A.5 PMP Reading Narrative

Overview

The following section details specifics regarding the Performance Management Plan for Reading.

Basis for Setting Predicted Baseline Figures

The standardized test performance data for FY 2011 for the four public district schools and one public charters school within the demographic area, and including the anticipated population of students, was averaged and used to predict baseline figures. However, we will open with grades K-2 and our students will not enter Hirsch Academy with SAT-10 or AIMS data as a baseline. For this reason, we chose to work from historical data for similar students in the target population. Working from the Education Evaluator tool on the Arizona Charter Schools Association (ACSA) website we used the average percentage of students passing the AIMS assessment. The four district schools demonstrated reading passing rates ranging from a low of 69.1% to a high of 84% passing. The charter school reported a 77.3% reading passing rate for students in Grades 3-8 and Grade 10. The state average was 76% passing. Significant to the Hirsch Academy: CFA team is the score for Supai Middle School with a 69.1% passing the AIMS in reading. This data supports our reasoning for bringing school choice and our strong language arts-based program of instruction to this target population beginning at the early literacy level.

The Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) reading program for K-3, slated to become a complete K-5 program, addresses the deficit in general knowledge often assumed by the writer in other elementary level reading programs, as well as the necessary systematic phonics and other reading skill development. The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) have specifically addressed this issue to ensure a foundation of background knowledge for all students. For students without adequate background knowledge in the core subject areas, especially in the sciences and social studies, growth in student achievement will often begin to drop off in the area of reading by or beginning in the fourth grade. This is often referred to as “the fourth grade slump”. Arizona’s “Move on When Reading” initiative is an attempt to manage this “slump” in reading achievement and to insure future academic success by addressing K-3 competency with early literacy. With this initiative, students not reading on grade level by the end of third grade must repeat an academic year of 3rd grade instruction with comprehensive reading intervention. The impetus is created for schools to address early literacy head-on with research-based effective instruction and to begin intervention as soon as possible so that the likelihood of retention is substantially reduced.

The CKLA program provides early literacy development and support through systematic phonics instruction and with content- specific and vocabulary-rich read-aloud experiences, and with instruction and skill practice for developing the skill and background knowledge necessary to build reading comprehension. The essential

relationship between these "two keys to reading" is often misunderstood in early literacy programs, thus unknowingly perpetuating the "fourth grade slump" phenomenon, which can become irreparable over time. CKLA addresses this challenge proactively at the outset through consistent progress monitoring to track student growth. From the assessments and trackers, Hirsch Academy: CFA will use formative and summative assessment data to provide ongoing professional development for our teachers on best practice to effectively inform reading instruction in the classroom and using data target instruction to lessen the "fourth grade slump". Initial training on the use of instructional materials for reading will be provided by the Core Knowledge Foundation for CKLA and SRA/McGraw Hill for Open Court Imagine It! Students are tiered for tutoring assistance.

A three-year independent study of the effects of the CKLA program on early literacy was completed in 2012 with very favorable results. As stated in a *New York Times* article in March 2012, "The study found that second graders who were taught to read using the Core Knowledge program scored significantly higher on reading comprehension tests than did those in the comparison schools. It also tested children on their social studies and science knowledge, and again found that the Core Knowledge pupils came out ahead."

We believe at Hirsch Academy that it is important for elementary students to continue with reading skill development and building background knowledge throughout the K-8 school years in order to perform at higher levels of achievement in high school and beyond. For this reason we have selected reading program support for grades 4-8 to reflect this philosophy, including opportunities to build skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing. We believe that our program will not only increase student achievement in reading at the elementary school level but, given time to build strong foundations, will also have a significant impact on middle school reading achievement for those students who choose to remain at Hirsch Academy: CFA through 8th grade and for those students who may choose to return to their neighborhood middle school. It is our intent to provide our students with an excellent K-8 reading education to allow for higher-level course options in high school and to be solidly college and career ready.

Plan for Monitoring the Implementation of the Action

The overall structuring of the strategies and action steps of the PMP was heavily influenced by TeamCFA's experience at Pioneer Prep: CFA. As mentioned in previous sections, Pioneer Prep: CFA was able to grow from a D to a B in the state's A-F Accountability Letter Grade in one academic year. The lessons learned through the experience at Pioneer Prep: CFA – an emphasis on high-quality effective instruction, rigorous curriculum, and a data-driven focus on teaching and learning – were incorporated into the PMP of Hirsch Academy: CFA.

The Reading PMP includes concrete evidence for meeting the action steps laid out in the plan. A checklist and notebook will be used to document and collect evidence for action items in Strategies I-IV. An example of an item on the checklist is as follows:

Reading PMP Strategy I:

Action Item 1
___ All hiring paperwork; including interview notes.

Action Item 2
___ Purchase order showing that Core Knowledge Language Arts and Open Court Imagine It! have been ordered.
___ Inventory report showing that Core Knowledge Language Arts and Open Court Imagine It! have arrived.

The Core Knowledge (CK) Implementation Rubric provides a planning tool to assist schools. This rubric helps schools identify whether CK implementation is "emerging", "developing" or "exemplary". The full text from the rubric is used in the PMP the first place it is used to assess CK implementation. Assessed areas on a detailed rubric are described as follows:

- ✓ Planning:
  Planning tools (i.e. Curriculum Plan and Domain Maps) are developed and used to guide instruction.

- ✓ Content:
  The Language Arts, History, Science, Math, Visual Arts, and Music domains identified in the Core Knowledge Sequence.

- ✓ Coherence & Context:
  Coherence entails arranging topics in a logical order (e.g. using filters such as chronological order, prerequisite knowledge) that enables students to build knowledge and vocabulary.
  Context refers to cross- curricular planning. Integrating cross-curricular connections (e.g. sayings & phrases and science biographies) in related domains.

- ✓ Cumulative Nature of Content:
  Understanding that the topics in the Core Knowledge Sequence are introduced in early grade levels and build in complexity in later grades. In addition, reflecting on this when planning instruction (e.g. identifying the prior knowledge students should have on a topic and activating that knowledge in the lessons).

- ✓ Professional Community:
  Teachers collaboratively (e.g. grade- level teams, interdisciplinary teams, etc.) develop plans.

- ✓ Approach to Elementary Level Math:
  A systematic mathematics program is in place and it is implemented in a coherent fashion. Students also have the opportunity to hear and use domain- specific vocabulary as well as general academic vocabulary relative to the domain.

- ✓ Approach to Elementary Level ELA:
  A systematic English Language Arts (ELA) program is in place and implementation assists students in learning and applying phonetic knowledge. Students have the opportunity to listen to and read a variety of high- quality literary and informational texts.

- ✓ Effective Teaching:
  Teachers exhibit knowledge of content along with an array of pedagogical strategies to deliver quality instruction.

- ✓ High Expectations:
  The school staff embodies and communicates a "growth- mindset" to motivate students to success.

- ✓ Resources:
  Teachers have (access to) and use quality resources to support Core Knowledge Implementation.

- ✓ Leadership:
  Leaders embody the Core Knowledge mission and support staff with implementation.

- ✓ Commitment:
  Understanding that Core Knowledge is the central curriculum and making every effort to align other initiatives so teachers can implement it with fidelity.

- ✓ Community:
  The school families are informed and involved with Core Knowledge implementation.

- ✓ Ongoing Process:
  Planning and the implementation of the Core Knowledge curriculum is not a "one time event", but a process that needs to be continually refined.

- ✓ Professional Growth:
  The professional staff seeks and participates in professional development opportunities that refine their teaching practices and improve their implementation.

It is the responsibility of the School Director to oversee accountability of the school performance management plan actions, including the PMP checklist, the Core Knowledge Implementation Rubric, and the specific step laid out for each strategy noting completion of the strategy and the effectiveness of the Reading PMP action items. It is the responsibility of the School Director and the School Board to review the outcomes of the plan and to assess the effectiveness of the monitoring plan. Student achievement on

benchmark, state and national standardized assessments, and evidence of meeting action steps will be used to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the plan.

A review of the progress and effectiveness of the performance plan will be conducted at least once or twice each year (see strategy timelines below). When reviewed more than once a year, data-analysis of evidence for meeting the action steps will be conducted by the responsible parties and the preliminary effectiveness of the steps will be articulated to all staff to guide improvement of the actions to the end of the year. The end of year review will guide plan improvement for the following school year. Review data will be reported to the Board by the School Director, and further direction for improvement may be given by the Board to the School Director. See the action items under each strategy for the steps leading up to the following processes for gathering and analyzing data on the effectiveness of the action steps, which are also noted in the plan:

Strategy I

Action: Review, evaluate the effectiveness of, and recommend revisions to Hirsch Academy: CFA's written and adapted curriculum, including materials, assessment, and alignment to Arizona Common Core State Standards for Reading and Core Knowledge content. Revisions and evaluation will be based upon student achievement on benchmark and summative assessment.

Timeline: By June 1, 2014, and by each June 1 annually thereafter

Responsible Party: School Director and Curriculum Review Committee members

Evidence of Meeting Action Step: Committee meeting agendas and minutes, including documented recommended revisions to Hirsch Academy: CFA's written and adapted curriculum.

For each grade level, the Core Knowledge Implementation rubric will be completed. The completed rubric will show that all of Core Knowledge content is addressed, and that content is addressed on grade - level.

The recommended revisions will then be made during the next cycle of curriculum development.

Strategy II

Action: Evaluate Strategy II and make changes as necessary. Survey all in-school staff stakeholders for review and feedback on monitoring plan.

Timeline: Ongoing; and annual evaluation by June 30th, and annually by June 30th thereafter

Responsible Party: School Director, Mentor Teacher, Core Knowledge Coordinator, Lead Teachers, Teachers, AIMS and NWEA Coordinators, Reading Specialist, Special Education Teacher

Evidence of Meeting Action Steps: Report of survey results; Revised Strategy II in PMP that effectively enables school to monitor the integration of state reading standards into instruction.

The review of system results will specifically address the Core Knowledge Implementation Rubric, noting if there is a discernible effort toward ongoing improvement and refreshing the activities and work products from year to year.

Strategy III

Action: Evaluate the effectiveness of Strategy III, and revise as necessary

Timeline: Annually, each summer

Responsible Party: School Director, Lead Teachers

Evidence of Meeting Action Steps: Meeting notes; revised Strategy III of the Reading PMP as needed

Strategy IV

Action: Evaluate effectiveness of Professional Development, and revise when needed.

Timeline: Twice each year, in January and June

Responsible Party: School Director

Evidence of Meeting Action Steps: Survey results and teacher walk-through forms; revised Professional Development schedules

Sources

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