DEVELOPING HUMAN CAPITAL TO IMPROVE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Since 1989, New Visions has served as a laboratory of innovation within the New York City public school system, driving significant achievement gains for tens of thousands of students through a multifaceted approach to school reform. Human capital development has been a key component of this work.

Developing teachers, leaders and other professionals that have the skills to meet student needs and effectively move schools forward is a central challenge facing public education. Research consistently indicates that well-prepared teachers are the single most potent resource within schools to improve student performance and close the achievement gap. Yet nearly 33 percent of New York City teachers leave the profession before completing their third year, citing a lack of support and inadequate preparation for the obstacles they face.

Over the last decade, New Visions has pioneered new approaches to human capital development in order to produce teachers and leaders with the skills to create classrooms and schools that foster student success. We now seek to aggressively scale the impact of our validated programs by bringing together talented emerging teachers and leaders to build a shared understanding of best educational practices and enter schools as a team with the ability to significantly improve students’ academic performance.

ESTABLISHING A PIPELINE OF GREAT TEACHERS AND SCHOOL LEADERS

Most preparation programs for teachers and school leaders take a theoretical approach that fails to ground learning in practical, field-based experiences. New Visions has developed innovative training programs with strong clinical components that have been shown to improve school and student performance. These include the Scaffolded Apprenticeship Model (SAM) and the Urban Teacher Residency program (UTR):

- **SAM.** In 2007, New Visions, in partnership with Baruch College, created the inquiry-based Scaffolded Apprenticeship Model as an alternative to traditional principal training programs. The SAM model seamlessly integrates school improvement with leadership capacity building, teacher professional development and succession planning. SAM has been validated in its impact on student achievement, and adopted in Boston, Oakland, and New York City. Today, every public school in NYC is required to assemble a SAM-like inquiry team to focus on moving struggling students forward.

- **UTR.** In 2009, New Visions partnered with Hunter College to launch the Urban Teacher Residency, a program that pairs pre-service teachers with an experienced mentor for a year-long apprenticeship at selected New Visions high schools. Through intensive coaching and support, residents learn alongside a dedicated mentor while working toward their master’s degree, bridging theory and practice with clinical experience. Evaluations show that the program improves student outcomes and that UTR graduates do as well or better than their more experienced colleagues in their first year of teaching.

We are now prepared to build out these successful programs and establish a radically re-imagined paradigm for teacher and leader preparation and development.
MOVING FORWARD: SCALING TEACHER AND LEADER DEVELOPMENT

In partnership with Hunter College, New Visions’ goal is to expand upon SAM and UTR to produce teams of like-minded and commonly trained teachers and leaders who, by working together, will have a more powerful ability to effect significant change across schools. Over the next five years, this approach will lead to a pipeline of effective teachers and leaders who will coordinate the implementation of validated educational practices and ensure improved student performance in up to 100 new, struggling, and/or turnaround schools. Moreover, our teacher and leader training programs will benefit schools across the district that hire our graduates individually and access New Visions’ and Hunter’s curricula, tools and practices. This work will encompass:

- **A new “teaching hospital” model that maximizes the impact of UTR.** New Visions has begun to deepen the reach of UTR by embedding it in select “teaching hospital” schools. Designated schools will appoint a full-time site director/master educator on staff who will oversee and support the school’s mentors, residents, and recently hired UTR graduates. This program establishes a critical mass of like-minded educators who can institutionalize best educational practices at their host schools.

- **A new leadership development program** at Hunter College, using SAM principles to build the skills of potential school leaders in supervision, management, legal and regulatory mandates and parent and community engagement. Hunter has established an advisory committee including New Visions and NYC Department of Education (DOE) employees with significant expertise in the development of teacher leaders, assistant principals and principals for the district.

- **A new teacher leadership credential** for existing teachers that introduces them to core elements of data analysis, teacher inquiry, change management and the implementation of Common Core-aligned literacy and mathematics curricula. We are working with NYC DOE and union leadership to establish this credential as a step on the salary scale for teachers in the coming years.

- **Teams of teachers, teacher-leaders, and principals** strategically grouped and placed to effect significant change at scale. “Team Prep” will be a six-month intensive bridge involving teachers and leaders from UTR and the Teacher Leader program, focused on preparing and selecting high-quality teams of 4-8 teachers and leaders to enter targeted sites – start-up, turnaround and struggling schools.

- **A deep link between a network of schools and a university school of education.** New Visions and Hunter College will act as service hubs, providing ongoing supports for the target site teams. Teachers and leaders clinically trained in these sites will be schooled in emerging practices that are expected to become national norms over the next five years. All involved programs will train and/or graduate teachers and leaders in a model sharing critical foci: Common Core alignment; the use of collaborative inquiry and student data to drive interventions; commitment to project-based learning and the development of teachers’ pedagogical content knowledge; and completion of a performance-based culminating activity proving instructional and/or leadership competency in order to receive the appropriate credentials.

BUILDING A PLAN FOR SUCCESS

New Visions’ human capital initiatives are supported by leading donors including the Carnegie Corporation and the U.S. Department of Education. Recently, Centerbridge Foundation invested significant funding towards our ambitious five-year expansion plan and sponsored in-kind support from Bain and Company to provide strategic planning for the Team Prep program. We are currently seeking an additional $1.5 million for 2012-13 in order to inaugurate the next phase of our work, scale-up teacher and leader training and begin implementing the team-based strategy.