

Instructional Plan Implementation

Pre-Review Reflection Spring 2013

- 1. What key elements of your instructional plan (Public School Choice, Single School Plan or other) have you implemented? What performance meter goals will be influenced by the implementation of these elements?**

As we anticipate the implementation of Common Core standards, all departments and disciplines have studied and implemented Marzano strategies across the curriculum. Marzano's nine focus areas have been the subject of school-wide and departmental training. Co-operative learning groups, nonlinguistic representations, note-taking (especially Cornell notes) and standards based summarizing strategies have become the norm in a majority of classrooms.

Peer observations, a lesson bank, and teacher-to-teacher feedback have accelerated the Marzano instructional approach.

A rotating schedule provides struggling students the opportunity to receive morning instruction twice a week.

A revised discipline structure emphasizing early intervention based on teacher – parent contact has dramatically decreased suspensions while increasing the amount and raising the quality of homework across all disciplines.

- 2. What specific progress on implementation have you seen in your school to date? What would an observer notice when visiting classrooms, talking with staff etc.? What formative data might you share that indicates progress?**

An observer would immediately notice a school-wide commitment to improve instruction through adoption of Marzano strategies and increasing emphasis on the Common Core Standards. They would also see evidence of cooperative learning, note taking, and use of open ended questions. Conversations with teachers would reveal a cross curricular focus on implementation of strategies aimed at improving instruction and student learning.

Formative data would include data on declining truancy and student suspensions as well as timely administration of district assessments to the highest extent possible. Data would indicate a high level of targeted interventions (Standards based CST tutoring) during advisory period and after school as well as ELL Saturday School. Standards based instruction is driven by CST and SPA data.

Benchmarks and Progress

3. With consideration of your school’s core and intervention programs, look at the “Unwavering Focus on Academic Achievement” category on the School Review Rubric for Observers and Key Categories for School Review:

- a. Briefly describe the status of your school in this rubric category.

Even the most casual observer would have to conclude that there is an unwavering focus on improving instruction, increasing student achievement, building a community partnership with school families, and making the paradigm shift to common core standards based education. As these efforts continue, the school merits an “approaching competence” designation

- b. What evidence supports your assessment in this category?

Suspension and truancy rates have fallen significantly. Records indicate an ongoing effort to maintain contact with parents. Periodic assessment scores have improved as backwards planning from standards to curriculum has narrowed the focus on specific academic goals. Cooperative learning groups – open ended questions and accountable talk -- are replacing direct instruction in an increasing number of classes. Student behavior is observably improved – less litter, less graffiti, substantially fewer students ditching, increased attendance at parent conference events.

Time is allotted in regular department meetings for planning and discussion of the most rigorous curriculum.

4. With consideration of your school’s core and intervention programs, look at the “School culture, climate and infrastructure that support personalization and academic achievement” category on the School Review Rubric for Observers and Key Categories for School Review:

- a. Briefly describe the status of your school in this rubric category.

Johnnie L. Cochran, Jr. Middle School is rapidly “approaching competence” in this category.

- b. What evidence supports your assessment in this category?

In addition to traditional use of SDAIE strategies, scaffolded curriculum and instruction and a conscious effort to teach the whole child, efforts to provide a safe, bully-free, culturally inclusive environment have been formally mounted with the creation of such groups as the Black students union, the Asian Students Union and the Latino Students

Johnnie L. Cochran, Jr. Middle School

union. Students have planned, rehearsed and presented assembly programs that teach tolerance, inclusion and cultural awareness.

In order to address the African American achievement gap, a Saturday colloquium has addressed the latest research in this field. Participating teachers have been guided through workshops aimed at increasing sensitivity to uniquely African American perspectives. A lesson bank of strategies aimed at closing the achievement gap has been created. A black parent forum has been established.

Documentation shows a high degree of parent contact, a strategic approach to change instruction across the curriculum, and specific PD on targeted Marzano strategies.

5. With consideration of your school's core and intervention programs, look at the "Leadership that supports high achievement for students and staff" category on the School Review Rubric for Observers and Key Categories for School Review:

- a. Briefly describe the status of your school in this rubric category.

Johnnie L. Cochran, Jr. Middle School is rapidly "approaching competence" in this category.

- b. What evidence supports your assessment in this category?

The Leadership Council has met on average twice weekly for at least an hour to plan and evaluate implementation of school wide strategies to improve instruction at Cochran Middle School. The School Based Leadership Team and the School Site Council have been extremely active in communicating and providing support for the LC's efforts which to date have included: publicizing and conducting trainings at the parents monthly Kaffe Klatch, providing structured professional development on the over-all process as well as institution of targeted invention using Marzano strategies, and a school-wide effort to document increasing teacher- parent contact.

A representative from the Leadership Committee has also been placed on the School Testing Committee to serve as liaison for dissemination of information regarding testing, preparatory materials, and for seeking input from students and teachers to be used to create the most efficacious testing environment.