



DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLAN, 2009-2010

(Notes: 1. The District Improvement Planning Committee has identified essential questions that will guide conversations at all levels. The continued conversations around these essential questions will be a catalyst for effective and sustainable change; 2. The essential questions reflect best practices for every child, regardless of AYP cell.)


District Improvement Guiding Belief

Quality instruction is the single most significant factor that affects student achievement.
 (McKinsey & Company, 2007)

We believe that any school system should develop goals embedded in best practices to support every child. In order to provide quality instruction every day, every moment, for every child, Federal Way Public Schools should have the following four focuses:

- K-12 Alignment
- Professional Development/Coaching
 - Leadership
- Parent/Community Involvement

Specific, Measurable Achievement Goals

Student Groups	Immediate Goal	Guiding Goal
All students		All students meeting or exceeding grade level expectations as measured by the state assessment and/or district assessments at grade levels where state assessment is not given.
AYP sub-groups	A decrease in 10% of students not meeting or exceeding grade level expectations as measured by the WASL (safe harbor).	All students meeting or exceeding grade level expectations as measured by the state assessment and/or district assessments at grade levels where state assessment is not given.

Note: This is a "working document." Therefore, it is subject to revisions as new information is gathered.

Strategy #1: K-12 Alignment

Rationale:

- “In improved school districts, curriculum is aligned with standards, assessment, and policies. The districts have a centralized and coordinated approach to curriculum, which is adopted district-wide.” (OSPI, 2004)
- We are a system of schools. We recognize that in order to meet district and state goals, we must have a system of schools that are aligned and cohesive with instructional practices and implementation processes.

Essential questions

(NOTE: Darkest shaded questions are highest priority.)

Person/Department Responsible

(Note: As a district, we recognize that high levels of collaboration are needed in order to successfully implement change. Therefore, much of the work completed will be a result of committees of administrators, teachers, parent/community members.)

1.A: What are the components of “highly effective instruction” and how do we implement them in all lessons?

Definition: Highly Effective instruction – those instructional strategies/components, when implemented with fidelity, that elicit the best results in student achievement

District: Josh Garcia & Judy Lemmel
(Shawn, Angie, Kim, Beth)
Principal:
Classroom:
Teacher:
Family/Community:

1.B: How do we best support assessment-driven instruction?

Definition: Assessment – the process of observing learning; describing, collecting, recording, scoring, and interpreting information about a student's or one's own learning

District: Dave Davis
(Pete, Susan, Hannah)
Principal:
Classroom:
Teacher:
Family/Community:

1.C: What are the essential learning targets in literacy and math and how do we support implementation, K-12, vertically, through the grade levels and horizontally, across grade levels and the district?

District: Judy Lemmel
(Shawn, Angie, Kim and Beth)
Principal:
Classroom:
Teacher:
Family/Community:

1.D: How do we support and ensure the implementation of the Response to Intervention (RTI) process to support all learners, especially those in targeted AYP cells (hispanic math and reading, black math, limited English reading and math, special education math and reading, low income math and reading, middle school math, high school math)?

Definition: Response to Intervention (RTI) - A three –tier assessment and instruction/intervention process for

District: Sharon Mitchell-Guddat
(RTI Team)
Principal:
Classroom:
Teacher:
Family/Community:

<p><i>systematically evaluating student progress. Within the model decisions are made about the need for instructional modifications or increasingly intensified services using progress monitoring data. Each tier represents an increasingly intense level of services based on individual students' response to scientifically research-based instruction and intervention.</i></p>	
<p>1.E: What does an effective system that ensures the continuation of targeted interventions for students (transitioning between grade levels, schools and specifically Pre-School to Kindergarten, Grade 5 to 6, and Grade 8 to 9) look like?</p>	<p>District: Sharon Mitchell-Guddat (Assistant Superintendents) Principal: Classroom: Teacher: Family/Community:</p>
<p>1.F: What are the common terms that need defined for K-12 consistency?</p>	<p>District: Josh Garcia & Judy Lemmel (Alma Dansby) Principal: Classroom: Teacher: Family/Community:</p>

Strategy #2: Professional Development/Coaching

Rationale:

- “Delivering excellent instruction requires teachers to develop a highly sophisticated set of skills,” (McKinsey & Company, 2007)
- A system is only as strong as its instructional staff and leaders.
- Investing in our instructional staff and leaders through professional development will pay off in large dividends for student achievement, regardless of AYP cell.
- We must provide support through a cycled, differentiated professional development model.

Essential questions

(NOTE: Darkest shaded questions are highest priority.)

Person/Department Responsible

(Note: As a district, we recognize that high levels of collaboration are needed in order to successfully implement change. Therefore, much of the work completed will be a result of committees of administrators, teachers, parent/community members.)

2.A: How do we effectively provide differentiated K-12 professional development related to the components of “high effective instruction” and district core curriculum/initiatives? What does differentiated professional development look like when based on student data, experience, and implementation levels?

District: Josh Garcia
(Shawn, Angie, Kim, Beth)
Principal:
Classroom:
Teacher:
Family/Community:

2.B: How do we define instructional coaching and the roles/responsibilities of K-12 instructional coaches? How do we promote a culture of coaching in our district and schools?

Definition: Instructional coach job description coming soon!

District: Sharon Mitchell-Guddat
(Shawn, Angie, Kim, Beth)
Principal:
Classroom:
Teacher:
Family/Community:

2.C: How do we create and support collaborative team structures to facilitate professional learning communities (PLC) in every school, department, professional group (teachers, administrators, etc.) and across the district?

District: Committee Chair established
Principal:
Classroom:
Teacher:
Family/Community:

Strategy #3: Leadership

Rationale:

- “[R]esearch on school leadership suggests that school leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on learning,” (McKinsey & Company, 2007)
- In order to create K-12 alignment and implement differentiated professional development/coaching, we must have clear communication at all levels of leadership.
- System sustainability requires increased leadership at all levels.

Essential questions

(NOTE: Darkest shaded questions are highest priority.)

Person/Department Responsible

(Note: As a district, we recognize that high levels of collaboration are needed in order to successfully implement change. Therefore, much of the work completed will be a result of committees of administrators, teachers, parent/community members.)

3.A: What processes do we have in place to identify and develop leaders in order to increase capacity in buildings and throughout the district?

District: Chuck Christensen
Principal:
Classroom:
Teacher:
Family/Community:

3.B: How do we ensure K-12 alignment around professional development/coaching, hiring practices and professional learning communities?

District: Judy Lemmel
Principal:
Classroom:
Teacher:
Family/Community:

3.C: What criteria do we use when hiring and evaluating school staff (principals, teachers, instructional coaches)?

District: Chuck Christensen
Principal:
Classroom:
Teacher:
Family/Community:

3.D: What processes do we have in place to identify and develop parent/community leaders?

District: Building principals with support from Trise Moore
Principal:
Classroom:
Teacher:
Family/Community:

Strategy #4: Family/Community Partnerships

Rationale:

- Partnerships between family/community and schools are critical to the success of every student.
- Communication and access should be provided consistently across the district.

Essential questions

Person/Department Responsible

(Note: As a district, we recognize that high levels of collaboration are needed in order to successfully implement change. Therefore, much of the work completed will be a result of committees of administrators, teachers, parent/community members.)

4.A: What steps need to be taken in order to establish an effective and efficient student progress reporting system that allows consistent communication between school and home?
 Topics could include:
 - Student-led conferences and access to all teachers
 - Portfolios/evidence of learning
 - Student learning plans

District: Trise Moore, Director of Family/Community Partnerships
 Principal:
 Classroom:
 Teacher:
 Family/Community:

4.B: What district level tiered supports will promote family/community and school partnerships?

Family & Community Partnerships Office,
 Trise Moore

Guiding Resources

The majority of this work is based on the committee's findings in two meta-analyses of the most current research. These two reports are the McKinsey Report and OSPI's Characteristics of Improved School Districts: Themes from Research. Sections of the "Executive Summaries" have been highlighted as they have provided the foundation for the work of this committee.

How the World's Best-Performing School Systems Come Out on Top, McKinsey & Company, 2007.

"There are many different ways to improve a school system, and the complexity of this task and the uncertainty about outcomes is rightly reflected in the international debate about how this should be done. To find out why some schools succeed where others do not, we studied twenty-five of the world's school systems, including ten of the top performers. We examined what these high-performing school systems have in common and what tools they use to improve student outcomes.

The experiences of these top school systems suggest that three things matter most: 1) getting the right people to become teachers, 2) developing them into effective instructors and, 3) ensuring that the system is able to deliver the best possible instruction for every child.

These systems demonstrate that the best practices for achieving these three things work irrespective of the culture in which they are applied. They demonstrate that substantial improvement is possible in a short period of time and that applying these best practices universally could have enormous impact in improving failing school systems, wherever they might be located."

Characteristics of Improved School Districts: Themes from Research, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2004.

"An analysis of the studies identified 13 common themes, which have been clustered into four broad categories: *Effective Leadership*, *Quality Teaching and Learning*, *Support for Systemwide Improvement*, and *Clear and Collaborative Relationships*. The themes should be viewed as integrated and interrelated – they are important to district effectiveness but not sufficient in isolation. Although they are treated discreetly in the synthesis of research, they are connected, impact one another, and infuse the organization. A conceptual framework illustrates the relationships among these 13 themes and four categories."

In addition to these two guiding resources, committee members attended various professional development workshops (ASCD Regional Conference, Washington State ASCD Conference, Equity and Achievement Conference, Parent Involvement Conference) to learn new information to guide our work.