



Questions and Answers

What is it? Get to Great is a full year initiative designed to get good school districts to great results, through professional development and on-site support for district and school leaders.

Who is behind it? The program is offered through The Rensselaerville Institute, “the think tank with muddy boots,” and the Capital Region BOCES. Les Loomis, 21 year retired superintendent at Bethlehem Central, and Hal Williams, senior fellow at The Institute, are the consultants.

What's the point? School districts strive for greater student achievement but often move too slowly or don't improve much. Get to Great advances achievement quickly through a constant focus on results.

What's the approach? The starting point is professional development for district and school leaders on leading for results. During the year the board of education and teacher and support personnel leaders are involved in the work.

Will this be a burden to teachers? To put results leadership to use each leader will identify and work on a small prototype project to improve performance in his/her area of responsibility. Implementation of some prototypes may involve a limited number of teachers who are interested in being part of it.

Are results going to be used for evaluation? No. The program is not intended to evaluate administrators, teachers, or staff. Results improve when the skill and support is there for individuals to lift achievement through teamwork with colleagues. The focus is on learning, not on finding fault.

Is this only about state test scores? State test scores are important and will not go away so they are part of the picture, but only part. Students' ability to apply their skills, knowledge, and character to each new challenge is the way Get to Great defines world class.

Why take on another initiative? Get to Great is not another new program laid on top of already overburdened administrators, faculty, and staff. It is professional development for leaders and an organizing framework for the district. Get to Great saves time and raises results by focusing on the work that people are already doing.