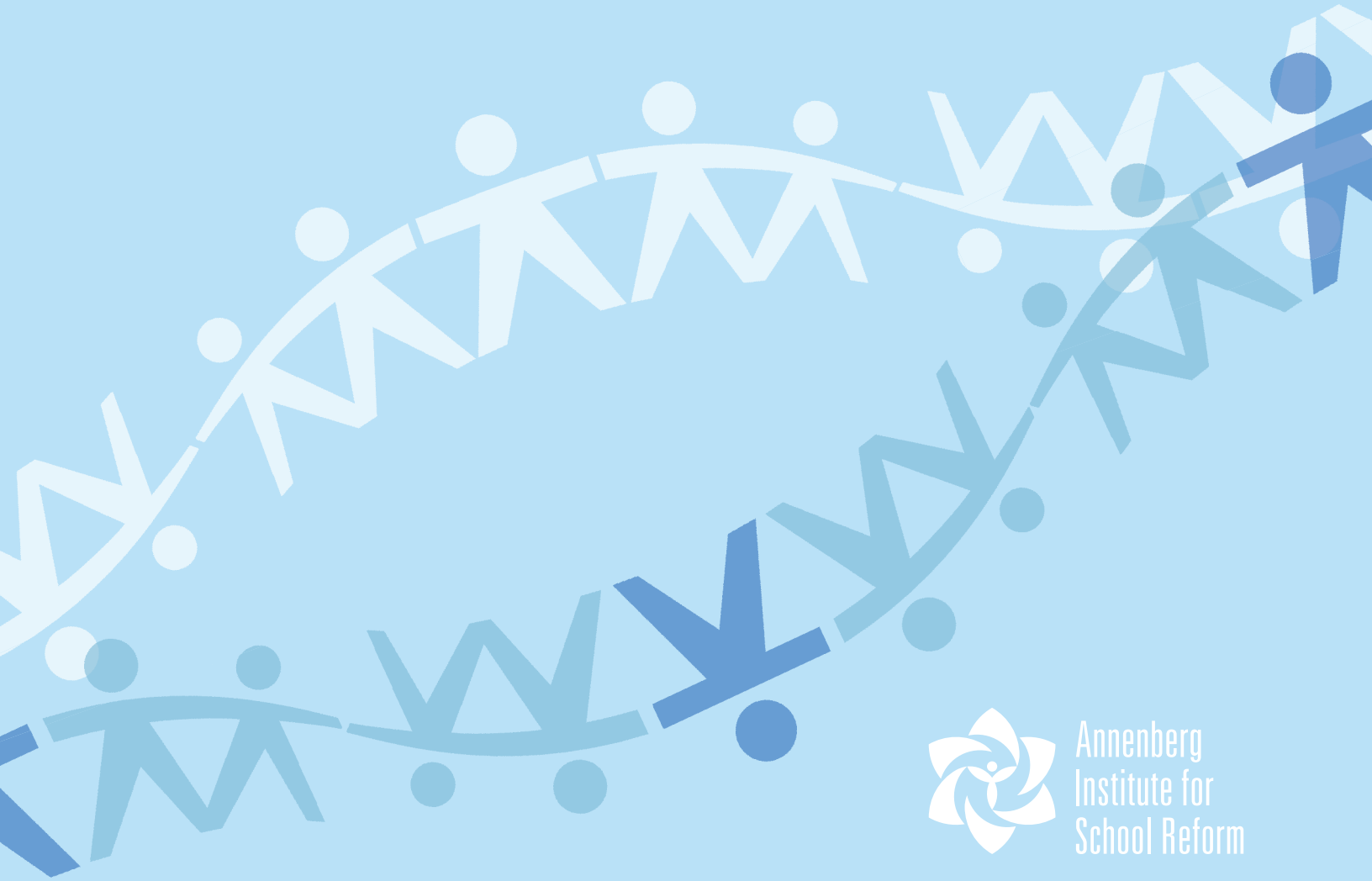
TRANSATLANTIC DIALOGUE ON COLLABORATIVE NETWORKS SERIES

Peer Networks in School Reform

LESSONS FROM ENGLAND AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES



Annenberg Institute for School Reform

AT BROWN UNIVERSITY

Authors

Jacob Mishook
Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University

Sara McAlister
Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University

Karen Edge
Institute of Education, University of London

Editors

Margaret Balch-Gonzales

O'rya Hyde Keller

Graphic Design

Haewon M. Kim

Annenberg Institute for School Reform
at Brown University

Providence
Brown University
Box 1985
Providence, RI 02912
T 401.863.7990
F 401.863.1290

New York
233 Broadway
Suite 720
New York, NY 10279
T 212.328.9290
F 212.964.1057

www.annenberginstitute.org

© Brown University, February 2011

CONTENTS

About the Series ii

About the Annenberg Institute for School Reform ii

Acknowledgments ii

Introduction 1

About This Report 2

Policy Context in England:
A Culture of Within- and Across-School Peer Networking with Strong Government Support 3

Policy Context in the United States:
Limited Government Role in Capacity Building 5

The New York City Context 6

Findings 7

England *7*

New York City *11*

Discussion and Conclusion 15

England *15*

United States *17*

APPENDIX A: About the Study 18

APPENDIX B: Lead Practitioner Network Analysis 19

References 21

ABOUT THE SERIES

The Transatlantic School Innovation Alliance (TSIA) is a collaborative partnership established in 2006 between the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University and New Visions for Public Schools (with support from the Annenberg Foundation) in the United States, and the Department for Education (DFE, formerly the Department for Children, Schools, and Families) and the Joint International Unit in England. The TSIA is a partnership program designed to improve teaching, learning, and educational leadership by creating a peer (or lateral) network of principals and practitioners in secondary schools in the United States and the United Kingdom engaged in action research into adolescent literacy and leadership development. TSIA began as a New York-London partnership and has since expanded to include partnerships between Washington D.C. and the Black Country, and Boston and Manchester.

As part of the program, participants have developed and studied approaches to teaching literacy to students in an urban context. Through the TSIA, participants have formed collaborative working relationships within their schools, across schools in their own cities, with their matched international partner school, and with other schools across the TSIA. Participants have also been exploring how school and policy leaders are tackling urban leadership challenges through peer-to-peer relationships and interactions with city, state, and national policy leaders.

Through the development of these partnerships, the authors of this report noted the proliferation of peer networking opportunities in London, in contrast to the relative lack of these opportunities for teachers and leaders in New York City. Given the Annenberg Institute's interest in how policy shapes practice in urban education settings, the authors set out to investigate how leaders and practitioners in both cities are incentivized (or not) by policy-makers to engage in these peer, collaborative networks across schools.

ABOUT THE ANNENBERG INSTITUTE FOR SCHOOL REFORM

The Annenberg Institute for School Reform is a national policy-research and reform-support organization, affiliated with Brown University, that focuses on improving conditions and outcomes for all students in urban public schools, especially those serving disadvantaged children. The Institute's vision is the transformation of traditional school systems into "smart education systems" that develop and integrate high-quality learning opportunities in all areas of students' lives – at school, at home, and in the community.

The Institute conducts research; works with a variety of partners committed to educational improvement to build capacity in school districts and communities; and shares its work through print and Web publications. Rather than providing a specific reform design or model to be implemented, the Institute's approach is to offer an array of tools and strategies to help districts and communities strengthen their local capacity to provide and sustain high-quality education for all students.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to thank the principals and practitioners in 2009-2010 TSIA schools for their participation in this research. Those schools are: the Academy for Language and Technology, Bronx Engineering and Technology Academy, Bronx High School for Leadership and Community Service, Bronx Leadership Academy II, East-West School for International Studies, High School for Telecommunication, Arts, and Technology, and the Young Women's Leadership School in New York City; and Bow School of Maths and Computing, City of London Academy, Elliot School, George Green's School, The Leigh Technology Academy, Lilian Baylis Technology School, Skinners' Company's School for Girls, and Westminster Academy in London. The authors would also like to acknowledge Rob Briscoe, U.K. TSIA adviser; Wendy Parmley U.K. TSIA program lead; and Marla Ucelli-Kashyap, U.S. TSIA lead, for their guidance and support in the development of this paper.

INTRODUCTION

Education systems have traditionally relied on building and using capacity at the upper levels of a hierarchy to bring reform to scale. In the United States, since the advent of standards-based reform in the 1980s, this has typically meant the use of top-down accountability systems (some strong, some weak) like the No Child Left Behind Act, where knowledge – whether in the form of standards, curriculum, assessment, and/or incentives – is presumed to exist at the federal, state, or district level. This knowledge is supposed to then flow down to principals, teachers, and students, though in practice this has been uneven at best (e.g., Porter & Smithson 2001; Tyack & Cuban 1995).

This persistent focus in the United States on building *vertical* structures has resulted in weak *peer* collaborative structures (also known as *lateral networks*) among local partners for building knowledge and spreading effective practices, even though local context strongly shapes the effectiveness of educational reforms (Sipple, Killeen & Monk 2004; Spillane, Reiser & Reimer 2002). At the same time, the mechanisms of accountability have also shifted toward individual teachers through new teacher-evaluation systems that rely on student test scores, as well as "pay for performance" systems.

This movement toward top-down accountability and accountability focused on individual teachers and schools continues, despite evidence that effective teacher and principal networks have the potential to improve learning. For example, Fielding and colleagues (2005) noted that high-functioning networks exhibit a number of defining characteristics that can support the difficult goal of spreading good practice:

- High levels of trust among practitioners
- A focus on learner engagement
- Long-term relationships for developing and transferring effective practice
- Joint development of practice

Local education authorities and other intermediary organizations have critical roles to play in developing effective peer school networks, including avoiding prescriptive policies, initiating but not driving networks, and promoting joint leadership for schools in such networks (Fielding et al. 2005; McLaughlin & Talbert 2006). Indeed, the sustainability and depth of whole system reform may depend substantially on high-quality peer networks (Fullan 2010). However, these principles are largely in conflict with current educational reform priorities in the United States, especially those of large urban districts like New York City.

There has been a degree of focus on the benefits of teacher collaboration within schools and in a few school districts in the United States (e.g., professional learning communities; see, for example, McLaughlin & Talbert 2006). However, there has not been a broad-based attempt in this country to harness the power of professional collaboration across schools to bring about substantial shifts in policy and practice at the state and/or national level. Professional networks in education in the United States, then, are largely external, informal, and voluntary.

Many public sector organizations and schools are not designed to promote sharing and collaboration; they have cultures of knowledge hoarding, where "knowledge is power" is still a central cultural tenet. Susan Moore Johnston (2010) has described the traditional education culture as the "egg crate model" where practitioners teach children within individual classrooms, isolated from the support and knowledge of colleagues. Again, the push in the United States for new teacher-evaluation systems that rely primarily on matching individual teachers with their students' test scores threatens to exacerbate this competitive, rather than collaborative, system of teaching (see also Corcoran 2010 for technical problems with the value-added approach).

Several large urban school districts (such as New York City and Philadelphia) are also experimenting with portfolio management policy structures. Districts using portfolio management typically allow for multi-

ple providers – charter schools and educational management organizations – to manage some schools within the district quasi-independently, as long as those schools meet accountability requirements for student achievement. In this sense, operational control is devolved locally to schools and their managing organizations, while the district still retains ultimate decision-making power to close low-performing schools through accountability policies (Lake & Hill 2009). The impact of these new policy structures on knowledge sharing across schools is not well documented, but preliminary evidence in this paper indicates that peer networking may be more difficult in portfolio management districts.

These challenges notwithstanding, there are several places where within- and between-school networking are being adopted to enhance professional practice and create opportunities for innovation and support. England[1] is relatively advanced in the scale of its adoption and implementation of mandated networking and collaboration to drive policy and practice change. Since 2000, networking and collaboration has become a central force in educational policy and practice within England. It appears that England's education system has capitalized on the potential power of networking and collaboration in two key ways:

- Policy levers (government-driven): Providing seed funding and/or enacting policy to foster/mandate collaboration between and within local authorities and local agencies and schools.
- Practice levers (agency/other organization-driven: National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services/Specialist Schools and Academies Trust): Support for head teachers and teacher networking and professional collaboration.

Most of these national network-collaboration initiatives aim to improve education practice at the local authority (or LA – similar to a district in the United States), school, or teacher/head teacher level. More specifically, these initiatives are often designed to influence various forms of teaching, learning, financing, resources, and inter-school and inter-professional cooperation.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

The role of peer networks for knowledge sharing and building has been at the heart of the Transatlantic School Innovation Alliance (TSIA) partnership (described in more detail in Appendix A, About the Study). TSIA participants have routinely discussed the conditions, policies, and structures inside and outside their schools that support teaching and learning in their home countries, giving rise to the idea for a broader exploration of peer networks in both countries. While there have been individual evaluations of many of the networking initiatives within the education system, there has been little comparative research or discussion of the role of networking and collaboration at the policy level.

Over a period of six months, the Annenberg Institute – the lead TSIA partner in the United States – and the Institute for Education at the University of London examined how peer networks in New York City and London foster effective practice for school leadership and teachers. We also conducted a comparative analysis of the policy and practice landscape of networking and collaboration initiatives within England, focusing on London, and the United States, focusing on New York City.[2]

We asked practitioners from both countries what networks are available to them, how they are funded, what outcomes are intended, what evidence exists about the success of the networks, and what evidence practitioners share about their experiences with the networks.

[1] We use "England" instead of "United Kingdom" in this paper, as the national education systems of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland are independent from one another.

[2] See About the Study in Appendix A for more details about this collaboration.

Because of the greater involvement of the national government in England in education, we focused much of our interviewing on national actors; conversely, the strong local control in United States schools meant that we focused on local and district organizations in New York City. While there are numerous national networks in the United States, they have often been scattered and informal, with the exception of some district- and philanthropically supported efforts (see McLaughlin & Talbert 2006).

We noted that while there were obvious differences in both the policy and structural context supporting schools and educators in each country, one of the most significant differences appeared to be the level of enthusiasm and national and local support for networking initiatives to support educators in England. In this report, we discuss and contrast the policy context on networking in England and the United States and present the findings on the usefulness of peer networks and on the type of enhancements and obstacles that policy can present to these networks. We close with recommendations to support future development of high-quality peer networks.

Finally, we should stress the provisional nature of these findings. While we were able to access and speak to a number of individuals with perspectives on peer networking in London and New York, the total number of interviews is small and the conclusions drawn from this work should be considered limited pending further data collection and analysis.

POLICY CONTEXT IN ENGLAND: A CULTURE OF WITHIN- AND ACROSS-SCHOOL PEER NETWORKING WITH STRONG GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

Peer networks have arisen as a central force in the design and implementation of English education policy. In order to encourage school-to-school networking, government agencies in England, including the Department for Education (DFE), have mandated and incentivized local authorities and schools to collaborate on different levels. Non-governmental organizations, including the National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services (which provide professional development and support for school and local authority leaders) and the General Teaching Council (which provides professional development for teachers),[3] have also established an array of networking initiatives and professional networks to support professional collaboration across schools and local authorities.

The landscape of education in England has been affected by the surge in mandatory and voluntary networking and collaboration initiatives. However, the priorities of the new Conservative-Liberal Democratic coalition government, reflected in a newly released white paper (link in footnote 5, page 7), would eliminate much of this formal support for collaboration. At this transitional point with a new government, it is unclear how and if these initiatives have influenced changes in practices at the local authority or school levels. New government initiatives, such as the "free schools" initiative (described in the section Discussion and Conclusion), will further complicate this assessment. While assessing the collective influence of the range of initiatives is beyond the scope of this project, our interest in the English context of networking lies in how the national policy/practice landscape has adopted and encouraged networking.

A body of practice and research has developed during the past two decades in England focused on networks of practitioners and school leaders across schools

[3] In June 2010, the Secretary of State for Education in England announced that the General Teaching Council will be abolished.

(though with a strong within-school component as well). The theory of action in these types of inter-school networks is that "significant changes in pupil learning depend on major changes in the practices and the structures of schools, and that these changes will emerge from the professional learning that occurs through interaction within and across schools in networks" (Katz & Earl 2010, p. 28). These significant changes for student learning emerge by enabling teachers and principals to "move outside their typical contexts to engage with a broader scope of ideas and possibilities," which, in turn, leads to sharing knowledge that will influence practices in the classroom (Katz & Earl 2010, p. 29).

The history of educational change in England has been described as a path from "uninformed prescription" in the 1980s to "informed prescription" in the 1990s to "informed professional judgment" or practitioner-led change in the 2000s (Barber 2002; Hannon 2007). Movement toward "practitioner-led change," however, has meant that the central government has devolved more authority to local schools, leaders, and practitioners, while at the same time providing structures, policies, and funding for local educational actors to communicate and share best practices. Moving away from this top-down structure and toward locally managed (but externally supported and reviewed) networks of schools has been a main thrust of English educational reform during the past decade (Ainscow, Muijs & West 2006).

At the system level, Hargreaves (2003) described what the larger educational system would need to do to create high-functioning peer networks in England. This included "many dynamic networks of schools and other providers operating collaboratively across local areas," often in healthy competition with one another, the development of leadership capacity distributed widely across school networks, a more highly developed information and communications technology capacity to "provide personalized, real-time information about student progress," and a "reshaped system of central governance with clear and simple objectives, underpinning a different kind of systemwide capacity" that would "handle and shape the flow of knowledge" and focus on the most urgent challenges, rather than prescribe policy indiscriminately to all schools (pp. 14–15).

Seven years after this description of what "high-functioning peer networks" might look like, and having used peer networks extensively in the highly successful London Challenge and City Challenge,[4] England enshrined school partnerships and networks as key to national educational strategy (Department for Children, Schools and Families 2009) and developed multiple networks through various public and private organizations for various purposes: supporting and improving low-achieving schools, moving schools from "good to great," providing professional development for teachers and leaders, and testing out new and innovative ideas that could be taken to scale across schools and networks.

Many of these networks have existed for many years. For example, the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT, formerly the Specialist Schools Trust), a nongovernmental organization (analagous to a nonprofit organization in the United States) that represents nine out of ten secondary schools in England, has provided professional development and networks for the past two decades. However, in recent years these networks have proliferated not only due to direct central government support, but also a culture or expectation that networking with colleagues inside and outside of schools is an expected part of business. This culture has been developed through DFE and the influence of nongovernmental organizations like the SSAT.

[4] The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED) recently reported that schools in London Challenge have continued to improve outcomes for children at a greater rate than other schools. See: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Documents-by-type/Thematic-reports/London-Challenge>.

POLICY CONTEXT IN THE UNITED STATES: LIMITED GOVERNMENT ROLE IN CAPACITY BUILDING

One school improvement strategy that has spread widely in the United States is the development of "professional learning communities" (PLCs) within individual schools (though supported and in some cases facilitated by local education authorities) (Coburn & Russell 2008; McLaughlin & Talbert 2006). Ideally, within these PLCs teachers "work collaboratively to reflect on their practice, examine evidence about the relationship between practice and student outcomes, and make changes that improve teaching and learning for the particular students in their classes" (McLaughlin & Talbert 2006, p. 4). Recent research by the well-respected Consortium on Chicago School Research found that strong professional learning communities were one of five characteristics common to fast-improving public schools in Chicago (Sebring et al. 2009). Less attention has been paid to inter-school networking.

While the emphasis in the United States literature and practice has been on collaboration within schools, recent examples of inter-school networks have emerged from larger reform initiatives. Several of these have been large-scale efforts to substantially improve struggling high-poverty schools, facilitated by universities, foundations, and other intermediaries, including the Johns Hopkins University Talent Development whole-school reform model, the Southern Regional Educational Board's High Schools that Work program, and district-level reform in Hamilton County, Tennessee. Evaluations of these reforms have found that emergent networks of schools or of practitioners in similar roles across a set of schools are important sources of capacity and sustainability and have been central to the initiatives' success (Institute for Education Sciences 2007; Fruchter 2007). Scholars, including Hargreaves and Shirley (2009), have recently highlighted the success of inter-school networks abroad and offered them as a promising strategy for struggling schools in the United States.

Networks have been a feature of the support provided by the robust nonprofit and nongovernmental sector involved in education reform in the United States. Organizations such as the Coalition of Essential Schools and the National Writing Project have supported virtual and face-to-face networking among teachers. Alternative teacher certification programs such as Teach for America and the New York City Teaching Fellows facilitate networks among their participants during their service in schools, and many participants also form strong personal networks that they use for support and advice on practice. Nationally, elementary and middle school teachers collaborate through an online network called TeachNet. The Teachers Network, with a significant presence in New York City, is a voluntary network through which teachers share lesson plans, access professional development, and discuss best practices. For the most part, these networks are not coordinated at the school level, but rather involve individual teachers.

The context of the United States education system means that there are fewer levers for translating research or promising practice – such as inter-school networks – into policy on a national scale. The federal government, historically, has played a limited role in funding education and in setting and driving education policy, particularly in comparison to centralized systems like that of England. While the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 established a national accountability regime and set national goals for educational achievement, states were left with the responsibility for establishing standards, developing assessment systems, and intervening in struggling schools. Many states also devolve considerable authority for supporting and monitoring schools to their districts. The United States has no national curriculum or national standards, though many states are currently voluntarily adopting common standards. The Obama administration has had recent success in pushing significant changes in state policy, including encouraging the adoption of the common standards through competitive grant making.

The structure of the American system also means that there is no centralized capacity-building process, and there has been limited investment in capacity building at all levels. The federal education department maintains a clearinghouse of educational research, as well as a system of ten regional educational laboratories that conduct applied research and provide technical assistance. But the absence of a common curriculum or shared approach to pedagogy makes developing and sharing relevant best practices difficult. There is no American counterpart to the National College to scale up and spread promising practices like peer networking.

THE NEW YORK CITY CONTEXT

New York City is the largest school district in the United States. It has experienced many different governance structures and reform directions over the past four decades. Demands for community control in minority communities in the 1960s led to decentralization in 1966, with the establishment of thirty-two neighborhood school districts, each with an elected board. High schools fell outside the local district structure and formed districts of their own that roughly corresponded to the five boroughs, each with its own superintendent.

In 2002, the state legislature granted the mayor, Michael Bloomberg, control of the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE). Mayor Bloomberg and his former schools chancellor, Joel Klein, experimented with a range of management structures built on the premise of devolving increased autonomy to school leaders in exchange for strict accountability for outcomes.

By 2007, New York had shifted from the geographic system to one of citywide school support organizations (SSOs), with which principals could contract for the curriculum, professional development, operations, and management support traditionally provided by district central offices. Some of these SSOs are led by former superintendents; some are led by nonprofit organizations, including New Visions for Public Schools (the SSO for the eight New York schools participating in TSIA), which provides professional development, coaching, and other non-infrastructure support services to approximately seventy-five secondary schools within the district. The SSOs allow principals to build relationships with colleagues with similar interests and orientations by self-selecting into the SSO that best matches their needs (Hemphill et al. 2010).

The district began experimenting in 2009 with a new scheme called Children First Networks (CFNs), which further institutionalizes the belief that decisions about teaching and learning and school management are best left to those inside of schools. Approximately twenty-five schools join together and hire a network leader, who brings a small staff to handle instructional and operational support. The networks are not geographically bound, and the idea is to allow schools with

similar interests or similar challenges to seek out appropriate support together. The network leader has little formal authority over principals and acts more as a coach. All schools have been organized into CFNs for the 2010-2011 school year.

The United States emphasis on within-school professional learning communities has combined with the emphasis on school-level autonomy to shape the New York City system's approach to school improvement. Based on a successful data-focused inquiry model developed by New Visions for Public Schools in collaboration with the Baruch College School of Public Affairs, the NYCDOE requires each school to establish "inquiry teams" of teachers and leaders. These teams are charged with jointly examining the conditions of learning for low-achieving students and devising, testing, and revising educational strategies to address their needs. System leaders believe that this direct responsibility for shaping instruction and improving achievement is key to investing teachers in their work and creating a culture of reflective, accountable teaching practice (Hemphill et al. 2010). As of the 2009-2010 school year, the goal was for 90 percent of each school's staff to participate in grade-level or subject-based inquiry teams (Talbert 2011).

A separate and simultaneous reform that has substantially reshaped the landscape of high schools is the creation of small, themed high schools to replace large, often-failing traditional neighborhood high schools. This work began in the 1990s and was advanced by Carnegie Corporation through the New Century High Schools initiative. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation invested more than $150 million in new small schools in New York City as part of its national initiative to replace large high schools with more intimate settings (Walz 2010). Mayor Bloomberg is a proponent of small schools and has accelerated the replacement of large schools with campuses of new small schools; since 2002, 214 new small secondary schools have been opened in New York City (NYCDOE 2010). (Prior to becoming an SSO, New Visions was an incubator of new small schools; seven of the eight TSIA schools are small schools launched with New Visions' support.)

FINDINGS

Our research revealed some of the ways in which system leaders in the two countries supported and/or constrained the development of peer networks of practitioners and school leaders to share best practices, promote school improvement, and support innovation.[5]

England

In England, with its decade-plus–long support of networking under the Labour government, numerous nationally supported and private organizations worked with schools, heads, and practitioners to spread best practices and improve student achievement, especially in areas of historically low student attainment like London and the Greater Manchester region. This section presents highlights from the findings (see Appendix B for preliminary findings from the lead practitioner network analysis).

Our interviews and document review yielded several key findings about peer networks in England. London teachers interviewed reported:

- a wide range of external networks supported through local authorities and private organizations and often focused on subject networks;
- an expectation that schools would be "outward facing" to other schools and the broader community;
- an attempt to balance top-down network expectations with bottom-up, customized ideas;
- a substantial focus on principal networking;
- scheduling within individual schools that allowed teachers and principals the time to be out of the classroom and observe practice in other schools, as well as participate in networks;
- local authorities varied in their capacity to support schools, and many networks bypassed them;
- the development of academies has had complex and not-well-understood effects on local authorities and other existing networks.

[5] The findings from England are based on the approach of the previous Labour government. At this report goes to press, the new Conservative-Liberal Democratic government has just released a white paper outlining its new approach. Overall, the new approach stresses a self-improving school system with little intervention or support from the central government except for schools that are struggling and well below standard. See: <http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/CM-7980.pdf>.

A wide range of external networks supported through local authorities and private organizations and often focused on subject networks

In interviews with London practitioners, Annenberg Institute researchers – coming from the perspective of the United States public education system – were struck by the number of opportunities for teachers to participate in external and internal networks outside of the school. Despite variance in local authority quality in England (described in more detail later in this section), a high percentage of respondents mentioned local authority networks (often related to subject areas) as valuable.

Professional development outside the school was also mentioned often. The twenty-two London participants mentioned sixteen professional development networks and highlighted eight as their most valuable. Private organizations and networks such as SSAT and Teach First were listed often as well. Finally, the TSIA network was often listed as a valuable network, though it is obviously limited to this particular group. Compared with the New York City teachers (see next section), the number and breadth of networks and organizations providing opportunities for networking in London was significantly higher, both in formal settings as described above and in informal settings such as after-work socializing.

Practitioners took advantage of time available to them to participate in out-of-school networks; those cited as particularly useful by interviewees included SSAT professional development opportunities that featured networking, as well as borough-wide networks that included both traditional secondary schools and academies.

An expectation that schools would be "outward facing" to other schools and the broader community

In England, schools are increasingly being asked to provide more social services to children as well as coordinate with external governmental and non-governmental social service agencies. This "Children's Services" approach to children's education and care has forced schools to be increasingly "outward facing" to the broader community, interacting and sharing with public and private organizations. Similarly, there has been a concerted effort in the past ten years in England to collaborate with leaders and teachers in other schools to share best practices (Hargreaves & Shirley 2009). As Andy Buck, operational director for City Challenge at the National College for School Leadership and Children's Services, put it:

> Great schools rarely go it alone. The most successful schools in London are not isolated and separate from their local community and other schools but actively encourage and embrace interaction with others. (Buck 2009, p. 15)

These networks take several forms. The National College, for example, has developed several programs that link school heads to one another depending on the particular needs of individual schools. For example, many principals of successful schools have engaged as Local Leaders in Education and National Leaders in Education, where they coach and mentor heads at struggling schools around a particular area of concern – behavior management, for example, or math instruction (National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services 2010).

Another program builds on the concept developed by business author Jim Collins (2001) around taking organizations from "good to great." Given the increased achievement across England, but particularly in urban areas like London, many schools and school leaders are in a position where achievement is above the

national standard. However, the National College has recognized that these principals may need additional support from other successful principals to earn an "outstanding" rating from the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. Schools involved in this program become part of a larger knowledge-sharing network and receive intensive "consultancies" from other successful school heads. Participation in the Good to Great program has increased by fourfold since 2007.

With this increased interaction, however, have come increasing responsibilities for school heads to manage a greater number of more-complex external relationships. One head said that a large challenge was determining which of the numerous networking and partnership opportunities to turn down because those partnerships would not be aligned with the academic mission of the school. Another nonprofit leader agreed:

> There is a need to achieve balance between being outward facing and taking [one's] eye off the ball. There are examples of organizations not being successful because people became too interested in what's going on outside. Similarly, some organizations make a conscious effort not to network because they don't want to lose focus on the day-to-day.

An attempt to balance top-down network expectations with bottom-up, customized ideas

There is a tension within the literature on effective networks between organizing networks centrally and allowing networks to "bubble up" through local actors (Mujis, West & Ainscow 2010). This tension was apparent in the agenda for City Challenge, an urban education reform focusing on support for low-performing schools that began in London and has since spread to Greater Manchester and the Black Country. While it began with a strong hand from the national government, there has been a slow but steady movement away from centrally directed mandates to customized plans to improve struggling schools, and a focus on school-to-school peer support and schools making informed decisions about support. As a City Challenge leader described:

> We are still at the turning point of schools leading. City Challenge is the turning point. Direct intervention was the first step – it moved us from poor to mediocre. Now the feeling is you can't direct that any further from center. [It is now about] empowering head teachers and local government. [There are] lots of tensions in here [and] still a lot of top-down interventions at the Department. . . . The new model relies much more on local authorities and schools being stronger and evaluating their own needs. . . . Most schools really detest the top-down model. The feeling from heads is that it's a one-size-fits-all [model] [and] doesn't meet their challenges.

Moving from a top-down model to one where schools are stronger and evaluating their own needs means that schools will need to become more business savvy in their evaluation and use of external expertise. Developing a cadre of quality external providers – whether that's the local authority or a private firm – and then effectively connecting those providers to schools based on that school's particular needs is a key challenge for this new customized model of network building.

A substantial focus on principal networking

A significant amount of effort in across-school networking in England has focused on school leadership personnel – principals, head teachers, and even middle leaders.[6] On its face this is not surprising, given that typically, school leaders are isolated within their own schools with little contact with counterparts in other schools (Hemphill & Nauer 2010). School leaders also face an increasingly complex profession (Crow 2006) with significant accountability pressures to increase student achievement (Public Agenda 2003).

We found a wide array of resources for school leaders in England and opportunities to connect with leaders in other schools through professional development, mentoring opportunities, and other programs. Two key providers for principal/head networking were the National College (described in earlier section of this report) and SSAT (the vast majority of secondary schools now identify as specialist schools or academies and are thus members of the organization).

The SSAT, as described by one of its leaders, is a voluntary network, and thus its networks have been developed through the needs expressed by schools themselves. There are a variety of different partnerships and networks, some based on region, while others are virtual. Their academy principals' network, for example, is online and is an "extremely vibrant" discussion for the nearly 300 academy principals in the SSAT. The SSAT also supports school-to-school networks with a focus on a particular kind of school development activity (similar to the National College).

Scheduling within individual schools that allowed teachers and principals the time to be out of the classroom and observe practice in other schools, as well as participate in networks

Based on the limited number of interviews conducted with London heads and practitioners, it appeared that both heads and practitioners had significant time available each term to leave their classroom and participate in out-of-school networks practitioners identified as helpful, such as professional development opportunities and borough-wide networks.

Local authorities varied in their capacity to support schools, and many networks bypass them

Several trends have complicated the role of the local authority in England. The most significant network and support building in England has been at the national level (e.g., City Challenge, National College) and through private organizations (e.g., SSAT). Yet although these networks have been initiated at the national level, they involve a substantial percentage of local authorities. For example, fully one-third of England's local authorities are involved in City Challenge, which encompasses London, Greater Manchester, and the Black Country.

Andy Buck, from the National College, noted that local authorities were "seen politically and by head teachers as variable in quality [and] . . . often the Challenge works despite the authority." However, the Challenge is "now trying to work in partnership, build the capacity of local authorities," though ultimately, trust in the effectiveness of local authorities comes "from [their] performance and track record." Given the relative lack of trust in many local authorities in England, Buck said, the most effective partnerships and networks were based on "head teachers supporting other heads" through programs that do not go through local authorities, but rather are facilitated by the Challenge with the National College.

Finally, the availability of the academy model has led to an increasing number of schools existing outside the local authority (even when the school facilities are physically located within a local authority's boundaries). It is not surprising, then, that the role of the traditional local authority is in flux. Several interviewees at the national and school levels remarked on local authorities' uneven capacity to support school improvement, though schools we visited remained engaged with their local authorities, especially with respect to their role in children's services. Local authorities have also started to move in the direction of "selling services" to schools, creating something of a marketplace for school improvement activity where local authorities now have to compete to remain relevant.

The development of academies has had complex and not-well-understood effects on local authorities and other existing networks

The development of academies in England, in some ways analogous to the charter school movement in the United States,[7] has had disruptive effects on the traditional organizational structure in education. Academies are state-funded independent schools that receive public funds after securing a modest amount of private investment or in-kind support. They have their own boards and hiring practices and do not have to follow the National Curriculum, though they are held to the same accountability standards as other state-funded schools. Academies' participation in networks may look different from other schools, though we do not have enough data yet to look at the types and quality of academy partnerships and networks. In our interviews with one academy head and two practitioners, the school was part of several national networks, including SSAT and the National College, though they were not part of City Challenge.

Whether academies will find existing networks sufficient is an open question. It may depend on whether the role of an academy head or academy practitioner is significantly different from that of their counterparts in traditional state-supported schools, thus necessitating different types of support and networking opportunities – and possibly whether, analogously to United States charter management organizations, an independent organization develops to support multiple academies.

[6] "Middle leaders" in the English context refer to teachers who take on leadership roles in a school. Examples include Head of Department and Head of Year.

[7] The Free Schools initiative proposed by the new government is closer to the charter school model as practiced in the United States.

New York City

Our interviews and document review yielded several key findings about peer networks in New York:

- limited external networks, generally focused on subject matter (e.g., language arts) or inquiry-based projects, and more robust internal networks;
- an emphasis on within-school professional learning communities centered on data inquiry;
- a heavy emphasis on bottom-up, self-directed networks with little top-down direction;
- disruption of existing peer networks and creation of new cross-school networking opportunities;
- less time for cross-school networking than in the English system.

Limited external networks, generally focused on subject matter (e.g., language arts) or inquiry-based projects, and more robust internal networks

New York practitioners highlighted work with their partner support organizations: New Visions and the Scaffolded Apprenticeship Model (SAM), an inquiry-based program operated in partnership between New Visions and Baruch College. Of particular interest was a network formed by New Visions of the TSIA schools to focus on literacy, which included professional development and school inter-visitations.

Beyond this TSIA network and SAM, however, there were limited formal external opportunities for networking. Internally, networks were more robust and most often included department and grade-level team meetings, as well as "inquiry teams" that examined data and initiated interventions with a subset of low-performing students. Overall, then, it was clear that opportunities for external networking were much more limited than internal networking and more limited than the external networking opportunities provided to their London-based colleagues. This led us to a deeper exploration of New York City policies that might constrain the development of high-quality external networks.

An emphasis on within-school professional learning communities centered on data inquiry

The reforms undertaken in the last decade by the NYCDOE have reflected the emphasis in United States research on within-school professional learning communities as a vehicle for improving teacher practice. The strategy of replacing large schools with small schools begun in the late 1990s and accelerated by Bloomberg and Klein enshrined the value of professional learning communities. A central tenet of the small schools movement is that intimate size provides more authentic opportunities for teachers to work together to improve practice (Bloom,Thompson & Unterman 2010). The small size of school staff allows for closer relationships and facilitates the development of a coherent culture. Many large high schools in New York have divided their students and staff into small learning communities to replicate the benefits of a small-school environment.

The adoption of the inquiry team model as the major vehicle for professional development has intensified the emphasis on within-school networks. Beginning with the 2006-2007 school year, the NYCDOE has scaled up "inquiry teams" modeled on a process developed by New Visions and Baruch College. Inquiry teams consisting of teachers and school leaders meet regularly to attempt to move a small group of students struggling with a particular skill into the school's "sphere of success" by closely analyzing those students' struggles and their conditions of learning and then refining practices to better meet their needs. The team then examines the outcomes of the new practices and makes further refinements as necessary in a continual cycle of improvement. Inquiry teams draw on a range of data, including standardized test results, the school's quality review, formative assessments, periodic assessments, and class work.

Based on a successful pilot of the inquiry team model in about 300 schools, the teams were expanded to all New York City schools in the 2007-2008 school year. While implementation and success, of course, varies from school to school, there is evidence that inquiry teams are functioning as effective networks on a large scale. The teams have been supported by SSO staff as well as a senior achievement facilitator, a NYCDOE staff position under the purview of the Office of Accountability. The NYCDOE has invested in building inquiry teams' capacity through a comprehensive inquiry handbook, materials to support each stage of the inquiry process, a new comprehensive data system, and online space for teacher collaboration (Talbert 2011).

A formative assessment of the inquiry team model, conducted by the Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE) at Teachers College, Columbia University, found that in the first year, the majority of inquiry teams had completed the inquiry cycle (Robinson et al. 2008). Most inquiry teams had established positive, collaborative norms of working together, and three quarters of teachers reported that participation on an inquiry team had improved their own practice. The inquiry teams have helped to establish a strong culture of collaborative data use to inform instruction in New York City schools. Talbert (2011) also found that inquiry team participation prompted positive shifts in individual teachers' classroom practice and built shared accountability and teacher leadership.

In addition to formal inquiry teams, high school teachers in New York City often work collaboratively through other structures. In the eight New York City TSIA schools, teachers met regularly by grade level and often by subject area as well. It is unclear how often these other internal networks have focused deeply on issues of teaching and learning rather than on administrative or discipline issues.

Principals saw these professional learning communities as important sources of professional development and instructional improvement. By the 2009-2010 school year, schools were expected to have 90 percent of their teaching staff participating in grade-level or subject-based inquiry teams. In high schools, many of the existing grade- and subject-area teams have likely remained in place and adopted the inquiry team model.

A heavy emphasis on bottom-up, self-directed networks with little top-down direction

The emphasis on empowerment and autonomy has favored the development of bottom-up, self-directed networks in New York. There is a strong belief not only that teachers and principals are best equipped to make decisions, but that the process of teachers in each school discovering what works best for their students is central to improving instruction. Eric Nadelstern, a deputy to the Chancellor and a key architect of the CFN structure, explained:

> If you don't give people the opportunity to reinvent the wheel, they don't have the opportunity to improve the wheel. People have to invent it for themselves, and then they own it. It's that ownership that inspires them to do their best work. (Hemphill et al. 2010, p. 23)

While the inquiry team model provides extensive guidance on the process of inquiry and building functioning teams, the content of teams' work and the approach they take to addressing students' needs is entirely self-directed. Principals select their own networks and choose whether and how closely to work with other schools and are free to leave a network that is not meeting their needs. Network leaders serve at the pleasure of principals and have no formal authority over them. Critics note that that this approach might be insufficient to develop the capacity of new principals and new teachers (Hemphill et al. 2010). While experienced principals may benefit from autonomy, the hundreds of new principals and tens of thousands of new teachers might require more direction and guidance.

Disruption of existing peer networks and creation of new cross-school networking opportunities

Formal peer networking among schools has never been a strategy explicitly pursued by the New York City school system; it is unclear to what extent networks have formed or received support at various points. Under the local school district structure that existed from 1966 to 2002, some districts supported collaboration between schools (for example, see Elmore & Burney 1998), and some informal networks arose among schools within local districts. These networks were in part the product of geographical proximity and the ability of local district administrators to bring together school leaders and teachers and facilitate communication.

Under the local district structure, high schools were clustered by borough and supported by a borough high school superintendent. The extent to which these borough groupings functioned as networks varied greatly, according to observers, but in some cases principals developed strong working relationships and shared ideas about practice. The stability of this structure over time, the relatively small number of high schools in each borough, and the longer typical tenure of principals fostered relationships that facilitated networking.

The shift to organizational structures emphasizing school-level autonomy and self-directed networking has impacted the opportunities for cross-school networking in multiple and contradictory ways.

We found a sense among some principals and observers that the current climate is not one that encourages cooperation or collaboration among schools. The heightened accountability for constantly improving test scores that comes as the flip side of increased autonomy has, according to some principals, created a culture of competition and territoriality that militates against the formation of strong relationships. The repeated shifts in the support structure since 2002 may have disrupted informal geographically based networks that previously existed. Hemphill and colleagues (2010) found that

principals had no mechanisms for learning from or working with nearby schools facing the same neighborhood issues and serving similar populations. The strategy of replacing large traditional high schools with small themed schools has meant the recruitment of hundreds of new principals and assistant principals spread across the city, a growing proportion of whom are recruited from fields other than education and have few relationships with other school leaders.

On the other hand, principals have been given new freedom to organize themselves in ways that best meet the needs and interests of their schools. Principals self-select into SSOs and now organize their own Children First networks. Theoretically, these groupings based on affinity should provide more impetus for lateral networking and sharing of practice than did local school districts based on geography. Rather than focusing on compliance with district mandates, the job of the network leader and his or her staff is to learn what schools need in order to improve and provide scaffolding and accountability for growth.

While there has been little formal research and very little documentation of how these networks function, most seemed to use some combination of electronic communication platforms, school inter-visitations, and regular meetings of principals and teachers across schools as tools for school improvement. According to a NYCDOE official, a good deal of informal and self-initiated networking also arose among schools in each network. A study of school empowerment and accountability in New York City found that some principals appreciated the opportunities to network with schools that are higher-achieving or that excel in a particular area, rather than being organized by geography (Hemphill et al. 2010).

Less time for cross-school networking than in the English system

Carrie Leanna (2010) has noted the importance of "slack resources" for creating the time and space for teachers to learn from each other in professional communities. The emphasis on efficiency often creates schools in which teachers are overwhelmed and principals resort to short-term incentives and monitoring, she argues, particularly in under-resourced schools.

In comparison with teachers in England, teachers in the United States appeared to have relatively limited opportunities to leave their schools during the course of the school day to observe other teachers and participate in networks. United States schools tended to have leaner staffs, and teachers carried a heavier course load. While New York City schools have developed strong cultures of teacher collaboration within schools, the same expectations did not exist, either in New York City specifically or the United States as a whole, around teachers working with and learning from teachers in other schools. In New York City, the leanness of school staffing was exacerbated by the proliferation of small schools, in which teachers tended to wear multiple hats and teacher absences, even for part of a day, took a large toll on the rest of a school's staff.

The New York City high schools participating in TSIA had formalized expectations and extra resources to support inter-visitations, online sharing, and regular meetings of principals and teachers. TSIA schools received funds for release time for teachers, and a New Visions facilitator planned inter-visitations and facilitated collaborative activities. New Visions found that the TSIA schools had begun to see how a lateral network can complement the work they do in their inquiry teams and other professional learning communities and strengthen practice. While other schools supported by New Visions also engaged in cross-school collaborations, they had been less successful and sustained without the formalized structures and resources provided through TSIA.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Over the past decade, the United States and England have both worked to reshape their respective educational systems at scale using different reform levers and influenced by their respective cultures and political and regulatory structures. In the United States, increasing power has been granted to the previously weak federal authorities, working in tandem with states to develop rigorous standards and an accountability system that holds individuals – especially teachers and students – responsible for increasing achievement as measured by standardized assessments.

Recently, the United States federal government has expanded its influence to push common (though still voluntary) national standards, "turnaround" policies for underperforming schools, systems for collecting, managing, and analyzing data, and new systems of teacher evaluation. While the emphasis on particular reform areas has shifted and expanded, and the United States system remains decentralized compared to other educational systems in developed countries, the overall strategy has remained one that is top-down. The federal government, through the United States Department of Education, sets priorities and funds states and organizations to create and disseminate knowledge to districts, schools, principals, and teachers. There has been relatively little attention paid to building what Michael Fullan (2010) calls "collective capacity" within and across schools to share locally developed knowledge and best practices.

By contrast, England, through both the public and charity (i.e., nonprofit) sectors, has invested heavily in developing this local collective capacity through the development of peer and school-to-school networks. While England previously was similar to the United States in its top-down standards and accountability movement (and it should be said, still retains some of that authority through standards development and school inspection regime), there has been a major effort to change the culture of education to one where schools are "outward facing," looking to peers for knowledge and expertise on specific issues.

While the evidence on lateral networks is still emerging, there is evidence that such networks can improve student achievement, especially in England. Both the London Challenge/City Challenge initiatives, as well as the Raising Achievement, Transforming Learning reforms in England described by Shirley and Hargreaves (2009) placed school-to-school and peer networking at the center of their school improvement work, with very positive results. However, the variety and varying intensity of many peer networks makes measurement of their impact difficult. Still, it is clear that educational policy plays a key role in facilitating the development of high-quality lateral networks.

Looking toward the future, both systems have opportunities and challenges to expanding lateral networks to improve teaching and learning.

England

In England, there has been a heavy investment in networks over the past decade. While many of these networks have been facilitated by national organizations like City Challenge and the National College, several interviewees spoke about a "hand-off" transition to more self-directed networks. Part of this transition involves schools developing and joining these self-directed networks, along with being able to purchase services from a "menu" of external public and private vendors. This movement to a more bottom-up approach to network creation and development has the potential to radically shift the notion of where expertise lies in the educational system from national experts to local ones.

However, there are several complicating factors and challenges to this vision of locally directed networks. The first is the recent change in English government from Labour to a coalition between Conservatives and Liberal Democrats. The new government direction in education, as described in the white paper, "The Importance of Teaching" (see footnote 5, page 7 for

link), pushes traditional Conservative policies such as local governance, a decreased national role, support for some level of privatization of services, and lower overall funding for education.

The new government has also adopted some United States-like educational initiatives, including the championing and adoption of the "free school" model, based on a Swedish approach as well as United States charter schools. These new state-funded schools can be formed based on an approved application from business, charities, nongovernmental organizations, parents, or groups of interested teachers. Free schools will have similar autonomy as academies, including operating outside the jurisdiction of local authorities. As of September 2010, the government had approved twenty-five free schools. Another goal of the new government is to expand the number of academies at both the secondary and primary levels.

Finally, while formal mechanisms for collaboration will not be supported in the future, the Conservative-Liberal Democratic government aims to significantly increase the number of national and local leaders of education, as well as to establish a network of teaching schools that would develop and disseminate effective and innovative teaching practices across the country.

These approaches could play out in several ways. One encouraging possibility is that an increased level of local governance and autonomy could positively impact the development of local networks, giving schools a free hand to link together in voluntary networks based on interest and need. On the other hand, if peer-to-peer networking has not been fully integrated into the culture of schooling in England, it is unclear how current networks will fare going forward without further encouragement from the national government. Finally, a decreased level of education funding may change the priorities for resource use away from allowing teachers and leaders the time to leave their classrooms and collaborate with others inside and outside their schools.

From all appearances, the increase in the number of academies in England will be accelerated under the new government. This will provide opportunities and challenges to networking. Again, increased autonomy and control at the local school level could lead to innovative networking initiatives, and private charities such as the SSAT, supported by dues from individual schools, will presumably continue to support networking. On the other hand, without central support, academies, which are independent from local communities and the national government, may turn away from cross-school networking. Another intriguing possibility might be that academies will begin organizing themselves into the United States equivalent within the charter school movement of educational management organizations, or EMOs, to leverage services and supports.

United States

In the United States, the growing attention to the use of data to inform decision-making in schools has influenced the development of professional learning communities to study, discuss, and act on critical issues of practice. In the New York City TSIA schools, for example, the involvement of practitioners in a local TSIA network and the SAM process, both sponsored and facilitated by New Visions, is allowing teachers the opportunity to collect and use data, and collaborate around issues of mutual concern.

One important policy, or rather set of policies, revolves around the idea of the slack resources available to teachers and principals that allow the time and flexibility to collaborate, talk about data, and share best practices with others. This is part of developing a professional culture within education, and without it the United States educational system will remain tied to its historical "egg crate" model of teaching and learning. In the United States, the average teacher has five to seven hours *per week* for lesson planning and collaboration with other teachers. Carrie Leanna (2010) notes that the lack of resources in schools for extra staff time restricts professional growth for teachers and leaders; while other professions and industries commonly provide these resources.

Secondly, building effective networks requires institutional memory. Without a common history, understanding, language, and terminology, it is very difficult for educators to develop high-functioning networks. This lack of institutional memory is manifested in two ways that we observed. First, unlike in England, there is no common curriculum or pedagogy across (or even within) schools in the United States or New York City. Sharing effective practices is difficult, though the development of common tools for schools to use within the internal New York City TSIA network has bridged some of those differences. Second, and more specifically to New York City, the multiple reorganizations of that school system have, on the one hand, increased individual school autonomy and accountability, while at the same time dismantling many of the older structures that allowed and even encouraged schools to share knowledge and best practices. This movement from a more collaborative to a more competitive system has produced real tradeoffs.

Building a supportive infrastructure to foster peer networking in New York City and the United States more broadly is critical to leverage local knowledge. Nationally, the current emphasis on common standards and common assessments may help to develop a shared language and framework to facilitate cross-school collaboration. Senator Michael Bennet of Colorado introduced a bill in the last Congress to create national and regional leadership development centers, run by partnerships of nonprofit organizations, universities, and state education agencies, to prepare teachers to lead turnarounds of low-performing schools. Prospects for this legislation are now uncertain, but if created, these centers could potentially play a role similar to that of England's National College and City Challenge in facilitating network development.

In New York City, it remains to be seen whether the new Children's First Networks will develop into true cross-school communities of practice. One observer of the system posits that the intensive focus on professional learning communities within schools that New York City has pursued was a needed step in creating a culture of teachers-as-learners who engage in shared reflection before that culture could be extended across schools. It remains to be seen whether schools will now be supported in turning outward to learn from one another.

As the United States enters an era in which the majority of states have already agreed to implement more challenging common core standards, educators and policy-makers must be thinking about the policies and practices that will support these higher standards. For implementation of common core standards across the nation to be successful, educators need curricular supports and formalized professional development – but they also need formal and informal opportunities to learn with and from their peers through observation, communication, and collaborative work.

APPENDIX A

ABOUT THE STUDY

In an effort to better contextualize the work of the TSIA within the United States and English systems, the Annenberg Institute – the lead TSIA partner in the United States – and the Institute for Education at the University of London examined how within- and across-school networks in New York City and London foster effective practice for school leadership and teachers.

This exploratory study examined networks from the teacher/leader, school, local authority (LA) or intermediary organization, and national perspectives. We began this research exploration through the lenses of principals and teachers at the TSIA schools in New York City and London. The New York City high schools involved in TSIA are all affiliated with the school support organization New Visions for Public Schools. In London, the secondary schools involved in TSIA are a mixture of traditional publicly supported schools and academies.

In the first phase of work, we gathered data from fifteen English and seven United States leaders and teachers. We asked participants to prioritize and describe their networking experience both within and beyond their school. This preliminary research set the stage for an examination of how the policy environment in the two countries impacted the development and operation of peer networks. We examined the following questions both within England (national level) and the United States (city level):

- What does the current networking-collaboration landscape look like?
- Who is funding/supporting networking initiatives?
- What are the intended outcomes?
- What evidence exists related to the success of the networks in attaining their stated goals?
- What evidence do teachers and heads/principals share about their experiences with these networks?

Because of the greater involvement of the national government in England in education, we focused much of our interviewing on national actors; conversely, the strong local control in United States schools meant that we focused on local and district organizations in New York City.

At the local authority, intermediary, and national levels, we sought to better understand how networks in which the TSIA schools are embedded are developed and supported and how promising, or even innovative, practices identified at the local school level are disseminated and scaled. We were also interested in if, and how, those practices are mediated and constrained. We began by identifying organizations that promote and facilitate networks of leaders, practitioners, and/or schools, including government and non-government actors. We also consulted with colleagues in London and New York City for recommendations related to organizations and individuals that should be included in our policy interviews. We conducted 45- to 90-minute interviews with members of eight English organizations and five United States organizations, both government-funded and nonprofits or charities.

These interviews were supplemented by a document review of materials provided by these organizations related to the development and support of peer networks.

At the local level, researchers interviewed practitioners and leaders in four TSIA schools to better understand the local conditions within these schools, the networks (including TSIA) that staff participate in, and how those local conditions impact network participation. These interviews supplemented the practitioner focus groups described above.

APPENDIX B

LEAD PRACTITIONER NETWORK ANALYSIS

External Networks

Our analysis of the networking data from the lead practitioners and head teachers produced some interesting preliminary insight into the types of internal and external networks they are currently engaged in. While we acknowledge we were working with a very small sample (twenty-two leaders and teachers), we were interested in both testing the tools and gaining initial understanding into the context of networking experience among our TSIA colleagues.

The external networks cited by the New York City and London participants fall into six distinct categories.

Program-Based Networks

Participants listed their involvement in thirty-seven program-based networks. Of the twenty-two participants, nineteen Londoners and New Yorkers listed the TSIA as one of their networks with four of the seven New Yorkers listing TSIA and their New York–based TSIA work as one of their two most valuable networking experiences. Twelve of the fifteen Londoners listed TSIA as one of their external networks, and three specifically mentioned their work on the Students as Researchers program with the Institute of Education.

Personal Relationships

Participants listed personal networks on thirteen occasions including, in descending order: friends from training, friends outside education, family, and community/neighborhood. Three Londoners and two New Yorkers highlighted personal relationships as one of their most valuable networks. Evenings in the pub and lunch with friends and colleagues were the most valuable networks for five Londoners and one New Yorker.

Professional Relationships

Professional relationships were listed twenty times by participants including fifteen times by Londoners and five times by New Yorkers. Four New Yorkers listed teaching fellow colleagues as a key external network, and one Londoner and one New Yorker mentioned their students' parents. When discussing important professional relationships, Londoners listed: teachers at their current school/colleagues, teachers at other schools, and former colleagues. It is interesting to note that New York participants did not mention teachers outside of their schools in the same way.

Professional Development

Participants listed professional development-related networks twenty-one times with just more than half (eleven) labeled as a most valued network. The twenty-two London participants mentioned sixteen professional development networks and highlighted eight as their most valuable. New York City participants listed five professional development networks and identified three as their most valuable.

Meetings/Boards/Formal Networks

While six London participants listed a total of eighteen meetings/boards/formal networks, none of the New York City participants listed similar networks. Londoner networks included local authority/district level, subject networks, teachers organizations/union-related, and alumni associations. Londoners chose six of these networks as most valued networks.

Extracurricular

Two Londoners listed a total of eight extra-curricular activity networks, including one who listed seven different extracurricular networks that influenced that student's personal work and development. No New York City participants listed extracurricular activities within their networks of influence.

Internal Networks

Our analysis of the reported internal networks within schools that provide support and influence to participating head teacher and lead practitioners produced four discrete categories: staff networks, leader-related (e.g., heads, senior leadership team, etc.) networks, student/parent networks, and school initiative/program networks.

Staff

Each London and New York City participant mentioned at least one staff-related network as a most valued network with a total of 118 networks listed. Nineteen of twenty-two participants (twelve Londoners and seven New Yorkers) listed their department or meetings with their department as an important network. Fourteen participants noted that their department was one of their most valuable networks. Fifteen participants (ten Londoners and five New Yorkers) listed their year/grade/tutor team as an influential network. However, only four New York City participants listed them as one of their most important networks. Some other staff-related networks mentioned were teaching and learning committee, inquiry team, and subject faculty.

Leader-Related (e.g., Heads, SLT etc.)

Nine participants listed seventeen leader-related networks, including head of department, own or other, head of year, own or other, and TSIA lead practitioner. One Londoner and one New Yorker mentioned their senior leadership team as an important network. Four London participants listed middle management or leadership networks as important, and two participants identified them as most valued networks.

Student/Parent

Participants mentioned seven networks including student and/or parents as important. Two London participants identified school briefings, and one New Yorker identified the parent-teacher association as a most important network.

School Initiatives/Programs

Participants identified twenty-three school programs/initiatives as influential networks. Eight Londoners listed seventeen networks, and four New Yorkers listed six networks as important to their work and professional development. Six participants mentioned TSIA as an influential network with two participants highlighting the TSIA as one of their two most influential networks.

REFERENCES

Ainscow, M., D. Muijs, and M. West. 2006. "Collaboration as a Strategy for Improving Schools in Challenging Circumstances." *Improving Schools* 9, no. 3:192–202.

Barber, M. 2002. "From Good to Great: Large-scale Reform in England." Paper presented at Futures of Education conference, Zurich, Switzerland, April 26.

Bloom, H., S. L. Thompson, and R. Unterman. 2010. *Transforming the High School Experience: How New York City's New Small Schools are Boosting Student Achievement and Graduation Rates.* New York: MDRC.

Buck, A. 2009. *What Makes a Great School? A Practical Formula for Success.* London: National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services.

Coburn, C. E., and J. L. Russell. 2008. "District Policy and Teachers' Social Networks," *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 3, no 3:203–235.

Collins, J. 2001. *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap and Others Don't.* New York: Harper Business.

Corcoran, S. *Can Teachers Be Evaluated by Their Students' Test Scores? Should They Be? The Use of Value-Added Measures of Teacher Effectiveness in Policy and Practice.* 2010. Providence, RI: Brown University, Annenberg Institute for School Reform.

Crow, G. M. 2006. "Complexity and the Beginning Principal in the United States: Perspectives on Socialization." *Journal of Educational Administration* 44, no 4:310–325.

Department for Children, Schools and Families. 2009. "The National Challenge," <http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/leadership/schoolimprovement/thenationalchallenge>.

Elmore, R., and D. Burney. 1998. *Improving Instruction through Professional Development in New York City's Community School District #2.* Philadelphia, PA: Consortium for Policy Research in Education.

Fielding, M., S. Bragg, J. Craig, I. Cunningham, M. Eraut, S. Gillinson, M. Horne, C. Robinson, and J. Thorp. 2005. *Factors Influencing the Transfer of Good Practice.* London: Department for Education and Skills.

Fruchter, N. 2007. "Unity Incorporating Diversity: A Case Study of the Hamilton County School District's High School Transformation Efforts." Unpublished Manuscript. Providence, RI: Brown University, Annenberg Institute for School Reform.

Fullan, M. 2010. *All Systems Go: The Change Imperative for Whole System Reform.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Hannon, V. 2007. *'Next Practice' in Education: A Disciplined Approach to Innovation.* London: Innovation Unit.

Hargreaves, D. 2003. Education Epidemic: Transforming Secondary Schools Through Innovation Networks. London: Demos.

Hargreaves, A. and D. Shirley. 2009. *The Fourth Way: The Inspiring Future of Educational Change.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press

Hemphill, C., and K. Nauer, with H. Zelon, T. Jacobs, A. Raimondi, S. McCloskey, and R. Yerneni. 2010. *Managing by the Numbers: Empowerment and Accountability in New York City's Schools.* New York: Center for New York City Affairs, Milano the New School for Management and Urban Policy.

Institute for Education Sciences. 2007. *What Works Clearinghouse: Talent Development High Schools.* Washington, DC: IES.

Johnston, S. M. 2010. "How Best to Add Value? Strike a Balance between the Individual and the Organization in School Reform." *Voices in Urban Education*, no. 27:7–15.

Katz, S., and L. Earl. 2010. "Learning About Networked Learning Communities." *School Effectiveness and School Improvement* 21, no.1:27–51.

Lake, R., and P. Hill. 2009. *Performance Management in Portfolio School Districts.* Seattle: Center of Reinventing Public Education.

Leanna, C. M. 2010. "Social Capital: The Collective Component of Teaching Quality," *Voices in Urban Education Reform*, no. 27:16–23.

McLaughlin, M. W., and J. Talbert. 2006. *Building School-based Teacher Learning Communities: Professional Strategies to Improve Student Achievement.* New York: Teacher's College Press.

Mujis, D., M. West, and M. Ainscow. 2010. "Why Network? Theoretical Perspectives on Networking." *School Effectiveness and Improvement* 21, no. 1:5–26.

National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services. 2010. "Local Leaders of Education Programme," <www.nationalcollege.org.uk/index/professional-development/lle>.

New York City Department of Education. 2010. "Chancellor Klein Announces More than 80 Percent of Students Admitted to High School for Fifth Consecutive Year." NYCDOE Press Release (April 21). New York: NYCDOE. <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/mediarelations/NewsandSpeeches/2009-2010/hsselection042110.htm>

Porter, A. C., and J. L. Smithson. 2001. "Are Content Standards Being Implemented in the Classroom? A Methodology and Some Tentative Answers," pp. 60–80. In *From the Capitol to the Classroom: Standards-based Reform in the States*, edited by S. H. Fuhrman. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Public Agenda. 2003. *Rolling Up Their Sleeves: Superintendents and Principals Talk About What's Needed to Fix Public Schools.* New York: Wallace Foundation.

Robinson, M. A., P. Kannapel, J. Gujarati, H. Williams, and A. Oettinger. 2008. *A Formative Study of the Implementation of the Inquiry Team Process in New York City Public Schools: 2007-08 Findings.* New York: Consortium for Policy and Research in Education, Teachers College, Columbia University.

Sebring, P. B., E. Allensworth, A. S. Bryk, J. Q. Easton, and S. Luppescu. 2006. *The Essential Supports for School Improvement: Research Report.* Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research.

Sipple, J. W., K. Killeen, and D. H. Monk. 2004. "Adoption and Adaptation: School District Responses to State Imposed Learning and Graduation Requirements." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 26, no. 2:143–168.

Spillane, J. P., B. J. Reiser, and T. Reimer. 2002. "Policy Implementation and Cognition: Reframing and Refocusing Implementation Research." *Review of Educational Research* 72, no. 3:387–431.

Talbert, J. 2011. "Collaborative Inquiry to Expand Student Success in New York City Schools." In *Education Reform in New York City: Ambitious Change in the Nation's Most Complex School System*, edited by J. O'Day, C. S. Bitter, and L. M. Gomez. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Tyack, D. and L. Cuban. 1995. *Tinkering Toward Utopia: A Century of Public School Reform.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Walz, M. 2010. "City's Small High Schools Lift Graduation Rates," <www.gothamschools.org> (June 22).