

Richard F. Elmore on School Reform

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Selected Citations

- Elmore, R.F. (2002, January/February). The Limits of Change. *Harvard Education Letter*.
- Elmore, R.F. (2004). *School Reform from the Inside Out: Policy, Practice, and Performance*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Elmore, R., & Burney, D. (1998). *Continuous Improvement in Community District# 2, New York City*. Pittsburgh, PA: High Performance Learning Communities Project, Learning Research and Development Center, University of Pittsburgh.
- Elmore, R. F., & Burney, D. (1997a). *Investing in Teacher Learning: Staff Development and Instructional Improvement in Community School District #2, New York City*. Washington, DC: National Commission on Teaching and America's Future.
- Elmore, R. F., & Burney, D. (1997b). *School Variation and Systemic Instructional Improvement in Community School District #2, New York City*. Pittsburgh, PA: High Performance Learning Communities Project.
- Elmore, R.F., Peterson, P.L., & McCarthy, S.J. (1996). *Restructuring in the Classroom: Teaching, Learning, and School Organization*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Description

Richard Elmore's writings on school reform are considered to be incisive, critical analyses that drill deep into challenging subject matter. Beginning in the early 1990's much of Elmore's evaluative work stemmed from his involvement in studies of Community District #2 in New York City. His more recent work has focused on the federal No Child Left Behind Act and high-stakes testing as impediments to meaningful educational change. Elmore's explanations of how school reform can succeed have captured the attention of practitioners and the educational community at large.

In his work, Elmore promotes the idea that school reform cannot be imposed through artificial constructs developed by outside policy-makers. Instead, change must begin from the inside, with a commitment by educators to develop the knowledge, structures and practices at the heart of the instructional core. Finding fault with the loosely coupled structures of school systems where administrators act as buffers for ineffective teaching, his work highlights: the importance of distributed leadership (where modeling and collaboration occur at all levels in a culture open to constructive criticism); the potential of improved incentive systems to promote effective practices and bring them to scale; and the necessity of maintaining a tight focus on instruction within an internalized accountability system. Elmore's view of reform concentrates heavily on what transpires between students and teachers, the processes that support those interactions, and how they relate to instructional improvement.

A professor and senior research fellow on the faculty of Harvard University, Elmore is also affiliated with the Albert Shanker Institute.

For More Information

Additional information about Elmore's research can be found online at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, which can be accessed at www.gse.harvard.edu.