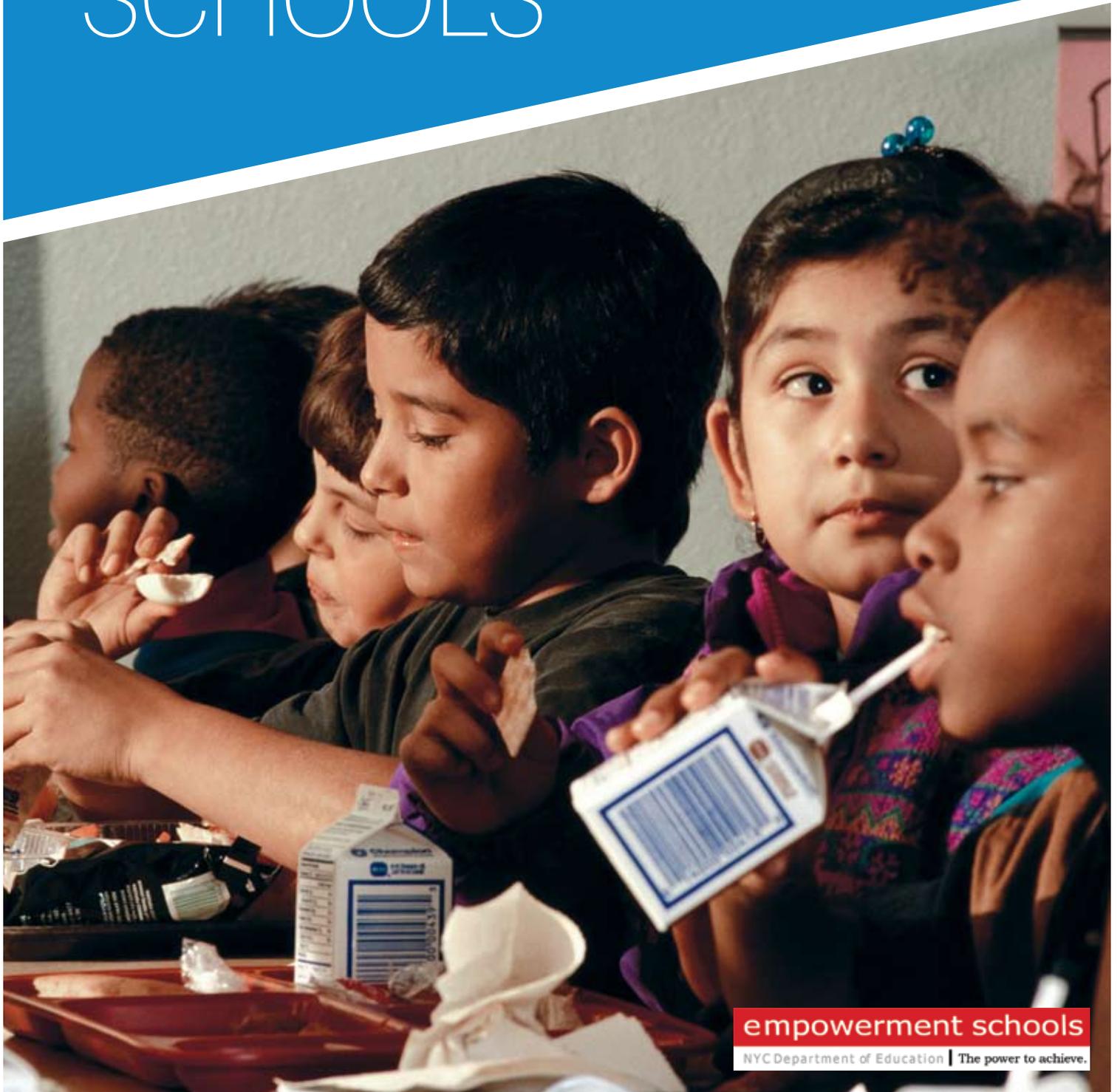


join the
**EMPOWERMENT
SCHOOLS**



empowerment schools

NYC Department of Education | The power to achieve.

“The teachers and administrators finally feel as though they are in control, responsible, and accountable for our successes and challenges.”

Brian Culot, Principal,
The Anderson School, Manhattan
Grades K-8

WE BELIEVE ...

We believe that it is important to put the decisions about how to educate students as close as possible to those who work with them – the principals in collaboration with the school community. Such key decisions include broader authority over educational programming and curriculum, greater discretion over budgets, a significant role in selecting and evaluating the dedicated administrative team that supports you in your work and the chance to decide what customized professional development you want for yourselves and your staff.

One of the core principles of the Empowerment Schools initiative is that we do not want to spend money on your behalf, but rather, we want you to determine how your school’s budget should be spent. The cost of joining the Empowerment Schools and all of the

related support and advocacy is roughly the cost of a paraprofessional. We are committed to continue advocating for increased devolvement of funds from the central organization to the classroom to further empower you.

Today, principals in more than 300 New York City public schools have the freedom and flexibility that comes with being empowered and have been using it to improve the educational opportunities for their students.

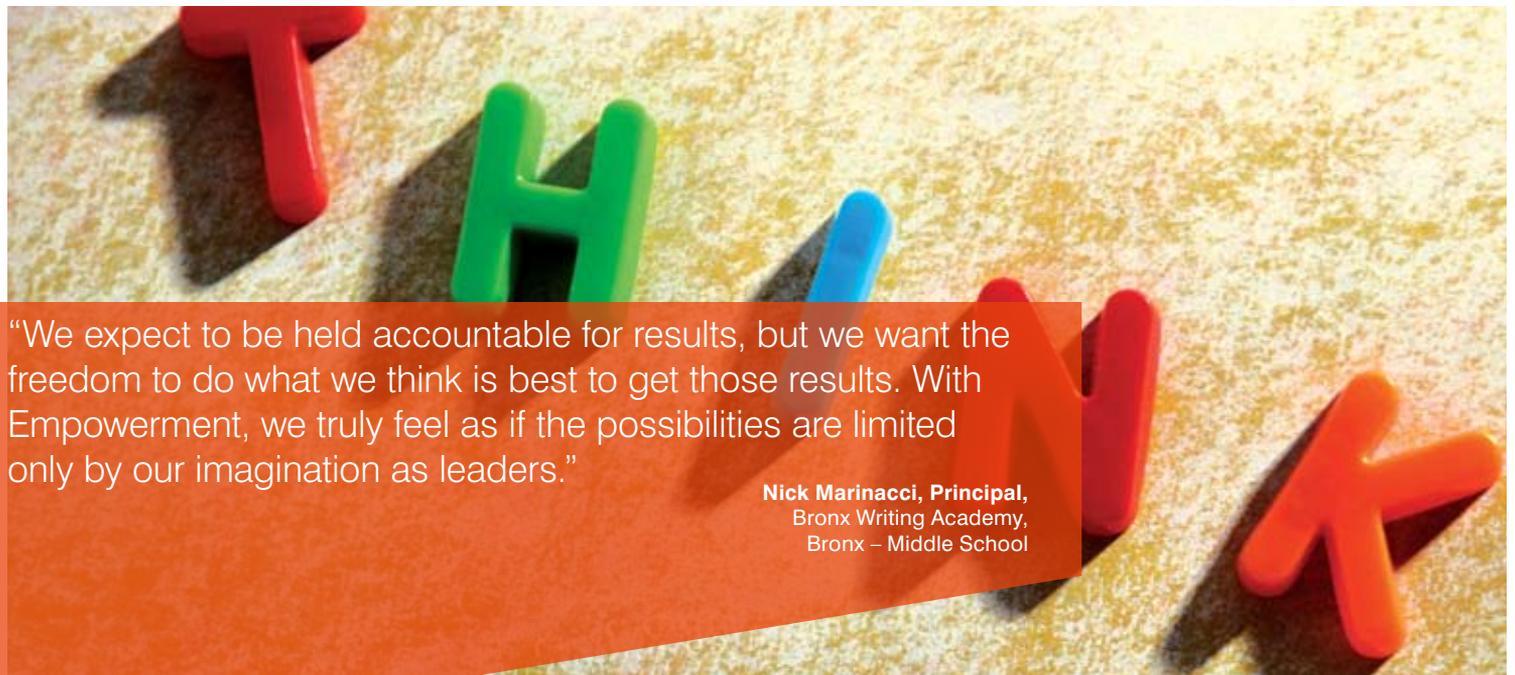
They’re members of our growing network of Empowerment Schools.

We invite you to join us.

Sincerely,



Eric Nadelstern
CEO, Empowerment Schools



“We expect to be held accountable for results, but we want the freedom to do what we think is best to get those results. With Empowerment, we truly feel as if the possibilities are limited only by our imagination as leaders.”

Nick Marinacci, Principal,
Bronx Writing Academy,
Bronx – Middle School

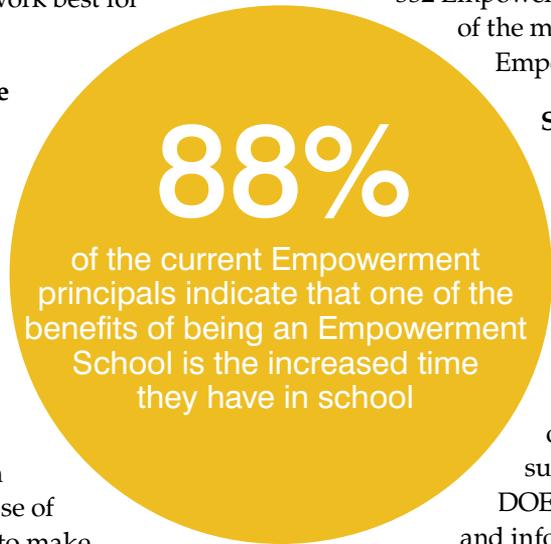
YOU'RE EMPOWERED

As an Empowerment School, you will have much more authority over the educational decisions that will help your students achieve at higher levels. Instructional practices, budgeting, professional development, scheduling, summer programming and more – as the school leader, you're in the best position to know what will work best for your students.

You are empowered to make the decisions that affect the results for which you are accountable as the citywide accountability and assessment initiative rolls out to all of New York City's public schools. Empowerment Schools allows you the most flexibility possible in making those decisions and has designed a support system to enable those of you closest to the classroom to make decisions based upon the needs of your unique school community. Empowerment Schools is the one school support organization with a year of experience in supporting schools with these metrics.

You are empowered to self-affiliate with a group of your peers with whom you select the Network Team

which will provide customized, school-specific support. Empowerment Schools Networks are fueled by a true culture of peer-to-peer collaboration. Principals share best practices, brainstorm solutions to common challenges, and regularly rely on each other for support, guidance and practical assistance. For a majority of the current 332 Empowerment principals, this was one of the main advantages of joining the Empowerment Schools initiative.



Select administrative obligations have been waived and while Chancellor's Regulations remain in effect, you are empowered to apply for waivers in order to allow you to maintain focus on the student achievement and the educational objectives of your schools. Examples of such exemptions include some DOE reporting requirements and information requests, and pre-approval requirements for instructional materials purchases. Additionally, in recognizing your priorities, most meetings are held after hours and all are voluntary, thus never asking you to leave during the school day. Eighty-eight percent of the current Empowerment principals indicate that one of the benefits of being an Empowerment School is the increased time they have in school.

A PROVEN TRACK RECORD OF SUCCESS.

The Empowerment Schools Organization was born out of the Autonomy Zone pilot which began in 2004 with 29 schools and the demand steadily grew from there. In the second year of the pilot, the Autonomy Zone grew to 48 schools and in it's first year beyond the pilot program, the Empowerment Schools now is 332 schools strong and encompasses schools throughout the city inclusive of all grade ranges.

We are looking forward to continued growth for the 2007-2008 school year.

You'll be joining a community of results-oriented principals who have successfully raised student achievement in their schools and have indicated great satisfaction with their experiences of being an Empowerment Schools principal. A recent survey

indicated 99% of principals are glad they joined Empowerment Schools and 92% have indicated that being an Empowerment School has had a positive or highly positive impact on their school community. More than 90% of the current Empowerment Schools feel that their overall classroom instruction has improved as a result of being an Empowerment School.

Our organization focuses on the feedback principals provide and makes changes as necessary. One such example was feedback in the fall of 2006 indicating the desire of principals to be able to work directly with the Integrated Service Center. With such feedback, the policy governing the lines of communication between the schools and the Integrated Service Center was changed to align with the desires of our schools. We know smooth operations support is important to principals. Our teams work with you to get to yes and find a solution that will work for you.

92%

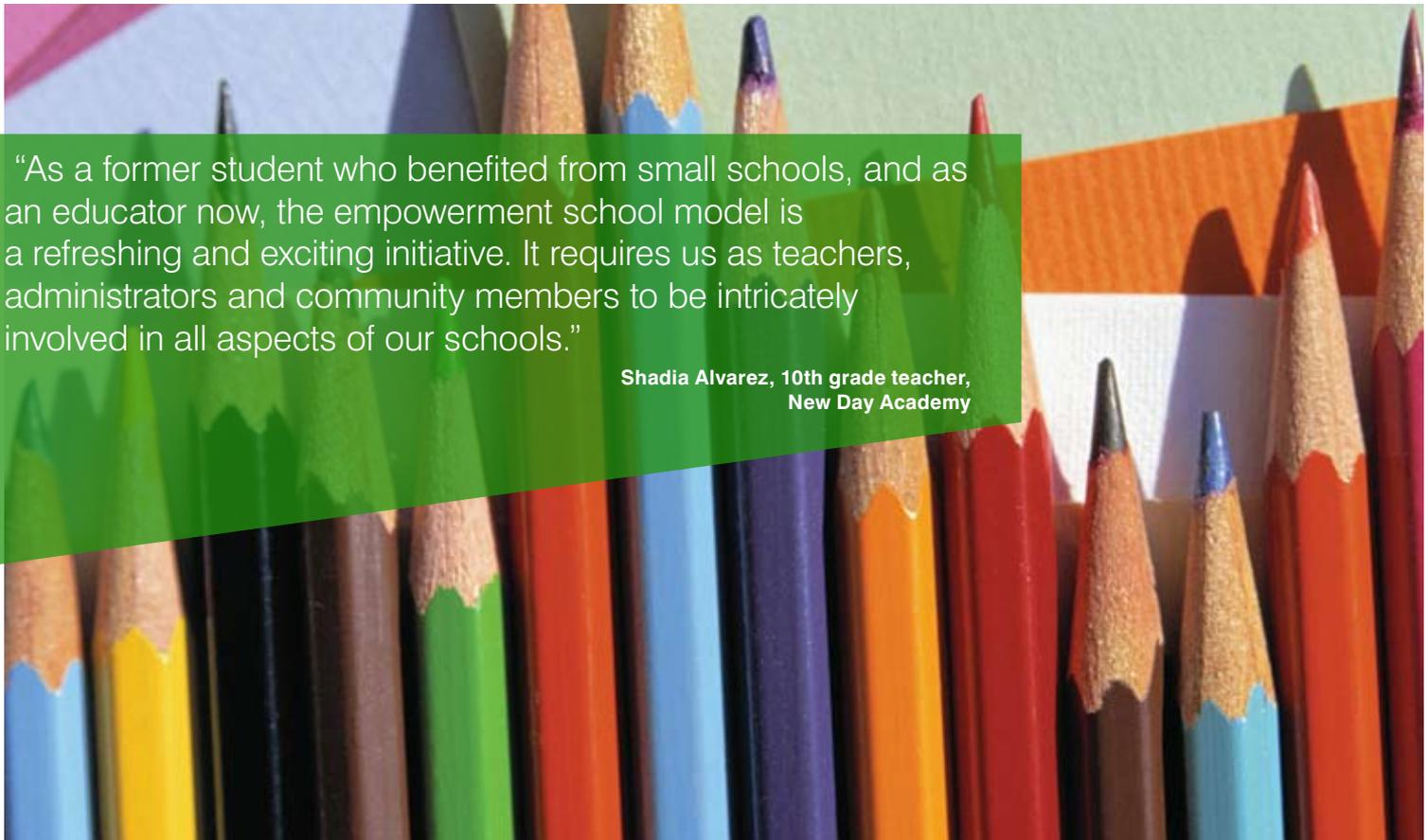
have indicated that being an Empowerment School has had a positive or highly positive impact on their school community

99%

of principals are glad they joined Empowerment Schools

"As a former student who benefited from small schools, and as an educator now, the empowerment school model is a refreshing and exciting initiative. It requires us as teachers, administrators and community members to be intricately involved in all aspects of our schools."

Shadia Alvarez, 10th grade teacher,
New Day Academy



YOU GET CUSTOM-TAILORED SUPPORT

As an Empowerment School, the support you receive is much more localized, relevant and practical. As a network of approximately 20 schools, you have the power to select a team of five individuals to provide support, guidance, advocacy, and coaching related to all issues ranging from instruction to budget. The job of the Network

Team is to support you in meeting all of your instructional and operational needs while ensuring you can reach your accountability targets. By selecting your Network Team and providing regular feedback you are able to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to help you reach your goals.

The Network Team will customize support to your priorities and programmatic needs regardless of school size, level, or any classification. The diversity of the current 332 Empowerment Schools exemplifies that

90%

of the current Empowerment Schools feel that their overall classroom instruction has improved as a result of being an Empowerment School

the support structure designed is capable of supporting all schools.

Under the leadership of the Network Leader, each member of the Network Team is a subject matter expert in the areas of instruction, achievement, business services and special services. Regardless of functional role, each member of the Network Team will act as a professional developer, problem-solver, thought partner, navigator and ally.

- The **Achievement Coach** is available to support you in going through the new citywide accountability initiative by assisting you in making best use of centralized tools such as the new ARIS data system, Quality Reviews, progress reports and in mining and making effective use of achievement data to drive your school's progress.
- With a **Business Services Manager** you are not alone in navigating the operational obstacles you face with regard to budget, purchasing, human resources, contracts, and grants. Your Business Services Manager provides guidance, troubleshooting, problem-solving and advocacy related to all such issues.
- The **Special Services Managers** are able to support you related to all special education, ELL, intervention and youth development issues you may face as a Principal.
- By including an **Instructional Mentor** for this coming year, the Network Team will be able to optimize the support provided to you by helping you develop and design a program to support and mentor new teachers and provide other professional development needs like differentiated instruction.

Again, the support you receive is completely dependent upon your needs and desires – the Network Team will provide you with any and all of the support you need based upon your school.

For the future our hope is to allow the network structure to adapt to the need of the network schools by allowing you to decide to increase, decrease, or change the number and function of positions within the Network Team.

YOU HAVE THE MOST FLEXIBILITY OVER YOUR BUDGET.

While the City's Children First reforms will continue to push more dollars directly to schools,

FUNDING FLEXIBILITY

How schools used the additional discretionary funds in the 2006-2007 school year:

SCHOOL A 384 Students/\$122,000	SCHOOL B 1,383 Students/\$228,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented new Extra Curricular Activities, including a Yearbook and Choir • Partially Funded two coaches to provide professional development to teachers to increase instruction quality • Allocated money toward parent outreach programs • Textbooks • Hired additional School Aide • Supplies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hired: 1 New Teacher 1 New Paraprofessional • Started a drama program • Focused on professional development for math teachers to increase the quality of math instruction received by students



“Empowerment has enabled and reenergized our growth as a Learning Community. This year we have mentors within our school, what a difference! Our mentors know the culture of the school and are acquainted with the new curriculum initiatives. The Empowerment money has also allowed more staff members to be involved before and after school. In sum, now we can focus on what is most important – OUR STUDENTS!”

**Digna Erstejn, Principal,
51st Ave. Academy, Queens – Elementary**

Empowerment Schools will have the most flexibility in how to spend those dollars.

YOU DETERMINE THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDED

No more one-size-fits-all training, with standardized workshops that may or may not address the specific needs of your school. As an Empowerment School, you choose exactly the kind of instructional and managerial assistance you need whether it be free professional development custom designed and conducted by you, your colleagues, and/or your network team or professional development you purchase from external sources of your choice.

You may choose to organize and deliver much of your training internally... or to use devolved dollars to partner with professional development providers of your choice. Your Network Teams will customize their assistance and help ensure that you have highly effective experiences, based on the learning needs of your students, the needs of your staff, and the need of you and your colleagues in the network.

Examples of Professional Development Topics Provided by the Network Teams for the 2006-2007 School Year include:

Instructional Support

Building Coaching Skills, Closing the Achievement Gap, Understanding Regents, Building Stronger Guidance Programs, Differentiated Instruction, Scheduling Methods/Models, Structures for Involving Families in Literacy Education, Enhancing Vocabulary Development, Strategies for Engaging Students.

Data & Accountability

Using Data to Inform Instruction, Progress Reports, School Quality Reviews- Preparation, Periodic Assessments, Prepare Schools to be Successful with Data to Raise Student Achievement.

Operational Support

Systems Training (CAP, ATS, FAMIS), Attendance Protocols & Outreach, Pupil Personnel Services, Safety & Security, Budget Optimization & Fiscal Management.

Special Education

Effective Strategies for Team Teaching in CTT classrooms, Behavior Management, IEP Annual Review.



Additionally, the Empowerment Schools Intensive (ESI) is an innovative professional development model available to you free-of-charge that develops leadership skills and prepares you to use the new accountability tools within your school. Specifically, the program targets and seeks to enhance learning among students who are struggling academically. ESI engages teachers in meaningful action research with the aim of identifying what students know and are able to do. This increased collective awareness is then leveraged within schools to accelerate student learning.

Through the ESI training sessions, Inquiry Teams (a group of teachers and administrators in each school) work with their Network Team to investigate student work, achievement data, and classroom practice.

The Network Team provides support and professional development around the use of this data to reach your accountability targets.

95% of current Empowerment principals feel that being an Empowerment School has improved the use of data by teachers to inform instruction.

95%

of current Empowerment principals feel that being an Empowerment School has improved the use of data by teachers to inform instruction

YOU GET FLEXIBILITY AROUND ASSESSMENT.

As part of the new citywide commitment to accurately measure and analyze student achievement periodically throughout the year, you'll be able to select from a few assessment options:

A standard set of three (high school) or five (grades 3-8) tests for next year; or

A customized version of these standard tests that is aligned to your school's particular curriculum; or

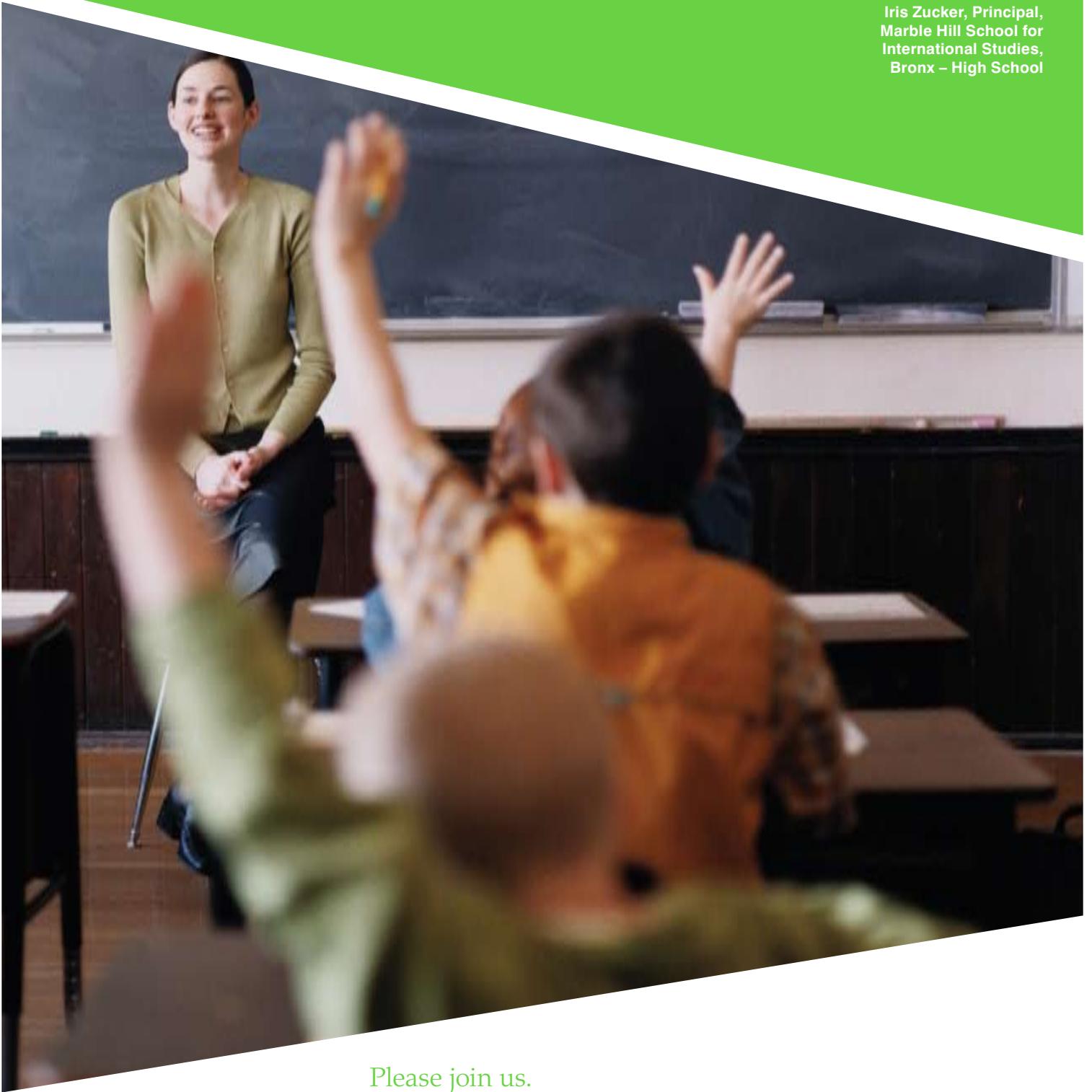
Design Your Own: This year one hundred Empowerment Schools designed their own assessments that were aligned and embedded in their curriculum. They partnered with groups like:

- Teachers College Reading and Writing Project
- Center for Inquiry in Teaching & Learning
- America's Choice
- Kaplan
- The Internationals Network for Public Schools
- Long Island University
- NCREST
- City College Math in the City
- AUSSIE
- New Leaders for New Schools

The goal is to provide teachers, students and families with the most accurate and timely information about student learning. You, your teachers, and school community are in the best position to decide how that should be done. For the 2006-2007 school year, principals who chose the Design Your Own (DYO) form of assessment showed great satisfaction.

“To keep the dream alive, one must be empowered; the most significant thing at the end of each day is to know that I have been given the freedom to decide what’s best for my students.”

Iris Zucker, Principal,
Marble Hill School for
International Studies,
Bronx – High School



Please join us.

For more information about Empowerment Schools, go to
<http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/Empowerment>