



Institute for Student Achievement  
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The Institute for Student Achievement (ISA)'s mission is to support and enhance educator capacity so that all students—regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, class, linguistic diversity, and exceptionality—are given intentional and equitable opportunities to learn and excel. ISA collaborates with districts and schools to support them in becoming high-performance educational organizations that provide students with intellectually challenging and supportive learning environments so that all students graduate ready for postsecondary education and careers.

ISA supports the following areas:

- Effective leaders
- Ambitious instruction
- Collaborative teachers
- Supportive environments

#### *Describe your organization's school improvement services*

ISA is a national non-profit school reform organization that for nearly 30 years has served as a direct service provider for districts and schools. We work primarily with secondary schools at grades 6–12; however, we can support elementary grades as well.

ISA offers three main services to schools and school districts:

- ISA's **professional development and coaching** is outcomes-driven. Coaches and the leaders and teachers they will work with identify the outcomes that staff want the coaching to address, and these outcomes in turn define each coach's scope of work. ISA provides schools with coaching in the following areas: leadership; content area (i.e., English language arts, literacy, mathematics, science, social studies); counseling; English learners; special education; social, emotional, and academic development; and restorative practices. All of ISA's coaches are experienced classroom teachers or school building or district leaders, which allows them to bring the authenticity, knowledge, and wisdom of real-life school experience to the work of coaching.
- ISA's **equity services** consist of (1) strategic planning with school and district leadership, to create an equity agenda inclusive of the supports necessary to close opportunity gaps; (2) professional development, with ISA providing equity-related training for school, district, and school board personnel; and (3) equity audits, as ISA personnel review various areas for their impact on equitable resources in the school district.
- Lastly, ISA works with schools and districts in the area of **social, emotional, and academic development (SEAD) coaching**. ISA supports the creation of classrooms in which students and teachers engage in daily metacognitive practice and in which students learn from their mistakes,

are reflective about and invested in their own growth, and identify and regularly use effective strategies to tackle academic problems.

*Describe how your organization differentiates its services to meet the unique needs of districts and schools*

ISA customizes our work with schools and districts to address each school and district's particular values, goals, student performance outcomes, and context. We work with the school or district to build high-leveraged goals and outcomes for students, faculty, and the school's organization and culture. In this, we assess the current state of implementation and create a strategic plan, an implementation plan, and a calendar to achieve the goals and outcomes. Finally, ISA provides ongoing monitoring and assessment of the effectiveness of these efforts.

*Describe the attributes of your organization's ideal partner district and/or school*

In our 30-year history ISA has worked with a variety of schools and school districts, and two common themes about those schools and districts have emerged. Firstly, the schools and districts that have succeeded in their work with ISA have a commitment to change. Secondly, and most critically, they have a commitment to fully serving their historically underserved students. We have worked in schools at each end of the demographic spectrum—those with very few students of color, for example, and those that are 100 percent African American or Latinx—but all of those schools have a commitment to educational excellence for all students.

*Describe your organization's track record of dramatically improving schools or systems and/or radically increasing outcomes for targeted subgroups of students*

Two independent and rigorous evaluation studies conducted by the Academy for Educational Development (AED) and by IMPAQ International have found that ISA has positive and statistically significant impacts on the attendance, grade promotion, credit accumulation, and four-year graduation rates of high-need students—both in general and African American males in particular. The following are additional highlights of ISA's work:

- In 2015, ISA was identified by the US Department of Education as one of three organizations to have a demonstrated record of success in implementing whole school reform and to be qualified for inclusion in the *What Works Clearinghouse*.
- ISA is the only proprietary, high school, whole school reform provider selected under the School Improvement Grant (SIG) program.
- ISA's approach to whole school redesign meets the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) evidence-based intervention standard at the Tier 2 – Moderate Evidence threshold.