
PREFACE

This report describes the evolution of the program of New American Schools (NAS), a nonprofit private effort to foster significant education reform through the widespread implementation of schoolwide designs. Since its establishment in 1991, New American Schools has contracted with RAND to provide analytical support for the effort. During that time, RAND research staff have played a number of roles ranging from advisor, to field observer, to formal evaluator of the effort. As the evaluations of the implementation of the designs and the outcomes associated with that implementation are completed, the results have been and will continue to be published as separate research monographs.

This report provides a background for these monographs. It takes advantage of RAND's unique perspective to describe the evolution of New American Schools and its strategy for reform during its first six years of operation. As such, it should be of interest to those concerned with the reform of public education and, more generally, with changing public institutions.

Other RAND reports about New American Schools include:

MR-598-NASDC, *Designing New American Schools: Baseline Observations on Nine Design Teams*

MR-729-NASDC, *Lessons from New American Schools Development Corporation's Demonstration Phase*

MR-716-NASDC, *Reforming and Conforming: NASDC Principals Discuss School Accountability Systems*

Lessons from New American Schools' Scale-Up Phase: Prospects for Bringing Designs to Multiple Schools (forthcoming)

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