

K. SAMPLE DISTRICT PLAN FOR EARLY LEARNING SUCCESS

The _____ School District has made a long-term commitment to becoming a district that uses formative assessment and offers responsive instruction. We will help students establish deep understanding of essential content and will meet the needs of our students by designing instruction at their levels of readiness. To this end we will establish and implement a 3-year to 5-year plan to develop the teaching skills and systems that supports these goals.

The plan described in this document focuses on the steps toward implementation at the elementary schools in our district and describes Year 1 of the long-term training commitment to early learning success.

ELEMENTARY OUTCOMES

1. We will have a system of universal screening and progress monitoring, which defines essential outcomes, in all elementary schools.
2. Teachers will develop skills to deliver instruction well-matched to the learning needs of students.
3. An accountability system will be fully implemented in all schools to support proper implementation.
4. A system of instructional support will be implemented in each elementary building, with clear procedures and time lines.
5. A culture of professional trust and collaboration will be explicitly defined and established in each school.
6. An ongoing plan for professional learning to support learning success for all children will be developed and implemented.

Outcome #1: We will have a K–3 system of universal screening and progress monitoring, which defines essential outcomes, in all elementary schools.

Discussion

The system should be simple, align with the report card, encourage us to take the time to help students deeply learn essential outcomes, help more students be successful, remind us to take time for social skill development, reduce anxiety, and increase joy. It should help us have fewer special education referrals and help us have more support time available for general education.

1. Training in the use of the Essential Skills Inventory will be given to K–3 teachers before the beginning of the school year.

Action Plan: The Curriculum Director will arrange for dates and trainer.

2. Clarify how this information and process may be used.
 - Compliance with the protocol for data collection is expected of all classroom teachers and can be considered a factor in evaluation.
 - Essential Skill proficiency will be noted only after the student has demonstrated this skill at the proficient level on several occasions and in different uses or contexts.

Action Plan: Principals will monitor progress in monthly data meetings.

3. A committee will develop a process to align the report card with the Essential Skills Inventories.

Action Plan: A study team will be appointed in May and will review and report to the Curriculum Director by August.

4. A clear directive from central office will describe the district's commitment to using essential skills as a focus for responsive instruction.

The _____ Public Schools are committed to using instructional strategies that maximize learning outcomes and encourages teachers to use techniques to deliver instruction that is responsive to student readiness. We recognize that students will be at different levels of readiness within a single class and that teachers will need to differentiate instruction at times within their classrooms to meet the learning needs of students. Teachers will deliver a rich instructional program that includes grade-level content and purposeful activities and projects and will also vigilantly monitor progress toward essential skills and outcomes. Pacing guides are to be used as guides. Students needing additional time or intensive practice to learn essential outcomes will be given that time and support.

Action Plan: The District Superintendent and the Board of Education will pass a motion to this effect by August.

5. Teachers at each grade level (K–3) will develop a plan for integrating use of any typical assessment tools, that is, DRA or MLPP, with the ESI.

Action Plan: A study team will be appointed in May and will review and report to the Curriculum Director by August.

6. A plan will be developed for keeping data on file within each school and sharing info with next year's teacher.

Action Plan: Building teams will prepare a plan and report to the Curriculum Director by December.

7. Midyear follow-up training in use of the Essential Skills Inventory will be given to teachers in Grades K–3.

Action Plan: The Curriculum Director will arrange for dates and trainer.

8. Addition training needs to help teachers learn skills to help more students achieve all essential outcomes will be specifically noted, considered, and planned.

Action Plan: Building Principals will collect input on learning needs, and a long-term plan will be developed in conjunction with the Curriculum Director by March.

Outcome #2: Teachers will develop skills to deliver instruction well matched to the learning needs of students.

1. Grade-level teachers will collaborate to support each other in the development of assessment procedures for essential skills and responsive instructional planning.

Action Plan: Building Principals will offer support to grade-level staff and schedule time for them to collaborate.

2. Learning needs will be noted and professional development planned.

Action Plan: Building Principals will collect input on learning needs, and a long-term plan will be developed in conjunction with the Curriculum Director by March.

Outcome #3: An accountability system will be fully implemented in all schools to support proper implementation of the Essential Skills Inventory.

1. The Protocol for Use of the Essential Skills Inventory will be followed in K–3.

Action Plan: Building Principals will meet with teachers by grade level or individually monthly.

2. Progress toward quality formative assessment will be reported in quarterly reviews.

Action Plan: Building Principals will offer a brief update on their progress at quarterly principal meetings. The Curriculum Director will place this on meeting agendas.

3. Support team referrals will include a review of the data from the ESI. Case managers will review this data with the referring teacher.

Action Plan: Principals and case managers will ensure compliance.

Outcome #4: A system of instructional support will be implemented in each elementary building, with clear procedures and time lines.

Discussion

Consistent procedures and paperwork will be developed to be used in all elementary programs. Teachers must be made aware of the opportunity to request support, have simple steps to receive help, and be encouraged to collaborate without waiting for students to become severely frustrated. Guidelines for when to refer to Instructional Support Team and when to refer to Special Education will be developed.

1. Support team members will be identified.

Action Plan: Principals will identify staff and consider time available for instructional support by August.

2. Written procedures and related forms will be developed.

Action Plan: A committee will be appointed in May and will complete a draft proposal to the Curriculum Director and Principals by August.

3. Implementation training will be given to each school's support team, with follow-up for the first 2 years, beginning September. Initial training will be followed by three coaching days in each school for each of the first 2 years.

Action Plan: The Curriculum Director will arrange for dates and trainer by August.

4. Each school's support team will prepare a plan to communicate the process and procedures to classroom teachers.

Action Plan: Support teams will construct a plan and begin this process in September.

5. End-of-year data will be collected, noting the number of referrals, of what type, cases that reached closure, open cases carried over to following year, special education referrals, special education placements, etc.

Action Plan: Principals will collect info and report to the Curriculum Director by June 15.

6. Each school's support team will complete an annual reflection on the support process.

Action Plan: Principals will collect and discuss at the end of the year and use this input to help plan for future needs.

7. Each support team will develop a procedure for informing next year's teachers about specific children who have received intensive support.

Action Plan: A plan will be developed by May. Principals will supervise sharing information.

8. All schools will participate in an end-of-year meeting where they will share accomplishments and identify learning goals for future consideration.

Action Plan: The Curriculum Director and Principals will plan and coordinate an end of year meeting, to be held in May.

Outcome #5: A culture of professional trust and collaboration will be explicitly defined and established in each school.

Discussion

The collaborative culture includes clear group norms, time for communication, and the comfort to be open with staff both individually and at group meetings. Working toward this collaborative culture will include bonding and team building activities, development of Professional Learning Communities, building and district grade-level sharing, an emphasis on quality general education/special education planning, and a building and district-level commitment to this expectation. Professional trust and collaboration will help us create the problem-solving and learning environment that improves instructional planning, building the culture of learning for students, and building the culture of support for parents.

1. Each school will consider the importance of a collaborative culture and establish group norms for the collaborative culture.

Action Plan: A survey of perceptions of school culture will be prepared and shared with staff at the beginning of the school year. Principals will have a discussion about the importance of collaborative culture at a staff

meeting(s) early in the year and ask for commitment from each individual once group norms have been reached by consensus. This process will begin in September.

2. A reflection on individual teacher use of the group norms will be developed and used quarterly to support the development of the collaborative culture.

Action Plan: A teacher leadership team will be selected by the Principal to develop this instrument. The building Principal will distribute the reflection to teachers quarterly.

3. Teachers will discuss the results of their self-reflection at building grade-level meetings.

Action Plan: Teachers will schedule this discussion after each self-reflection quarterly.

4. The principal will survey perceptions of school culture at the end of the school year.

Action Plan: Principals will review progress at summer council.

Outcome #6: An ongoing system of professional learning to support learning success for all children will be developed and implemented in all schools.

Discussion

An effective ongoing system of professional learning will include a clear understanding of common learning goals for our students, and common teaching skills and strategies that can support the achievement of these learning outcomes. When we have identified core teaching skills/strategies that each teacher should have, we can identify teachers to serve as mentor teachers and can also identify teachers who need support to develop these skills. We strive to develop an ongoing learning process within our collaborative culture. Training opportunities should be differentiated and available based on the need of individual teachers in addition to recognizing group needs for whole group learning. At the district and building levels, important learning initiatives should be clearly identified and supported over time to achieve quality, ongoing implementation.

1. Learning needs to support districtwide initiatives will be identified annually, and a plan to train staff will be developed for the following year.

Action Plan: A committee including the Curriculum Director, Principals, and teacher leaders will coordinate, with input from staff. A plan for the following year will be developed by March for implementation in the summer and the following school year.

2. The planning committee will do research and develop a set of teaching skills that support the full implementation of an early learning success initiative. These skills will be part of the focus of professional development.

Action Plan: The committee will convene in October and begin work toward identifying common teaching skills needed for K–3 early learning success. Once identified, these skills will be incorporated into the long term training plan. The long-term training program will include considerations for training existing staff, training new staff, developing mentor programs within staff, and sharing materials to support this initiative. The Curriculum Director will convene the planning committee and oversee this process.