



The Institute of Student Achievement

ISA Fact Sheet

Our Mission

The Institute for Student Achievement (ISA) partners with schools and districts to transform public high schools so that students who are traditionally underserved and underperforming graduate prepared for success in college.

Our Story

In 1990, philanthropists Lilo and Gerard Leeds founded the Institute for Student Achievement (ISA) as a non-profit organization committed to improving the educational conditions and outcomes for America's underserved youth. In 2000, under the leadership of Dr. Gerry House, ISA became a comprehensive school redesign partner with an implementation model grounded in educational research and practitioner expertise. Today, after two decades of partnering with high schools, ISA has a successful track record of having impacted over 70,000 students.

Leadership

Gerry House, Ed. D., President

Dr. House was named President of ISA in April 2000. Prior to joining ISA, she spent 15 years as superintendent of schools in Memphis, TN and Chapel Hill, NC. Dr. House has received numerous professional accolades throughout her career including the 1999 National Superintendent of the Year Award for her extensive reform efforts in the Memphis school system.

ISA Expert Educators

ISA provides its schools with external coaches, who are highly experienced, expert practitioners. Many have been secondary school principals or lead teachers who have started their own schools. Some have been instructional superintendents. Content coaches are experienced secondary school practitioners with strong expertise in their discipline; many have advanced degrees. All ISA coaches have experience doing job embedded professional development and are highly knowledgeable about college readiness instruction, state standards and the teacher evaluation framework. NCREST at Teachers College, Columbia University, oversees the coaching and provides regular live and web-based support and resources to ISA coaches.

Partnership with NCREST

Since 2001, the National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools & Teaching (NCREST) at Teachers College, Columbia University has been ISA's strategic education partner. NCREST has collaborated with ISA on the design, development and implementation of ISA's high school reform model and continuously engages in various activities to support ISA.

Proven Results

ISA has a proven track record of positive results based on two decades of partnering with some of our country's most challenging public high schools where over 70% of students are eligible for free lunch and the student population is largely African American and Hispanic.

90%

College persistence rates for ISA students who enrolled in a 4-year college, as compared to the national rate of 77%, and the national rate for African American and Hispanic students of 55%.

87%

Average 4-year attendance rate of ISA students.

80%

4-year cohort high school graduation rate for ISA students, as compared to the national average. For ISA's largely African American and Hispanic student population, this number greatly exceeds the national high school graduation rate of 60% for African Americans and 58% for Hispanic students.

70,000

Students impacted

4,000

Teachers impacted

The ISA Approach

Continuous organizational improvement is facilitated by the use of data to monitor program implementation and student performance outcomes. Teams meet regularly to ensure that the program is aligned with ISA's seven principles and that the focus is on accountability for measurable outcomes. Staff use student performance data, results from student inventories and program implementation reports to inform practice, make program improvements and provide appropriate interventions for students. Teachers collaboratively and regularly review student work to determine if the learning goals are being met. Schools participate in an end-of-year inventory that includes a self-assessment and an external assessment to examine program quality and identify where further development is needed.

Teaching & Learning

College-preparatory instructional program provides all students with a rigorous, inquiry-based curriculum and instruction aligned with your state standards and teacher evaluation framework.

Extended day/extended year provide additional opportunities for student enrichment and remediation.

Continuous professional development ensures a collaborative learning community in which teachers and school leaders benefit from individualized coaching, professional development institutes, and networking.

Building Relationships & Personalization

Distributed counseling leverages trusting adult/student relationships to increase achievement and provide a safety net of care and support.

Dedicated team of teachers and counselors provide a consistent, four-year support network. Parent involvement is strongly encouraged, as it has been proven to positively influence student learning and achievement.

Continuous Improvement

Continuous organizational improvement is facilitated by the use of data to monitor program implementation and student performance outcomes. The ISA Network allows school leaders, teachers and counselors to connect with a larger community of ISA educators to promote sharing and collaboration.

Customized Solutions

ISA provides customized solutions tailored to the individual needs and local context of each school. ISA uses three approaches to support the transformation of high schools.

New school development

- Creates new small schools including Career and Technical Education schools, starting with a 9th grade and adding a grade per year.
- Creation of a new culture with norms and practices designed for success.

Restructuring of existing school

- Redesign an existing, failing school through a phase-out campus, small schools or small learning communities model.
- Creation of several new independent schools or small learning communities.

Targeted intervention of existing school

- Supports existing schools to improve in selected areas such as leadership, instruction, content knowledge and pedagogy, student support system and counseling.



The ISA approach utilizes a model with three core areas of focus that are supported by seven research-based principles and a strong ISA network. Its approach ensures students receive the attention, support, and challenge essential for academic success.

Contact ISA

(516) 812-6700
info@isa-ed.ets.org
www.studentachievement.org



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