ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SOLUTIONS TEAM SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE REPORT

Date of Visit: October 26, 2012
Site Visit Leader: John Black
Solutions Team Members: Lisa Cogan, Scott Maxwell and Martha Morgan

Allsport Academy

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Intervention 1: Strong, Effective Leadership

EVIDENCE:

- In August 2012, school/district leadership changed the school's physical location to a different facility, providing an environment more conducive to student learning.

- Documentation and interviews indicate school/district leadership is beginning the process of setting up organizational structures to sustain continuous school improvement.
  - A new system is in place to ensure that all teachers are Highly Qualified and/or certified to teach in their assigned areas and/or grade levels;
  - Teacher lesson plans are collected and reviewed on a bi-weekly basis; and
  - Grade level schedules indicate that 52 minutes are dedicated daily to reading and math intervention programs; after school tutoring is available for struggling students.

- Interviews indicate that the Assistant Principal (AP) deals with student disciplinary issues, while Principal oversees transporting students and various executive decisions. Teachers are unaware of the Principal's daily responsibilities; feedback comes more from the AP due to his background in education.

- Teacher interviews show that school/district leadership welcomes staff input during school meetings. Teachers express feeling free to discuss areas of concern, as well as feel comfortable offering ideas on how to improve the school; on the other hand, teachers state that their advice is rarely acted upon. Additionally, interviews indicate that non-leadership staff had limited input in conducting the school's needs assessment and designing its improvement plan.

- There is little or no evidence that a functional system exists for the collection and dissemination of assessment results. Teacher interviews reveal that school-wide data is presented to staff infrequently or in a limited format.

- Allsport Academy does not have a formal process to observe and evaluate teacher effectiveness. Interviews indicate that school/district leadership recognizes the need to design and utilize a teacher observation tool to provide instructional feedback and prescribe staff development.

- School/district leadership has not provided instructional staff with appropriate curriculum and instructional materials. School/district leadership has also not provided instructional staff with professional development necessary to effectively use resources that are available.

- Interviews and documentation indicate that school/district leadership provides little support in developing frameworks to create and implement a learning community. The leadership team conducts weekly staff meetings; however, interviews show that meetings are not targeted toward addressing school needs.

- Administrator growth plans are not developed and the school has no programs in place to support the leadership team in their instructional and management skill development.

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Intervention 2: Effective Teachers

EVIDENCE:

- Staff would like to take part in professional development in the areas of classroom management, instructional strategies, and data assessment.
- School presentation shows that four Highly Qualified paraprofessional aides support Language Arts and Math instruction.
- Classroom observations reveal that the majority of teachers had posted objectives in student friendly language, as well as had student work and posters displayed.
- Classroom observations reveal that teacher/student interactions are respectful; however, there was limited meaningful interaction observed between teachers and students. The school's Science teacher was the only staff member observed engaging students in a meaningful discussion. Classroom observations reveal little evidence of students being cognitively engaged.
- Students have had a substitute Math teacher for this year; however, a new math teacher has been hired and is set to start work on October 29, 2012.
- Classroom observations indicate that teachers do not use varying instructional strategies to engage students in learning. During classroom walkthroughs, 5 out of 8 lessons observed involved students watching a movie with no accompanying activity or discussion.
- Evidence indicates that teachers have not examined student data on a consistent basis to identify target populations needing interventions. There is also no evidence to indicate that teachers are aware of the curriculum expectations that were included in the school's improvement plan.
- According to interviews conducted with staff, teachers rarely participate in job-embedded professional development to update their content knowledge and/or professional practices.
- No teacher mentors or support services have been selected to assist less experienced teachers on staff.
- Teachers report that the school lacks structure (e.g., transition times are not maintained) and consistency (e.g., student referral program is not reliably enforced); as a result, instructional time is lost.

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Intervention 3: Additional Instructional Time

EVIDENCE:

- In order to accommodate student transportation issues, Allsport Academy designates two different start times for two different groups of students (Group B and Group G). Group B begins classes at 7:45am and ends at 2:39pm; Group G begins classes at 8:40am and ends at 3:34pm. Although the schedule accommodates students' transportation needs, it does not make effective use of available instructional time. For instance, when 5th grade students in Group G arrive at school they join Group B for the final 20 minutes of English/Language Arts (ELA) instruction. During the last period of the day, 5th grade students in Group G receive an additional 46 minutes of ELA, bringing their total ELA instructional time to 66 minutes, considerably less than their Group B classmates'. Evidence shows that the current daily schedule limits instructional time – and is both disruptive and confusing for students and teachers.

- Allsport Academy's 6th through 9th grade daily class schedule shows that students receive 52 minutes of instruction in ELA, Math, Science, History and Physical Education (PE) every day. During classroom observations, however, it was noted that the daily class schedule did not align to the content of the lessons being observed. The schedule also shows that students take 52 minutes of Reading and Math intervention courses each day. However, the school did not provide any criteria for how they select students to participate in these intervention programs, except for student diagnostic test results from the *STAR Math Enterprise* program. Also, the specific content of these programs was not made clear. The schedule also includes 45 minutes of unspecified afterschool tutoring time each day, running from 2:42pm-3:34pm for Group B and 3:45pm–4:30pm Group G. Teachers did state that the tutoring program, also referred to as "study hall," was an opportunity for them to help students with their homework. Student interviews indicate that study hall is used to complete homework, and that it is not a tutoring or an intervention program.

- Allsport Academy's 5th grade daily class schedule shows that students receive 75 minutes of ELA, Math and History instruction every day; 62 minutes of Science instruction; and 87 minutes of either PE instruction or Reading/Math intervention. Again, the school did not provide any criteria for how they select students to participate in the Reading/Math intervention program or the specific content of the program.

- School/district leadership and teachers state that the school's English Language Learner (ELL) teacher works with content-area teachers throughout the day to expand student supports. Teachers report that paraprofessionals provide additional one-on-one support for struggling students. However, there was no observable evidence of a clear plan for increasing the achievement level of ELL, SPED and struggling students.

- Teachers indicate that 6th-8th grade students participate in upwards of 2 hours of PE every day. Students state that they take part in 1 hour and 50 minutes of PE. The daily schedule shows that 8th grade students in Group B, specifically, take three periods of PE, totaling 156 minutes (2.6 hours) of PE each day.

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Intervention 4: Strengthen Instructional Program Based on Student Needs

EVIDENCE:

- Interviews, documentation and classroom observations reveal that the school does not have a standards-based curriculum and does not have a process in place to ensure flexibility within the curriculum to meet the needs of all students.
- There is no evidence that the school's curriculum is articulated across all grade levels and subject areas. Pacing guides and/or curriculum maps are not used at Allsport Academy.
- Teachers indicate that they have limited time to collaborate.
- The school does not have policies and procedures in place to ensure school leadership and instructional teams examine student work for evidence that instruction is aligned to state standards.
- There is no evidence that a functional system exists for the collection and analysis of assessment results. The school does not have a formal process to observe and evaluate teacher effectiveness.
- The school did not provide evidence that it offers interventions shown to be effective with at-risk students. Interviews reveal that afterschool tutoring is focused on homework completion, not on closing education gaps in student learning.
- Teachers express having outdated textbooks and no technology equipment, such as computers and telephones. Interviews and classroom walkthroughs reveal that both the administration and teachers must use personal computers for school-related work.
- Interviews and documentation indicate that the SPED teacher ensures that students with disabilities receive appropriate accommodations, modifications, and supports in accordance with their IEPs.

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Intervention 5: Data Informs Instruction

EVIDENCE:

- *STAR Math Enterprise* diagnostic test was administered to all students at the beginning of the year to determine their mastery of math skills in order to personalize instruction and practice, and then schedule appropriate interventions. School/district leadership plans on purchasing *Star Reading Enterprise* for the school's reading intervention program.

- School presentation shows that leadership is familiar with the school's demographic data, including gender, ethnic, free and reduced lunch, Special Education (SPED) and grade-level breakdowns. Presentation also reveals that school leadership is familiar with 2010, 2011 and 2012 AIMS data.

- Allsport Academy does not have a framework for collecting, storing, accessing, and disseminating school and student-level data. School does not have data warehousing system in place.

- Interviews indicate that teachers have not analyzed students' AIMS data. School/district leadership has not shared AIMS data with instructional staff.

- Interviews and documentation reveal that the school does not have benchmarking system in place.

- Based upon interviews and classroom observations, there is no evidence that teachers use formative assessment data to determine correct level of difficulty for individual or group instruction.

- School does not use professional development time to train and support teachers in using data; the school does not have structures in place to facilitate frequent, ongoing data-driven conversations.

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Intervention 6: School Environment Focused on Achievement/Non-Academic Factors Affecting Student Achievement

EVIDENCE:

- School/district leadership emphasize that the school was founded on the principle that sports and academics can be successfully integrated into the lives of students. The school strives to teach students a paradigm of success that will serve them in sports, academics, and in their personal lives. Teachers report that the school's emphasis on sports and physical activities is attractive to students.

- Physical activity has a major influence on the school's academic schedule, with approximately 2 hours a day dedicated to PE. The majority of students surveyed said they chose to attend the school because of its PE/sports program. Students said that they get to play several sports throughout the school day, including basketball, baseball, football and tennis. Observations, however, show that the school's PE/sports programs have no structure, are not well organized, and do not teach students life skills, such teamwork and sportsmanship.

- Teacher interviews reveal a lack of ongoing, consistent, school-wide systems and programs to promote a positive learning environment for all students. Teachers report that students' disruptive behavior and inappropriate language is not addressed by school administration, which in turn negatively impacts student achievement.

- There is little or no evidence that leaders, teachers and staff promote high expectations of students and recognize and accept their professional role in student success and failure. Teachers report that the school does not maintain high expectations for student behavior and academic performance.

- There is little or no evidence that the school has implemented any positive behavioral interventions or supports for students.

- Comparing notes between the school/district leadership interview and the teacher interviews, a shared vision and mission for the school is not evident. For example, school/district leadership emphasize the positive impact sports have on the school's academic culture, while teachers state that the school's overemphasis on sports detracts from a culture of academic achievement.

- Students state that they wish coursework was more challenging; they mention that lessons are too easy and that they are not being pushed to reach their full academic potential. Classroom walkthroughs confirm this sentiment; students were not engaged, nor were they completing work at or above grade level.

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Intervention 7: Engaging Families and Communities

EVIDENCE:

- Allsport Academy has designated its SPED teacher as the parent/community liaison. The liaison contacts parents about student attendance. According to interviews, however, the role of the liaison is still in the process of being fully defined.

- School has demonstrated communication strategies that are culturally and linguistically appropriate. Several staff members, including the Principal, speak Spanish, which is the primary language of many of the students' family members.

- The school has created a site-based council, consisting of staff members and parents. Currently, students are not involved in the council. The council's schedule is not predetermined, but school administration states that they have met once and they are set to meet again in February, March and June of 2013. Site leadership did not have minutes from the one meeting, but states that it helped to boost enrollment.

- Site leadership states that the school hosts an open house for parents and family members in the Fall and Spring. During the open house in the Fall, parents met with teachers.

- Principal states that he makes regular home visits to support the school's attendance initiative, to increase parental involvement, and to foster positive relationships with families.

- Limited evidence to suggest that parents receive specific information regarding academic expectations/standards taught on a quarterly basis for each grade level. No evidence that a weekly/monthly newsletter is sent home to parents.

- Information contained on the school's website is out-of-date. For example, the school's address is listed as 6211 East Broadway Boulevard, Tucson, whereas the school's current location is at 601 East Fort Lowell Road in Tucson.

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Summary of Evidence			
	Provide a detailed summary identifying 2-4 areas of **STRENGTH**	Provide a detailed summary identifying 2-4 areas of **WEAKNESS**	Provide a detailed summary identifying 2-3 **OVERALL AREAS OF FOCUS** (These are only suggestions of possible action steps you may want to consider in your quest for continuous school improvement.)
Strong, Effective Leadership	• Site leadership acknowledges that all systems are not in place to support continuous school improvement at this time. • Site leadership's strength is in its commitment to improving all aspects of the school, including curriculum, instruction, as well as the school's climate and culture. • Site leadership changed the school's physical location to a different facility, providing an environment more conducive to student learning.	• Site leadership has not created a formal, on-going process to provide instructional staff with appropriate curriculum and instructional materials. • Site leadership has not created a formal, on-going process to measure teacher performance. • Site leadership has not created a formal, on-going process to collect and disseminate assessment results. • Site leadership provides little support in developing frameworks to create and implement a learning community.	• Increase instructional time and limit PE time. In order to increase student achievement, students should be involved in academic classes with PE limited to approximately 30 minutes per day. • Develop curriculum maps and a benchmarking system aligned to the Arizona Common Core. Curriculum maps will lay out a course of study for teachers and students. Benchmarking systems can be purchased that will guide teachers in their instruction to ensure students are successful. • Establish job-embedded PD based on teachers' needs. Their needs will be determined by the use of a teacher evaluation system that meets the new state requirements for teacher

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Effective Teachers	• There is evidence that teachers maintain positive relationships with students. • Teachers expressed a willingness to increase skills and learn more effective and efficient teaching strategies to make a positive impact on student achievement.	• There is limited evidence that teachers use varying instructional strategies to engage students in learning. • Evidence indicates that teachers have not examined student data on a consistent basis to identify target populations needing interventions. • Teachers rarely participate in job-embedded professional development to update their content knowledge and/or professional practices.	evaluation. Once the needs are determined, contract with one of the many outside consultants that specialize in Professional Development for educators. • Schedule regular meetings to discuss student achievement data and develop plans to meet student needs. Using data from benchmarks is critical to developing plans to enhance instruction. This data will be available with the adoption of a benchmarking system. • Develop and use a classroom walk-through protocol to be used by school administration to improve instructional competencies and to document teacher effectiveness. This will require training on the part of administration and discussion with teachers about the protocol.
Additional Instructional Time	• The school's ELL teacher works with content-area teachers throughout the day to expand student supports.	• School lacks a consistent plan for specific interventions for individual, small group reading or math support, and/or differentiation for each specific grade level. • Evidence shows that the current daily schedule limits instructional time. • The content and structure of the school's tutoring and intervention programs are not well established.	

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Strengthen Instructional Program Based on Student Needs	• SPED teacher ensures that students with disabilities receive appropriate accommodations, modifications, and supports in accordance with their IEPs.	• Limited to no evidence of a cohesive instructional program that includes a standards-based curriculum, the use of data, or appropriate instructional delivery which is differentiated to meet individual student needs. • The school does not have policies and procedures in place to ensure school leadership and instructional teams examine student work for evidence that instruction is aligned to state standards.	
Data Informs Instruction	• School administered a diagnostic test to all students at the beginning of the year to determine their mastery of math skills. • Teachers and site leadership are familiar with the school's demographic data.	• Allsport Academy does not have a framework for collecting, storing, accessing, and disseminating school and student-level data. • No evidence demonstrating the use of continuous formative assessments to make decisions about curriculum and instructional planning. • School does not have a benchmarking system in place.	
School Environment Focused on Achievement/Non-Academic Factors	• School strives to teach students a paradigm of success that will	• There is little or no evidence that site leaders, teachers and staff	

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Affecting Student Achievement	serve them in sports, academics, and in their personal lives.	promote high expectations of students and recognize and accept their professional role in student success and failure. • There is little or no evidence that the school has implemented any positive behavioral interventions or supports for students.	
Engaging Families and Communities	• School has demonstrated communication strategies that are culturally and linguistically appropriate. • School has established a community/parent liaison position.	• Limited evidence to suggest that parents receive specific information regarding academic expectations/standards taught on a quarterly basis for each grade level.	