From Structure to Instruction

Collaboratively Using Data to Turn Around Schools

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Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) – The measure of whether a school or system is making progress in academic achievement; benchmarks include student performance on annual tests, attendance, and graduation rates.

Why does AYP exist? – AYP data is a requirement of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

Who must achieve AYP? – Each state, school district and school must meet specified AYP benchmarks as a whole and for each of nine student subgroups. The student subgroups are: white, black, Hispanic, Native American, Asian/Pacific Islander, economically disadvantaged, limited English proficient students, and students with disabilities.
High Priority – A high priority school is a school that has missed the same AYP benchmark for two or more consecutive years. Once a school is designated high priority, it must meet AYP for two years to return to good standing. In Tennessee, there are six sub-categories of high priority schools; these designations are based on how long the school has been in high priority status.

Target – A target school is one that has missed a benchmark in at least one area for the first year. The Department of Education offers technical assistance to help keep target schools from becoming high priority schools.
### AYP (Annual Yearly Progress) Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School 1</td>
<td>High Priority (2nd year as HP)</td>
<td>High Priority (3rd year)</td>
<td>High Priority (4th year)</td>
<td>Good Standing</td>
<td>Good Standing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 2</td>
<td>High Priority (5th year as HP)</td>
<td>High Priority (6th year)</td>
<td>High Priority (7th year)</td>
<td>Good Standing</td>
<td>Target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 3</td>
<td>High Priority (6th year as HP)</td>
<td>High Priority (7th year)</td>
<td>High Priority (8th year)</td>
<td>Good Standing</td>
<td>Good Standing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School 1
• Established in 2002; grades 6-8
• Total enrollment (2009-10) = 614
• Economically disadvantaged = >95%

School 2
• Established in 1957: grades 9-12
• Total enrollment (2009-10) = 574
• Economically disadvantaged = >95%

School 3
• Established in 1956; grades 7-12
• Total enrollment (2009-10) = 1,007
• Economically disadvantaged = 87.2%
The Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools: A research based resource for schools and districts to assist with improving student learning

G. Sue Shannon, Senior Researcher
Pete Bylsma, former Director of Research, Assessment, and Accountability

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Olympia, Washington
2007 (2nd edition)
A supportive learning environment
Strategies: atmosphere of caring

- Knowing students and their challenges
- Innovative practices IF helpful to student achievement
- Addressing non-academic needs
- Flexibility in working with individuals
- Principals who articulate and model a passion for the school, the teachers, the students
supportive learning environment

“Without a caring spirit, keeping the needs of students at heart, we would not have been successful.”
supportive learning environment

“I think basically the students will go to class where someone cares about them.”
supportive learning environment

“What makes the school successful is the teachers. They like to interact with the kids after school...Everybody is walking around the school trying to do right.”
Programs

- Academic Coaches—literacy, math, English, reading, graduation
- Specialists—behavior, family centers, college prep
- Special academic programs—EOC, online courses, Saturday school, Twilight school
- “themes”—ZAP (Zeros Are Not Permitted), Failure is not an option!
High standards and expectations for all students.
Strategies:
high standards and expectations

- Conflict between increased rigor (higher standards) and flexible, creative instruction.
- Making changes—personnel, program, assessment, use of data, scheduling and teaching methodologies
High expectations for staff
Strategies: high expectations, staff

- Hiring (and retention practices)
  Interview required demo lesson in classroom
- Expectations are articulated, modeled, and monitored
- Teachers work hard and have passion for helping “our” kids
- Balance of veteran and new teachers
- Need to encourage and support teachers
High expectations--Programs

- Double-dipping—reading and math
- Tutoring and enrichment periods
- All courses incorporate reading and writing and problem solving
- Lesson plans—reviewed with suggestions weekly
- Frequent assessment and use of data
Curriculum, instruction and assessment are aligned; data are used extensively.
Strategies: alignment of curriculum, instruction and assessment...use of data

- Instructional maps with common weekly assessments to measure “how we are doing with the standards?”
- Data driven—“don’t do anything without checking the data....tells us what to teach and re-teach.”
- Practice tests before state tests and focused teaching on “need” areas
Strategies: alignment of curriculum, instruction and assessment...use of data

- Role of instruction on test scores
- “What model did you use?”
- “I didn’t use a model. I just examined the data and did what you are supposed to do in school—teach.”
High levels of collaboration and communication.
strategies: high levels of collaboration and communication

- Shared focus (teamwork)
- Common plan times with established agenda and action plans
- Positive climate for teachers, after initial turnovers
- Focused faculty meetings—lesson plans, student interventions, using data
- Calendar of events for collaboration
Focused professional development

- An interesting note...
Strategies: focused professional development

- Internal professional development to empower teachers
- Use of academic coaches
- Teacher attendance at conferences and seminars
- Teacher led sessions (data, instructional methods)
One factor permeated all others....
Effective school leadership
Strategies: Effective school leadership

- “Effective instructional and administrative leadership is required to implement change processes. Effective leaders are proactive...They also nurture an instructional program and school climate conducive to learning and professional growth.”

  - Shannon and Bylsma, 2007
Strategies: Effective school leadership

- Dedication to students and meeting their needs
- Focus on instruction—data analysis, lesson development and teacher support
- Straight-forward, open communication ("Nothing is sugar coated....This is what should be done. And that goes from the administration to the teachers to the students.")
Strategies: Effective school leadership

- Enthusiasm and passion
- Strong organizational skills (Accurate records and data)
- Positive view of culture and climate
- Increase academic rigor (increase number of courses; pump up ALL courses; weed out “filler” courses)
Strategies: Effective school leadership

“We have an awesome leader—a young principal with a brilliant mind. She is very passionate and has the highest integrity...She doesn’t ask more of us than she gives a hundred fold.“
“The teachers felt like they were the worst teachers in the district. I had to pump them...and the kids up. The teachers trusted me. Now, that is important—they have to trust their leader.”

“The principal trained us to build relationships.”
“Because I want to do what is best for kids, I think of my own educational life – having mentors and people who have made a difference for me...I think that true change takes three to five years under a leader who is being effective....When we see what is not working we should act fast instead of let a whole year or two years pass. .... we have to pay attention early to troubled schools.... Open, honest discussion without being condemned is key.”
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