget was approved by the School Committee.

The following steps were undertaken in the areas of roles and responsibilities (as of mid-October 2003):

- Professional development is being centered around department meetings at the high school, facilitated and led by department chairs.
- Districtwide elementary school faculty meetings have been instituted as a venue to provide targeted professional development to those teachers.
- The district was to move forward in hiring a new technology director (once a FY2003–2004 budget was approved by the School Committee).

The CORRE Team had a rich discussion of other possible action steps that were to be prioritized according to indicators of readiness for action in the immediate future versus the longer term.

Options for a Continuing Relationship

The Annenberg Institute sees several ways it might continue as a partner in East Providence's improvement efforts, given funds to support Institute staff time.

- Support implementation of action steps by consulting with district leaders regularly throughout the year to review progress and adapt plans to changing context within the district;
- Continue to provide facilitation for the CORRE Team or other district teams as they meet to implement action steps and integrate CORRE findings into district policies, programs, and procedures;
- Provide specific assistance for improving human resources, community supports and youth engagement, information and indicator systems, professional learning communities, or budgeting systems, using preexisting tools in the Institute's portfolio;
- Identify supports (e.g., consultants, tools, funding opportunities, etc.) that the district could employ/adapt to address additional priorities; or
- Jointly develop and pilot tools that the district needs and which are not available elsewhere.

What Is CORRE?

The Central Office Review for Results and Equity (CORRE) is a five-step process to help school districts evaluate the capacity of the central office to support high academic performance for all students in all the district's schools. Participants in CORRE identify high-priority issues in the district, examine quantitative and qualitative data about it, and develop plans and propose action for improvement.

CORRE is not an audit, a consultant report, an external review, or any other practice commonly done *to* districts. The CORRE process is facilitated by Annenberg Institute staff and consultants *in collaboration with* a district and its community. Districts that participate do so voluntarily, motivated by a strong desire to look closely at their central office practices and improve their work with schools.

CORRE was developed by School Communities that Work: A National Task Force on the Future of Urban Districts, created by the Annenberg Institute in 2000. The Task Force developed a vision for “smart districts” – urban education systems that have the capacity to achieve both results and equity for all their students, with no significant differences in achievement based on race, ethnicity, or family income. The Task Force concluded that there are three things a “smart” school system must do:

- Provide schools, students, and teachers with needed supports and timely interventions.
- Ensure that schools have the power and resources to make good decisions.
- Make decisions and hold people accountable, using indicators of school and district performance and practice.

The Task Force concluded its work with the publication in 2002 of the *Portfolio for District Redesign* – a series of tools, including CORRE, to help districts perform these three key functions. Building on the work of the Task Force, Institute staff have continued to expand understanding of key central office roles as part of these functions, including communicating big ideas, promoting a service orientation and a data orientation, increasing capacity, brokering partnerships, advocating for and supporting underserved students, and addressing inequities.

CORRE brings together a team of leaders from the district (central office staff, board members, teachers, principals), the community (community-based organization leaders, parent leaders, foundation officers), and consultants from outside the district who are experienced in content areas, systems and culture change, and leadership for learning. The team goes through the following steps.

Step 1. Preparation

CORRE Team members are chosen and receive an orientation facilitated by the Annenberg Institute team members. Meetings are scheduled. Institute and district liaisons prepare background information about the district for the team and begin to identify issues that CORRE might address.

Step 2. Developing Shared Understanding of the District and a Plan for Inquiry

The team discusses the background information about the district and visits schools to develop a shared experience of the district. The team then identifies and prioritizes key issues, sequences the inquiry, creates questions related to central office support of teaching and learning, and identifies key informants – usually including students, teachers, parents, principals, and community partners.

Step 3. Deepening Understanding

The team deepens its understanding of the key issue(s) by collecting data, which may include school visits, classroom observations, surveys, focus groups, shadowing of students, and interviews with central office, parents, community members, school staff, or students.

CORRE as a Research Study

CORRE shares many of the qualities of a comprehensive research study. It is based on a conceptual framework; uses research tools – mainly interviews and focus groups – to collect data; and adheres to the strictest research ethics for dealing with human subjects.

CORRE differs from a comprehensive research study primarily with respect to sampling. Rather than basing focus group and interview lists on randomized sampling or related statistical methods, the CORRE Team (also not a statistically representative sample of the district/community, but representing many perspectives) draws upon its collective knowledge to identify participants. Furthermore, all the participants are volunteers, and thus the sampling of groups such as parents is often limited because their participation is usually subject to their availability.

The findings report perceptions across individuals and groups, such as teachers, parents, or principals, noting similar themes relevant to the roles/functions of central office. The subsequent recommendations for improvement build upon those themes.

The data derived from both interviews and the focus groups represent those individuals' perceptions about the focus area. These perceptions may or may not align with quantitative data. But making perceptions explicit is vital, both to convince the district of the need for change and to indicate the areas in which the district may need to improve its policies and practices.

Step 4. Compiling and Analyzing Data

The data is compiled, categorized, and analyzed by Institute staff. The team vets the findings – testing them, based on their own experience in the district – and draws conclusions about implications for central office practice and policy.

Step 5. Developing Action Steps

CORRE shifts from inquiry to action. Based on the feedback from the team in Step 4, Institute staff develop recommendations for action steps, drawing on a framework developed by the Institute that translates the functions of a smart district into key central office roles. These are presented to the team and the superintendent and, eventually, at a public meeting with the board of education. The recommendations may consist of next steps for the district as a whole or specific recommendations for the leadership of the district.

To review progress on the implementation of the action steps, the Institute conducts follow-ups two, four, and six months after the public report is issued. In some cases, the district deepens the post-CORRE relationship with the Institute by requesting support for implementation of one or more of the action steps.

CORRE Team Members

Appendix B

East Providence Public Schools Community

Patricia Almquist, *Guidance Counselor*

Peter Barilla, *Chair, EPSD School Committee*

Roberta Brady, *President, East Providence Education Association*

Mary Cabral, *Teacher*

Ed Daft, *Principal*

Jackie Forbes, *Assistant Superintendent*

Cheryl Gibbs, *Principal*

Taras Herbowy, *Superintendent (resigned Spring 2004)*

JoAnn LaBranche, *Rhode Island Department of Education*

Eileen Lovett, *Parent*

George McDonough, *Rhode Island Department of Education*

Edna Snow, *EPSD School Committee*

Manny Vinhateiro, *Deputy Superintendent*

Dianne Whetmore, *Teacher*

Annenberg Institute Staff

Marla Ucelli, *Director, District Redesign*

Jude Pelchat, *Principal Associate*

Frank Barnes, *Senior Associate*

Tamara Miele, *Research Associate*

Appendix C Timeline for the East Providence School Department

March 2003–June 2004

March 13, 2003	Meetings held between Annenberg Institute staff, Rhode Island Department of Education leadership, and superintendents from three Rhode Island districts to introduce CORRE and to invite each district to participate.
April	Arrangements solidified for the process and a framework for naming members of the CORRE Team.
April 22	CORRE Team orientation meeting convened.
May 5–6	<p>CORRE Team members visited schools to get a shared “feel” for the district.</p> <p>We examined and discussed student-achievement data, school demographics, and contexts for learning.</p> <p>We chose a priority area to focus the review: Teaching and Learning Tools and Resources.</p>
May 19–21	<p>CORRE Team members convened focus groups with teachers, principals, teacher leaders, parents, and community members.</p> <p>Annenberg Institute staff interviewed EPSD senior leadership, managers, office heads, and staff that provide supports to schools/students.</p>
May 22–31	Annenberg Institute staff completed interviews with EPSD senior leadership and School Committee members.
June	<p>Annenberg Institute staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyzed data from 17 interviews and focus groups.• Reviewed key EPSD documents and plans.• Requested and analyzed additional data, mostly quantitative.• Developed draft findings for presentation to CORRE Team.
June 19	Presentation of draft findings to CORRE Team.

- August 27 Meeting of CORRE Team to discuss findings and subsequent action steps.
- Focus of preliminary response articulated by the CORRE Team emphasized:
- Increasing clarity/agreement about who is ultimately responsible for what is taught.
 - Increasing clarity about where/from whom instructional support may be obtained.
- June 8, 2004 Presentation of CORRE Findings to East Providence School Board.



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