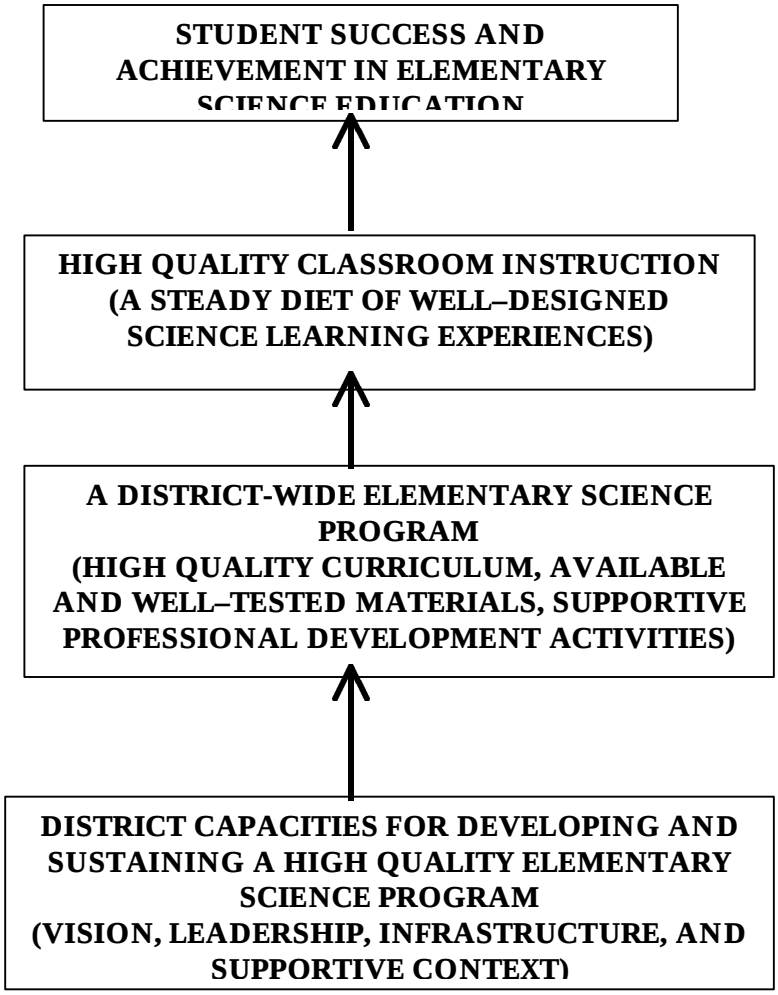
A FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING THE GROWTH OF THE CAPACITY OF A SCHOOL DISTRICT FOR IMPLEMENTING ELEMENTARY SCIENCE EDUCATION REFORM

OVERVIEW

This framework is intended to provide a set of questions that will review the degree to which and the ways in which a school district is developing the capacities and policies that are necessary to develop and sustain a standards-based elementary science education program. The Framework also documents the conditions that most influence the probability that a elementary science reform effort will succeed. This framework can be used by outside evaluators to monitor the degree to which a district is making progress toward a standards-based program. But it can also be used by the district itself, as a self-assessment tool and, perhaps more importantly, as a means to promote a dialogue within the district about the status of its current efforts to improve the elementary science program. Finally, this framework can also be used to provide a longitudinal view of how the district's capacities for reform are changing over time.

The theory that lies behind this framework may be stated very simply as follows:

(1) Student success in elementary science depends upon classrooms that provide a steady and daily diet of high quality science instruction. (It is well known that in most districts in the United States both the quantity and quality of elementary science instruction is lacking.)
(2) Good classroom instruction that takes place in every classroom in the district depends upon the presence of a solid district-wide elementary science program. Such a program includes good curriculum, readily available and well-designed materials, and supportive professional development activities.
(3) To establish such a program is not easy. Few districts across the United States can boast of a high quality elementary science program that reaches of all its students. To put such a program in place, and to sustain it, a lot of work must be done. And this work does not happen automatically, but rather it requires a district to develop a set of capacities – each of which is necessary but not sufficient to create a standards-based district-wide elementary science program.



The capacities, policies and conditions outlined in this framework are not mere theoretical constructs (although they are congruent with a vision of systemic reform). Rather, the capacities that are listed here are those that emerge from a five-year study of twelve urban school districts[1], all of whom are part of the Center for Urban Science Education Reform. (For more detail about CUSER and for a thorough explication of the framework, see Parts One and Two of ….Report =name…)

[1] Fall River, MA; Springfield, MA; Worcester, MA; Portland, OR; Tucson, AZ; Pueblo, CO; Ft. Wayne, IN; South Bend, IN; Spring Branch, TX; Beaumont, TX; Jackson, MS; and Fayette County, KY.

I. VISION AND REALITY

1) ***A Widely-Shared Vision of Good Science Teaching.*** The degree to which the district / project[2] has been able to create, articulate and build consensus around **an explicit and concrete instructional vision of what good science instruction looks like**. (This vision would, for example, outline the range of instructional approaches, the underlying philosophies, as well as the scientific subject matter to be included.)

A) Status at the Start of the Reform Effort

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low			Some	Very High	Unknown

B) Current Status

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low			Some	Very High	Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low			Some	Very High	Unknown

Comments:

[2] Throughout this report we refer to the district / project as the agent that is propelling the elementary science education reform effort. What is important is the degree to which the project has helped the targeted district(s) develop their own internal capacities for developing and sustaining a high quality science program. Thus, ultimately, it is the district that must invest in and come to value the requisite capacities.

2) ***A Widely-Shared Programmatic Vision.*** The degree to which the district / project has been able to develop, articulate and build consensus around **an explicit and concrete vision of what the desired elementary science program will look like**. (This vision would, for example, outline the key program components including specific kits to be used at each grade level, additional activities beyond the kits such as field trips or science fairs, and perhaps the use of additional reading materials.)

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

B) Current Status

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

Comments:

3) ***A High Quality Vision of Both Good Science Instruction <u>and</u> an Effective Science Program.*** The degree to which the district/project's **<u>vision of science instruction and its science program is of high quality</u>**, e.g., aligned with the National Science Education Standards, inquiry-rich, coherent and comprehensive, and developmental:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

B) Current Status

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

Comments:

4) ***A concrete vision of the development and implementation process*** -- The degree to which project leaders are able to develop agreement about and support for the specific steps of the process that will allow for the implementation of a standards-based science program on a district-wide basis.

4) ***A Knowledge of Classroom Realities.*** The degree to which the district / project is interested in and willing to examine **the realities in the field**. The degree to which the project / district has in place multiple mechanisms for assessing the quantity and quality of elementary science instruction that is taking place district-wide. (Such mechanisms generate easily understandable data that can help district leaders understand, for example, which kits and lessons are being taught, the quality of that teaching, and the degree to which program supports, such as professional development and materials distributions, are working.)

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

5) ***A System for Gathering and Using Data.*** The degree to which the project has the **capacity to both gather and use data**. Data about program implementation, and about the realities of classroom science instruction can be used both for program improvement and for "making the case" for the program to external audiences. (Such data might include a teacher and school database; information about the current status of science teaching; teacher beliefs and attitudes; the success of program implementation; and/or evidence of student success and achievement.)

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

II. LEADERSHIP

6) ***An Elementary Science "Point Person".*** The degree to which the district/project has identified, developed, and supported one individual person as a **"point person" for elementary science education reform**. (An effective point person is an individual working [full time] at the district level who has the mandate, expertise, commitment, energy, knowledge, and position to further elementary science education reform in the district.)

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

7) ***Core Group.*** The degree to which there exists a committed and empowered **core group** of people (a project-based "leadership team") either formally or informally designated as responsible for furthering the improvement of elementary science education in the district. (An effective core group consists of individuals who share a common vision, are highly motivated, work well together, and bring complementary skills to the reform effort.)

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

8) ***Science Resource Teachers.*** The degree to which the district has established positions for and been able to recruit skilled teachers so that the can serve as **"Science Resource Teachers" or "Teachers on Special Assignment."** (Effective Resource Teachers must themselves be good teachers of science, have experience in new curricula and methods, and be good at working in multiple modes of professional development.)

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

B) Current Status

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

Comments:

9) ***Science Lead Teachers***. The degree to which the district has been able to identify, recruit, train and deploy **a cadre of strong science lead teachers**. (These are teachers who are still teaching full-time but are willing to assist the reform effort by leading workshops, doing demonstration teaching, working of district task forces or contributing in a multitude of other ways.)

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

10) ***Principals***. The degree to which the district / project has been able to identify, support and draw upon a group of **school principals** who are leading the science reform effort in their own schools; in addition, they are knowledgeable about, and actively involved in, the effort to improve elementary science education in this district:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

B) Current Status

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

Comments:

11) ***District Elementary Science Coordinator or Science Specialist***. The degree to which the district has designated a **permanent position** (and accompanying support) **for a district administrator** who is expected to provide strong and stable leadership for the effort to promote a district-wide standards-based elementary science education reform effort:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

B) Current Status

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

Comments:

12) ***The Superintendent.*** The degree to which the **District Superintendent** is interested in the success of the elementary science education program and is willing to assume a proactive role, making elementary science education reform a public priority. Also, the degree to which the Superintendent is able and willing to provide the resources necessary to further the elementary science education reform effort in this district at this time:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

13) ***Administrative Supporters and Science Advocates***. The degree to which there exists at least a few **key upper-level district administrators** (e.g., the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Area Superintendents, a key Financial Officer) who are involved in and actively supporting the elementary science education reform:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

14) ***School Board Members***. The degree to which the **School Board** is knowledgeable about and supportive of the elementary science education reform effort:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

B) Current Status

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

Comments:

15) Elementary Science Classroom "Exemplars". The degree to which there are available in the district **sources of classroom expertise** (e.g., classroom teachers who can present visible examples and models of exemplary, inquiry-based science teaching):

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

Scientists and Scientific Expertise. The degree to which the district/project has developed a relationship with and has working access to **sources of scientific expertise** (e.g., university faculty or graduate students, local industry scientists, high school teachers, local science museum staff). The degree to which the district/project helps design and provide appropriate and useful supportive roles for these people (e.g., enabling them to ensure the content integrity of kits, or teach science content to elementary teachers, etc.):

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

B) Current Status

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

Comments:

Partner Organizations. The degree to which there are symbiotic **connections or partnerships between the project/district and other institutions**, agencies, and/or program aimed at science education improvement (e.g., Boces, universities, science museums, industry roundtables; other NSF reform projects):

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

B) Current Status

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

Comments:

Political Leadership. The degree to which there is **strong external political leadership** (individual or group) that is organized and committed so that it is effective in playing an advocacy role for elementary science, both within and outside of the district .

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

B) Current Status

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

Comments:

15) ***National connections and expertise***. The degree to which district **leaders are connected with and involved in professional associations**, networks, and national projects involving science and math reform (e.g., NSTA, CUSER, NSRC, Exploratorium Institute for Inquiry):

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

B) Current Status

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

Comments:

III. REFORM INFRASTRUCTURE

16) ***Curriculum.*** Overall extent to which the district has the capacity and will to identify, select and implement district-wide a **standards-based and inquiry-based curriculum** in elementary science:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

17) ***Instructional Materials.*** Overall extent to which the district has the capacity and will to establish and implement a system for providing all its teachers with the **instructional materials** necessary to implement a district-wide inquiry-based ("hands-on") curriculum in elementary science:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

B) Current Status

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

Comments:

18) ***Professional Development for Teachers.*** Overall extent to which the district has the capacity and will to implement a coherent and districtwide **professional development program that can support teachers** in gaining the knowledge, skills and inclination to implement a standards-based and inquiry-based curriculum in elementary science:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

19) Professional Development for District and Project Leaders. The degree to which the district/project has the intention and capacity to provide appropriate ongoing **professional development experiences for those who are the key leaders and supporters of the science education reform effort** (e.g., District science specialists, TOSAs; principals…).

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

B) Current Status

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

Comments:

20) ***Financial Resources***. Overall extent to which the district has the capacity and will to acquire and designate the **financial resources necessary to implement a district-wide standards-based and inquiry-based program** in elementary science:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

IV. DISTRICT POLICIES AND PRIORITIES

21) ***District Science Standards***. The degree to which the district has **reviewed and addressed its own science standards**, science framework and/or course of study so that it might better support the envisioned elementary science education reform effort:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

22) ***Formal District Science Assessment Policies***. The degree to which the district has reviewed and addressed **its own formal testing policies and practices** so that they might better support the envisioned elementary science education reform effort:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

23) ***Informal Science Assessment Policies***. The degree to which the district/project has supported teachers at the classroom level in **<u>developing informal assessment practices</u>** so that they might better support this elementary science education reform effort:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

24) ***Science Reform and Site-based Management***. The degree to which the district has designed its elementary science education reform so that it is **supportive of and congruent with school restructuring and site-based managed reforms** (e.g., proactively working with individual schools and/or supporting pilot schools through schoolwide professional development efforts):

A) Status Two Years Ago

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

25) ***Science Reform and Literacy***. The degree to which this district has **integrated elementary science education reform** with its higher priority efforts to promote basic literacy and/or mathematical competency in its elementary students:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

26) ***Science Reform and Equity*** The degree to which the district has sought to **integrate this elementary science education reform with the broader efforts of the district to increase equity** (e.g., bilingual programs, magnet schools, Title 1) so that the elementary science reform effort can "piggyback" on and be compatible with other equity-related reform efforts:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

27) ***Science Reform and Broader District Policies.*** Overall degree to which the district is **addressing its own broader policies and practices** (e.g., textbook adoptions, materials support structures) so that the district context is supportive and/or aligned with an inquiry-based and standards-based elementary science education reform:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

28) ***A Proactive Stance to Barriers.*** Overall degree to which the district is proactively and deliberately **identifying and resolving systemic barriers and blockages** that stand in the way of the progress of the elementary science reform program (e.g., finding creative solutions to chronic teacher substitute shortages, organizing time for classroom coaching, etc.):

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

V. CLIMATIC CONDITIONS THAT INFLUENCE REFORM

29) ***Overall State Political and Policy Climate.*** The overall degree to which **major state policies (e.g. accountability) and current state political climate are supportive** of the district's effort to improve elementary science education:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not Supportive		Mixed		Very Supportive	Unknown

B) Current Status

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not Supportive		Mixed		Very Supportive	Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not Supportive		Mixed		Very Supportive	Unknown

Comments:

30) ***State Science Standards and Testing.*** The overall degree to which **state science standards and science tests are supportive** of the district's effort to improve elementary science education:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not Supportive			Mixed	Very Supportive	Unknown

B) Current Status

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not Supportive			Mixed	Very Supportive	Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not Supportive			Mixed	Very Supportive	Unknown

Comments:

31) ***District and Local Community Political Climate***. Overall extent to which **local district and community political conditions** affect the district's effort to develop a plan and process for improving elementary science education in the district:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not Supportive			Mixed	Very Supportive	Unknown

B) Current Status

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not Supportive			Mixed	Very Supportive	Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not Supportive			Mixed	Very Supportive	Unknown

Comments:

32) ***District and Local Community Financial Conditions.*** Overall extent to **which local district and community financial conditions** affect the district's effort to develop a plan and process for improving elementary science education in the district:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not Supportive			Mixed	Very Supportive	Unknown

B) Current Status

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not Supportive			Mixed	Very Supportive	Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not Supportive			Mixed	Very Supportive	Unknown

Comments:

33) ***District professional culture and climate***. The overall **professional "culture" and "climate" in the district** (the working conditions, professional culture and overall morale in the district) that influence the willingness of all those working in the district to initiate and sustain reform efforts:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not Supportive		Mixed		Very Supportive	Unknown

B) Current Status

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not Supportive		Mixed		Very Supportive	Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not Supportive		Mixed		Very Supportive	Unknown

Comments:

34) ***District Turbulence and Instability***. Overall extent to which **unexpected or rapid <u>changes</u> in the local district or community** (e.g., new superintendents, teacher turnover, growth, the number and pace of new reforms) affect the ability and willingness of the district to promote elementary science education:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not Supportive		Mixed		Very Supportive	Unknown

B) Current Status

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not Supportive		Mixed		Very Supportive	Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not Supportive		Mixed		Very Supportive	Unknown

Comments:

VI. SUMMARY JUDGMENTS

This section summarizes the previous sections and asks the rater to make judgments about the overall status of the capacity of the district to engage in a successful elementary science education reform effort and the probability of its continued success.

35) ***Overall Development of Increased Internal Capacity***. Overall degree to which this district has developed its **own internal capacity for initiating and sustaining** elementary science education reform (e.g., its leadership, resources, relationships, infrastructure, and implementation progress):

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

36) ***Visible Success in Program Development.*** The overall degree to which the district/project has **made visible progress** in implementing its elementary science reform program, thereby building a positive reputation for the initiative and showing visible and publicly-recognized evidence of success (e.g., establishing a Materials Center, model classrooms, press releases, test scores, testimonials, etc.) that can buoy and further support additional reform activities:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

37) ***Intentionality.*** The **overall "seriousness" and priority** that this district places upon elementary science education reform:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

B) Current Status

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

_____

1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Low Some Very High Unknown

Comments:

38) ***Signal-to-noise Ratio***. Overall, any district's efforts to reform elementary science education are inevitably a small "signal" in an otherwise noisy district environment. The degree to which the **signal-to-noise ratio** of elementary science reform in this district is strong enough to be significant:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

B) Current Status

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very Low		Some		Very High	Unknown

Comments:

39) ***Trajectory.*** The overall **trajectory** of the elementary science program in this district:

A) Status at the Start of the CUSER Affiliation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Downward (Worsening Rapidly)		Flat		Upward (Improving Rapidly)	Unknown

B) Current Status

1	2	3	4	5	6
Downward (Worsening Rapidly)		Flat		Upward (Improving Rapidly)	Unknown

C) Most Likely Status in Two Years

1	2	3	4	5	6
Downward (Worsening Rapidly)		Flat		Upward (Improving Rapidly)	Unknown

D) Overall Contribution of CUSER to this capacity

1	2	3	4	5	6
Downward (Worsening Rapidly)		Flat		Upward (Improving Rapidly)	Unknown

Comments:

Other summary comments or thoughts: