New Paradigm Schools: A National Survey-Based Search

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Overview

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Background

Problem
The need for paradigm change in education
The need for examples of schools that have undergone such change

Purpose of this study
To identify and describe schools that exhibit many characteristics of the new paradigm
Criteria for Selecting Schools (email):

Student progress is based on individual mastery as opposed to the use of traditional A-F grades or percentage assessments, and report cards track attainments.

Every student has a personal learning plan.

Grouping for learning is based on attainments and learning-plan goals.
Method

Process for Identifying Schools

Email & Online survey:
• All Change Division members
• Duffy Reports announcement

Process for Collecting Information

An online form to fill out
Information on their website (vague and general)
Follow-up phone calls to clarify and elaborate
Results

12 schools have been nominated so far

Most exciting one is Minnesota New Country School

EdVisions
Doug Thomas, Executive Director
Results

Minnesota New Country School
A teacher-owned public charter school
Founded in 1994
Has about 110 students across grades 6-12
Received a $4 million replication grand from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to form EdVisions
EdVisions has now helped more than 40 schools to adopt the MNCS model.

EdVisions Design Essentials Checklist:

Information: http://www.newcountryschool.com/
Results

Minnesota New Country School

1. Attainment-based student progress
2. Criterion-referenced assessment
3. Criterion-referenced student records
4. Customized learning: Personal Learning Plans
5. New roles for teachers
6. New roles for technology
7. Engaging learning (authentic, interesting, PBL)
8. Self-directed learning
9. Well-rounded development
10. Small learning communities
Discussion

Questions? Comments?