Why Alternative Schools?

Traditional schools don’t meet the educational needs of all students:

- Low levels of student engagement
- High dropout rates
- Achievement gaps
Current School Design Limitations

- Simplistic measures
- Narrow band of innovation
- Reduced to typologies
- Model “programs” and “best” practices
- Inadequate program evaluation

Process Users

Local Design Leadership Teams that include committed internal and external stakeholders:

- Teachers and Administrators
- Students and Parents
- Members of the Community
- Staff from regional service center, associations and the state department of education
Fundamental Characteristics

• Start over
• Use accreditation standards
• Incorporate all “essential innovations”
• Make use of program evaluation

Design Framework

Accreditation Standards:

• Mission, beliefs, and expectations for student learning
• Curriculum
• Instruction
• Assessment
• Leadership and organization
• Schools Services
• Facilities and finance
• Culture of continual improvement

Adapted from Northwest Accreditation Commission, used by permission (NWAC, 2010)
Ten Elements of Innovative Schools

- Shared Vision
- Educational Diversity
- Relevant and Focused Curriculum
- Creative Instructional Approaches
- Student Assessment
- Caring andDemanding Teachers
- Voluntary Participation and School Choice
- Comprehensive Programs
- Small School Size
- Shared Governance and Local Autonomy

Adapted from the work of Robert Barr and William Parrett, used by permission
Make Use of Program Evaluation

- Types of Program Evaluation
  - Goal-Free (Utilize)
  - Objective-based (Audits)
  - Expertise-oriented (Accreditation)
  - Participatory-oriented (Involves participants)
- Internal/External Evaluator Competencies
- Program Evaluator Standards
- Matrixes and Logic Model Tools

Oregon Traditional School Improvement Criteria

School Improvement:
- Curriculum
- Instruction
- Culture and Norms
- Family and Community Engagement
- Leadership
- Integrated Systems and Structures

Based upon Oregon Department of Education, Used with Permission (ODE, 2010)
Quality Alternative Schools:

- Have defined a clear purpose
- Address all of the needs of their students
- Have curricula that engage students and is relevant to their lives
- Use multiple forms of assessment
- Provide flexibility and choice in learning
- Staff are given autonomy to make decisions

Adapted from the work of Robert Barr and William Parrett, used by permission

Types of Schools (Typology)

“Similarly to alternative schools, a lack of a workable typology with which to describe and classify charter schools has contributed to the lack of quantitatively examined studies of schools” (Carpenter, 2006).

Adapted from Chenoweth and Everhart (2002)
Program Evaluation Tool
Design Components

Continuous Improvement Loop

Product: Winter Lakes High School
Other Benefits of the Process

• Community relations
• Teacher buy-in
• Administrative support
• Increased revenue/resources
• Efficient use of resources

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