

Priority Need:

Underlying Need/Root Cause:

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT--Classroom & School not as supportive of student achievement as desired.

Measurable Objective:

Increase the positive impact of the learning environment on academic performance (culture supportive of academic excellence; orderly, safe, secure environment; high level of belonging and acceptance).

Benchmark:

POSSIBLE SAMPLE Activities:

- Develop high levels of support, positive relationships, acceptance of diversity, cooperation and tolerance among and within all groups.
[State specific actions.]
- Provide adequate incentives and opportunities for recognition (for achievement, improvement, participation) and for potential leadership opportunities that would be motivating to students.
[State specific actions.]
 - Designate an “Appreciation Day” once each semester to recognize and thank our student leaders, teacher leaders, staff leaders, parent volunteers, community volunteers who have receive special awards or made significant contributions to our school community.
 - Hold academic rallies once each semester to recognize student academic performance (excellence, improvement, personal bests).
 - Review and revise rules (conduct, dress, attendance, etc.), procedures, positive incentives and reactive measures with appropriate consequences. Publish in student handbooks to be distributed to parents.
- Develop “repeat offenders” program including opportunities to “relearn” appropriate social behaviors.
- Develop and communicate crisis management procedures in preparation for unforeseen events.
- Provide training to all adults so they may become knowledgeable about signs of potentially serious inappropriate behaviors (indicators or drug/alcohol use, depression, bullying, gang membership, etc.) and communicate any concerns or suspicious signs to responsible individuals.
- Maintain data on discipline referrals so that strategies may be identified to prevent or reduce particular inappropriate behaviors.
- Enlist key stakeholders in developing strategies to improve the positive perception of our schools as “family friendly” organizations.

Priority Need:

Underlying Need/Root Cause:

ORGANIZATIONAL PROCESSES not as supportive of student achievement as desired.

Measurable Objective:

Increase effectiveness of organizational processes to support academic achievement (i.e., level of faculty and staff support and commitment to positive change to benefit student learning; effectiveness of teams to promote supportive relationships and high quality outcomes; communication; leadership expectations and accountability of principals and teacher team).

Benchmark:

POSSIBLE SAMPLE Activities:

- Provide training to faculty and staff to increase awareness of the benefits of collaboration and creative problem solving in school improvement activities.
- Increase involvement of faculty staff, and key stakeholders in making collaborative decisions and solutions.
- Increase the opportunities for professional interactions and collaboration within schools and across the district.
- Provide training for teams to ensure productive functioning (roles and responsibilities, meeting agendas and procedures, effective use of planning time).
- Develop/Improve effective horizontal (within grade/content area) and vertical (across grade/content area) structures to enhance communication, relationships, and decision making.
- Collaborately develop semester calendars in a timely manner and post to ensure coordination of effort and to protect instructional time.
- Increase phone calls; notes; class, school, and district newsletters; press releases; etc. to keep key stakeholders informed.
- Develop communication procedures for parents, community members, faculty, staff, students to have access to school and district leaders.
- Develop system of grade-level notebooks to record team agendas, student performance data, improvement actions, progress, communications, etc.
- Improve clarity of expectations for student performance.
- Improve adequacy of resources and support (e.g., time for collaborative planning, instructional assistants to provide additional practice time or tutoring for needy students, supplementary materials, professional development opportunities).

- Increase level of recognition and reward to enhance team functioning and intrinsic motivation.
- Develop structure of action research to explore “cutting edge” practices or programs. Scout teams, Research teams,

[Packaged programs that meet your needs may be readily available. Just be aware that there is tendency to “buy into” available programs in order to get a “quick fix.” If you are at the decision point, engage in a well structured decision making process. Clearly identify the criteria for selection and assess the options against those criteria. Keep in mind that a strong possibility is to develop a program of your own that would be tailored to meet your students’ needs.]

Priority Need:

Underlying Need/Root Cause:

Use of TIME is not promoting student achievement as desired.

Measurable Objective:

Increase the productive use of available time.

Benchmark:

POSSIBLE SAMPLE Activities:

- Allocate more instructional time to critical academic subjects of reading and math for each student group (struggling, average, and high achieving). [potentially best learning times; protected block of quality time]
- Increase the amount of student academic learning time (allocated time for instruction + “right” level of challenge + student motivation to learn) by reducing inappropriate learning behaviors.
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- Reduce the number of interruptions to instruction (schoolwide and classroom) (e.g., intercom announcements, unexpected events (only momentary notice given), disruptive students, disorganized instructors, parent requests, etc.).
- Increase timely opportunities for struggling students for extended learning time--one-on-one or small group tutoring/coaching, practice.
- Increase academic productivity of days that have typically been primarily unproductive.
- Decrease the amount of time teachers’ spend in noninstructional activities.
- Initiate action research to study the possibilities of going to year round school year.

Priority Need:

Underlying Need/Root Cause:

CURRICULUM is not promoting student achievement as desired.

Measurable Objective:

Improve quality of the curriculum including the availability of appropriate and adequate curriculum materials.

Benchmark:

POSSIBLE SAMPLE Activities:

- Develop/Implement/Monitor curriculum content maps that are aligned with State Frameworks and Terra Nova objectives and other initiatives.
- Improve the articulation within and across grade levels (i.e., scope and sequence)--K-12 to eliminate gaps and redundancy.
- Increase integration of reading and math in other content areas. [or vice versa]
- Increase alignment of curriculum with student areas of need--weakness or strength based on assessment data.
- Identify currently used/available instructional materials (basic and supplemental), events, and technology--on curriculum content maps.
- Conduct an audit of available instructional materials and technology to determine items of need.
- Develop a timeline for systematic review and renewal of curriculum in all content areas (over a five year period)

Priority Need:

Underlying Need/Root Cause:

INSTRUCTION is not promoting student achievement as desired.

Measurable Objective:

Increase teacher use of research-based instructional practices (e.g., the most productive and effective strategies to promote student academic performance and motivation to learn) to increase acquisition and retention of important content knowledge and skills.

POSSIBLE SAMPLE Activities:

- Increase active monitoring, encouragement for risk taking, and reinforcement to teachers to ensure consistent high quality everyday practice in every classroom. [Includes consistency of instructional approach across grades and content areas]
- Increase teacher use of varied task structures (direct instruction or whole group activities, small groups or partner activities, learning centers, independent practice or projects, etc.), differentiated instruction, and appropriate adaptations and accommodations.
- Increase teacher use of appropriate enrichment activities for all student groups.
- Increase timely opportunities to reteach, remediate, extend practice opportunities, give feedback to students needing immediate assistance [to accelerate their learning before the gap between their performance and that of their peers becomes too great.]
- Improve learning opportunities for students to address performance levels 4 & 5.
- Increase student active engagement, discussing and interacting with other people (adults, peers) and technology in stimulating, interesting activities.
- Improve appropriateness and effectiveness of homework.
- Increase teacher use of research-based instructional strategies that produce academic success.

Priority Need:

Underlying Need/Root Cause:

ASSESSMENT strategies are not promoting student achievement as desired.

Measurable Objective:

Increase student performance by improving the quality and variety of assessment strategies.

Benchmark:

POSSIBLE SAMPLE Activities:

- Increase teacher use of a range of assessment strategies--including tests, quizzes, or checks of knowledge, informal monitoring and questioning, teacher assessments, student self-assessments, project or meaningful use tasks.
- Provide students with adequate instruction and practice like they are assessed. [Periodically require students to respond to “standardized test-like” formats, questions, and time limits.]
- Provide instruction to help students develop test-taking skills.
- Increase students’ awareness of performance expectations. [State specific actions]
- Provide opportunities for students to develop or use quality criteria or rubrics for major assignments or projects.
- Provide professional development in assessment strategies.

Priority Need:

Underlying Need/Root Cause:

STUDENTS are not showing satisfactory academic achievement nor motivation to learn.

Measurable Objective:

Increase motivation and academic competence and confidence of students to high achievement. [May want to target specific grades, students groups, etc.]

[Consider needs identified from demographic information about students by grade level, gender, ethnicity, limited English Proficiency, students with and without disabilities, free and reduced lunch (economic disadvantaged), identified as at-risk, gifted & talented, in foster care, highly mobile, poor attenders or tardies.]

Benchmark:

POSSIBLE SAMPLE Activities:

- Teachers will identify a minimum of 3 specific motivational strategies in their written unit plans. Strategies are intended to increase motivation to learn and beliefs in ability to perform challenging tasks for particular students or student groups.
- Teachers will incorporate options or adaptations based on multiple intelligences into instructional units.
- Design and initiate Advisee-Advisor groups in middle grades.
- Increase conferencing with individual students and goal setting to improve learning and personal development.
- Increase the numbers of students (or the percentage of students in each class) who are involved in at least one school sponsored activity (extracurricular activities, athletics, etc.).

Priority Need:

Underlying Need/Root Cause:

TEACHERS are not as competent or confident in their ability as desired in promoting high student achievement.

Measurable Objective:

Improve overall instructional quality.

Benchmark:

POSSIBLE SAMPLE Activities:

- Identify teachers with areas of special expertise who are willing to fill leadership roles in sharing their
- Decrease/Eliminate numbers of teachers on waivers.
- Increase appropriate placement of current faculty and staff to address student needs.
- Decrease absentee rate (substitute days) of staff.
- Recruit and train quality instructional assistants.
- Increase involvement of grade level teachers and/or the leadership team in interviewing and hiring potential teachers.
- Implement effective mentoring, peer coaching, and additional support opportunities for new teachers.
- Design and implement a teacher assistance team to serve as an advisory group to teachers who need support and strategies to reach certain students, to redesign units of instruction, etc.
- Conduct a teacher satisfaction survey using the results to improve conditions that will increase morale.
- Increase adequacy of resources and support (including planning time, assistance with non-instructional duties, etc.).
- Increase administrator's active and visible support of innovative instruction to encourage teacher acceptance including developing a full understanding of the innovative instruction, expecting and supporting risk taking, monitoring to ensure accountability, recognizing and rewarding progress appropriately.
- Increase faculty and staff commitment to our vision/mission and to their role in promoting student success and motivation to learn. [State specific actions]
- Provide effective, research-based, high-quality professional development opportunities with content focused on improving instructional competence in meeting student needs. [of appropriate intensity, duration, approach to effect positive transfer into everydayclassroom instruction.]

Priority Need:

Underlying Need/Root Cause:

STRUCTURE is not promoting high student achievement.

Measurable Objective:

Improve effectiveness of school structure in promoting high academic achievement (including transition to a new school settings or grade levels; teachers' success in meeting the wide range of student needs, abilities and interests).

Benchmark:

POSSIBLE SAMPLE Activities:

- Engage appropriate grade level teachers (2nd & 3rd-if primary to intermediate; 5th & 6th--if intermediate to middle; etc.) in developing activities for a smooth and seamless transition from one level to the next (i.e., orientations, visits, student buddies, mixed grade activities, student programs, curriculum planning for teachers).
- Initiate research into the possibility of using alternative structures such as looping or multiage classes.
- Increase effectiveness of placement and grouping of students. Align practices with research recommendations.
- Determine the best collaborative structure for meeting the needs of special education students (or any other target group) including inclusion, inclass, resource, or pullout are options currently in use.
- Study the effects of departmentalization (or not) in promoting student achievement in target priorities.

Priority Need:

Underlying Need/Root Cause:

POLICIES are not promoting high student achievement.

Measurable Objective:

Increase the alignment of current district and school policies to be supportive of student success and achievement.

Benchmark:

POSSIBLE SAMPLE Activities:

- Review district policies regarding attendance, tardies, discipline, grading, retention, waivers, student placement, teacher placement, teacher evaluation, etc. to ensure consistency with student and school improvement.
- Revise policies that are counterproductive to improvement efforts.

Parent & Community Member Involvement/Training

- Recruit a minimum of ___ parents who are not employees of the school system to be a committee member on the dress code for students.
- Share draft of new/revised policies with a majority of parents and community members by holding focus groups, publishing draft in local paper and inviting comments and suggestions, etc>>>

Communication

(See Above)

Professional Development

Priority Need:

Underlying Need/Root Cause:

RESOURCES/FACILITIES are hindering high student achievement.

Measurable Objective:

Improve use of available financial and human resources to accomplish improvement target priorities.

Benchmark:

POSSIBLE SAMPLE Activities:

- Develop quality control and accountability measures in place to ensure the most cost efficient use of funds without threat to quality of programs and services to students.
- Develop strategies that ensure the best (most efficient) use of human resources (instructional assistants, specialists, preservice teachers, parent and community volunteers) given current conditions.
- Assign/schedule instructional assistants at times when they can assist the most needy students.
- Develop strategies to recruit more people to be involved in improvement efforts.
- Develop strategies to obtain acceptable teacher/student ratio.
- Increase use of the focused observation option for experienced, proficient teachers who are interested in studying and implementing potentially effective strategies or programs that address school improvement target priorities.
- Attempt to secure additional funding to contribute to school improvement target priorities by encouraging and rewarding the efforts of individuals (educators and/or parents and community members) in writing grants.
- Collaborate with community agencies to establish formalized services to families, especially young children (birth - 5), including educational opportunities for parents, parenting classes, play groups, home visits, preschool, etc. to foster readiness in our preschool population.
- Offer extended library hours with programs to attract parents with young children.
- Explore the possibilities of establishing the school as the center for distribution of services needed by students and families (psychological services, social workers, etc.).

