



Correlates of Effective Schools

The First and Second Generation

A number of schools have been relying on effective schools research as the framework for their school improvement program. After three or four years, many claim that they have successfully met the criteria described in the research on the correlates of effective schools. These educators ask if there is anything that comes after, or goes beyond, these standards.

The concept of second generation correlates attempts to incorporate the recent research and school improvement findings and offers an even more challenging developmental stage to which schools committed to the Learning for All mission ought to aspire.

There are two underlying assumptions to keep in mind: First, school improvement is an endless journey. Second, the second generation correlates cannot be implemented successfully unless the first generation correlate standards are present in the school. In one sense, the second generation correlates represent a developmental step beyond the first and, when successfully accomplished, will move the school even closer to the mission of **Learning for All**.

1. Clear and Focused Mission

First Generation: There is a clearly articulated school mission through which the staff shares an understanding of a commitment to the instructional goals, priorities, assessment procedures, and accountability. Staff accept responsibility for students' learning of the school's essential curricular goals.

Second Generation: The focus will shift toward a more appropriate balance between higher-level learning and those more basic skills that are truly prerequisite to their mastery. The advocated mission will be **Learning for All** instead of "teaching for Learning for All". There will be continued learning of the educators as well as the students.

2. Instructional Leadership

First Generation: The principal acts as an instructional leader and effectively and persistently communicates that mission to the staff, parents, and students. The principal understands and applies the characteristics of instructional effectiveness in the management of the instructional program.

Second Generation: The concept of leadership will be broadened and leadership will be viewed as a dispersed concept that includes all adults, especially the teachers. This will help to create a "community of shared values". The role of the principal will be that of "a leader of leaders". Expertise is generally distributed among many, not concentrated in a single person.

3. Climate of High Expectations for Success

First Generation: There is a climate of expectation in which the staff believes and demonstrates that all students can attain mastery of the essential school skills, and they believe that they have the capability to help all students attain mastery.

Second Generation: The emphasis placed on high expectations for success will be broadened significantly. Teachers will anticipate that some students did not learn to their expectations and will develop a broader array of responses and implement additional strategies such as reteaching and regrouping to assure all students do achieve mastery.

4. Safe and Orderly Environment

Lezotte, Lawrence W. *Correlates of Effective Schools: The First and Second Generation*. Effective Schools Products, LTD.



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First Generation: There is an orderly, purposeful, businesslike atmosphere which is free from threat of physical harm. The school climate is not oppressive and is conducive to teaching and learning.

Second Generation: The concept of a school environment conducive to **Learning for All** must move beyond the elimination of undesirable behavior. The second generation will place increased emphasis on the presence of certain desirable behaviors (e.g., cooperative team learning). These second generation schools will be places where students actually help one another.

5. Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress

First Generation: Student academic progress is measured frequently. A variety of assessment procedures are used. The results of the assessments are used to improve individual student performance and also to improve the instructional program.

Second Generation: The use of technology will permit teachers to do a better job on monitoring their students' progress and will allow students to monitor their own learning. The assessment emphasis will continue to shift away from standardized norm-referenced paper-pencil tests and toward curricular-based, criterion-referenced measures of student mastery. The monitoring of student learning will emphasize "more authentic assessments" of curriculum mastery. Teachers will pay much more attention to the alignment that must exist between the intended, taught, and tested curriculum.

6. Opportunity to Learn and Student Time on Task

First Generation: In the effective school, teachers allocate a significant amount of classroom time to instruction in the essential skills. For a high percentage of this time, students are engaged in whole class or large group, planned, teacher-directed, learning activities.

Second Generation: Teachers will have to become more skilled at interdisciplinary curriculum and they will need to learn how to comfortably practice "organized abandonment." The school is willing to declare that some things are more important than others; they are willing to abandon some less important content to be able to have enough time dedicated to those areas that are valued the most.

7. Home/School Relations

First Generation: Parents understand and support the basic mission of the school and are made to feel that they have an important role in achieving this mission.

Second Generation: The relationship between parents and the school must be an authentic partnership between the school and home. The best hope for students to learn what the school teaches is to build enough trust and enough communication to realize that both teachers and parents have the same goal – an effective school and home for all children!