

Peshine Elementary School
4-18-2005 to 4-20-2005
Introduction

The New Jersey Department of Education conducted a CAPA (Collaborative Assessment for Planning and Achievement) review of Elementary School on April 18, 2005 to April 20, 2005. This school is designated as “in need of improvement” for four consecutive years as defined in the *NJ Accountability Workbook. No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) §1117: School Support and Recognition requires that the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) create and maintain a statewide system of intensive and sustained support for those Title I schools designated as “in need of improvement” for four consecutive years. As part of this required support system, the NJDOE developed the CAPA review process, which assigns teams of skillful and experienced individuals to provide schools with practical, applicable, and helpful assistance, increasing the opportunity for all students to meet the state’s Core Curriculum Content Standards. CAPA is required for all Title I schools in corrective action.

This school is categorized as a “low performing school,” meaning 50.0 percent or more of the general education students were not proficient on the 2002 ESPA Language Arts Literacy subtest, adjusted by the Commissioner, as codified herein, based on mean score growth or decline from 1999-2002. Any school so identified will remain in this category for the 2004-2005 school year, even if more than 50 percent of its general education students were proficient or advanced proficient on the 2003 NJ ASK4 Language Arts Literacy subtest. A literacy assessment team reviewed the early literacy program in the fall of 2003, and an Intensive Early Literacy agreement is in place. For Abbott Low Performing Schools, the CAPA visit fulfills the requirements stipulated in the Abbott regulations (N.J.A.C. 6:A10A).

The CAPA review team activities included:

- A review of the documents collected for the school portfolio and data profile;
- 160 classroom observations;
- General observations, such as morning and afternoon arrival and dismissal, lunch in the cafeteria, and student restrooms;
- 54 interviews with teachers;
- 17 interviews with building leadership and administrators;
- 63 interviews with students;
- 31 interviews with school and student support staff; and
- 12 interviews with parents.

Following the study of documentation, and the conducting of interviews and observations, the team discussed each standard and its indicators.

Team members and their affiliation included:

TEAM POSITION	NAME	AFFILIATION
Team Lead	Anne Wilkins	Consultant
Principal	Peggy Meakin	Consultant
Language Arts Literacy Reviewer	Anne Wilkins	Consultant
Mathematics Specialist	Howard Ogull	Consultant
Special Education Specialist	Joe Jakubowski	Consultant
Parent	Janice Gabbidon	NJ Department of Education
Pupil Personnel or Equity Specialist	Dennis Villano	Belleville Public Schools
District Liaison LAL	Sharon Bonner	Newark Public Schools
DOE Liaison	Janice Gabbidon	NJ Department of Education
District Liaison Math	Valerie Miller	Newark Public Schools

Academic Performance Standards

The following Academic Performance Standards address curriculum, classroom evaluation/assessment, and instruction.

- Standard 1:** The school develops and implements a curriculum that is rigorous, intentional and aligned to state and local standards.
- Standard 2:** The school uses multiple evaluation and assessment strategies to continuously monitor and modify instruction to meet student needs and support proficient student work.
- Standard 3:** The school's instructional program actively engages all students by using effective, varied, and research-based practices to improve student academic performance.

Learning Environment Standards

The following Learning Environment Standards address school culture; student, family and community support, professional growth, development and evaluation.

- Standard 4:** The school functions as an effective learning community and supports a climate conducive to performance excellence.
- Standard 5:** The school works with families and community groups to remove barriers to learning in an effort to meet the intellectual, social, career, and developmental needs of students consistent with 6A: 10A-3.6 Supports for Parents and Families and NCLB §1118 Parental Involvement.
- Standard 6:** The school provides research based, results driven professional development opportunities for staff and implements performance evaluation procedures in order to improve teaching and learning.

Efficiency Standards

The following Efficiency Standards address leadership, school culture and resources and comprehensive and effective planning.

- Standard 7:** School instructional decisions focus on support for teaching and learning, organizational direction, high performance expectations, creating a learning culture, developing leadership capacity.
- Standard 8:** There is evidence that the school is organized to maximize use of all available resources to support high student and staff performance.
- Standard 9:** The School Leadership Council and district planning team develops, implements, and evaluates a three-year operational plan/school improvement plan that communicates a clear purpose, direction and action plan focused on improving teaching and learning.

Summary Findings in: ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE (QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION)

STANDARD 1-CURRICULUM: The district P-12 curriculum is rigorous and aligned to state standards.

1.1b The district initiates discussions among schools regarding curriculum standards and frameworks to ensure they are clearly articulated across all levels (P-12).

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Local curriculum documents, units of study and lesson plans
- Teacher interviews
- District interviews
- Classroom observations
- Common Planning Meetings

Findings:

There is some evidence that the district initiates and facilitates discussions regarding curriculum standards. New Math and Literacy programs have most of standards built in. The district's Mathematics department has a comprehensive math calendar that encompasses the building of content knowledge and pedagogy. Teachers, coaches, and tutors are required to attend full day staff development workshops. The Office of Language Arts Literacy also has a comprehensive schedule to build capacity among teachers. In addition teachers have opportunity to attend summer workshops and weekend workshops. There seems to be no direct links between schools other than meetings at district workshops.

Special Education - There is no evidence that there is any dialogue between schools regarding the special education program structure or options or implementation. Literacy and math coaches do provide ongoing training and discussions with all teachers in the building, including special education staff, but do not specifically address how the program can be adapted to meet special education student's needs.

1.1e The curriculum requires all students to take courses with sufficient academic rigor to prepare for college preparatory courses and pass the HSPA, and provides specific links to life and career options.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- District interviews
- Teacher interviews
- Student interviews
- Teacher lesson plans
- School and Community Perception Survey

Findings:

The district curriculum does require students to take courses with sufficient academic rigor in preparation for college prep courses. Math assignments in Everyday Math sometimes contain segments that are real-life related. Connected Math assignments usually contain this real-life related piece. The school does

have a Career Day once a year. In interviews with the school social workers, they informed us of their discussing career goals and options with the students. However, this seemed to be few and far between.

Elementary school teachers reported various activities that related to life experience particularly in the areas of social studies and literature. The school provides ample opportunity for the students to acquire links to life and career options through the services of CIS and other programs such as Drew University and Project Grad.

1.1f The district works with supervisors and faculty to systematically monitor, evaluate and adjust the curriculum based on the evidence of student achievement.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of the three-year operational plan
- Review of the SLC manual
- Review NJASK3 and 4 Assessment Results
- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

The findings point to partially implemented district and school process that include professional development days and grade level/cluster meetings in school to address curriculum issues. A five year curriculum review cycle is in place for evaluation, reviewing and monitoring the curriculum.

Curriculum review does take place as evidenced by the implementation of new Language Arts Literacy and Math programs in the building. The district monitors curriculum implementation through school visitations.

Special Education - There is no evidence that this occurs in the special education program. These classes are required to offer the general education curriculum at appropriate grade levels. Although supplementing this program is encouraged, there has been no training or specialized materials provided to special education teachers to do so.

The curriculum that is used in the special education classes is the same as the general education program. Special education teachers are not allowed to deviate from that curriculum, but are required to adapt as necessary to meet their student's special needs. Teachers have been resourceful in their endeavor to do so, although they have not received any training to do so. Although this program offers no reading instruction per se, beyond literacy, these students are reading at levels that preclude them from reading the very textbooks from which they are expected to learn. The majority of classes are self contained .

1.1g The curriculum provides access to a common academic core for all students including, but not limited to, special education and ELL students.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Intensive Early Literacy Report and Plan
- LAL and math local curriculum documents, units of study and lesson plans

- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

Although a SLC curriculum sub-committee exists in the school, its role in the school is not specified and its impact is not obvious. Evidence points to a strong effort to accommodate the learning needs of all students through a variety of in-house programs and activities that include both in school and after school programs. The program supports expectations for high academic performance and provides the opportunity for all students to access a curriculum that is aligned with NJCCCS standards.

Lessons do not seem to reflect completion of grade level curriculum or all the components of the district's Language Arts model which will prepare the student for the upcoming grade level.

Special Education - The special education program is largely exclusionary. There have been minimal efforts to offer inclusionary classes to special education students. A vast majority of special education students are placed in self contained classes, in which there is no integration with general education students. They have no opportunity to interact with non-disabled peers in their academic programs. There are two resource room replacement teachers who offer replacement LAL and math classes, one of which provides in-class support in Math, in addition to replacement. All of the special education staff state that they have students who could benefit from an in class support program, in which a special education teachers provides modifications and accommodations.

1.1h The principal and faculty work together to ensure that the district curriculum determines what is taught through the review of lesson plans and teacher peer review of curricular standards and the best method of teaching them.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of the three-year operational plan
- Review of the SLC manual
- Review NJASK3 and 4 Assessment Results
- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

District policy is in place to ensure that the district curriculum is implemented but it is not consistently followed. Lesson plans are checked but seemingly not on a regular basis. The plans themselves contain printout copies of the actual texts being used in the classroom. These are not teacher generated and therefore lack creative teaching techniques and/or reference to district model. They do not allude to conceptual learning in place.

There does not appear to be in place any teacher peer review of curricular standards and the best method of teaching them. The staff does seem to meet and support each other, but not necessarily touching upon issues that should be dealt with.

STANDARD 1

NEXT STEP

Have the building teachers, as well as district staff, with strong skills in writing rubrics, using manipulatives and facilitating group work conduct peer training sessions to address these skills.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The central focus of math lessons should be concept, not process or fact.
2. Someone with pedagogical strengths in math should be selected as a facilitator to act as a coach to model the “math as concept” approach.
3. Use technology so teachers can track performance on the ASK3, ASK4, pre-GEPA and monthly assessments, both individually and aggregated by classroom. This data should be used to identify priorities in the current curriculum and modify the next year’s planned curriculum. Cluster analysis should be done for each of these assessments.
4. There needs to be implementation of an SLC curriculum sub-committee to oversee and regulate content and make adjustments where needed. The curriculum committee members need necessary training to make specific suggestions to adjust curriculum and curriculum delivery.

Special Education -

1. Special education teachers need professional development programs that would allow them to better meet the needs of the students they serve:
 - a. How to modify and supplement the general education program to the functional level of their students
 - b. Additional specialized Reading Programs for their population, e.g. Project Read, Language, etc.
 - c. Inclusionary Practices, Structures and Strategies (this should be offered to the general education teachers as well)
2. CST, special education staff and general education staff should be trained together in inclusionary practices so that a full range of program options can be offered to special education students. The CST needs to apply the required Oberti test which presumes a general education placement with supports and only deviates from that assumption within the context of that test.

STANDARD 2 -CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION: The district and school use multiple evaluation and assessment strategies to continuously monitor and modify instruction to meet student needs and support proficient student work.

2.1a Assessments created by teachers, school and district are frequent, rigorous, aligned with NJ CCCS, used to gauge student learning and adjust teaching to individual needs.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Local curriculum documents and units of study
- Teacher interviews
- Student interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

Assessments seem to be given on a regular basis and are aligned only so far as the program books are. In language arts literacy there is an overuse of program assessments. Weekly story assessments are consuming twenty percent of instructional time. There is not enough rigor in the teacher designed assessments. Teacher designed assessments seem to be used infrequently and many do not seem to be familiar with multiple assessment strategies and tools. There seems to be a lack of monitoring and adjustment.

Special Education – Special education classroom assessments are tied to the general education program and follow that model exclusively.

2.1b Teachers collaborate to design authentic classroom assessments aligned with the CCCS.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans, local curriculum documents and units of study
- Teacher and student interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

There is little evidence teachers collaborate in the design of authentic assessment tasks. There are both new Literacy and Math programs throughout the grades and there is a great reliance upon the built-in assessments in the programs themselves. Many of the teachers are still busy learning the programs.

District personnel have stated that authentic assessments have been shown to teachers, but they have not been implemented. Grade level common planning meetings occur, but they lack evidence of outcomes.

Special Education - Special education teachers have not been trained in, but routinely practice authentic assessment or other forms of alternative assessment such as performance assessment. All teachers are using portfolio assessment that consists merely of a collection of student work. Self contained teachers do collaborate in this area. Resource center teacher conducting many more projects that are assessed with rubrics than do the self-contained classes.

2.1c Students can articulate the academic expectations in each class and know what is required to be proficient. Academic expectations are clearly communicated, evident in classrooms and observable in student work.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Student interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

There are rubrics posted in most rooms, although they are the standard ones. Some teachers did state in interviews that they have made and used student created rubrics. There was no observable evidence of the this. Student interviews showed an understanding of what is necessary for proficiency, but many had only a sketchy understanding. Some students had low expectations and stated that their teachers shared that feeling of low expectations.

2.1d Test scores are used by the district and school to identify curriculum gaps.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- District interviews
- Classroom observations
- SLC interviews

Findings:

There seems to be more done on a district wide usage of test scores to identify curriculum gaps than a school wide effort. There seems to be too little analysis and what is stated as a need does not seem to bring about the modification of curriculum, instruction and assessment practices to meet that need.

Special Education - There is no evidence that special education teachers are using state test scores. Teachers have not been trained to analyze test data nor or they assigned that task in order to inform their curriculum or instruction.

2.1e Multiple assessments are designed and used to gauge student learning and to adjust teaching to meet individual student needs.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- District interviews
- Quarterly report
- Classroom observations
- Portfolios and work folders

Findings:

In some cases multiple assessments were used to provide meaningful feedback on student learning. Most assessments seemed to be used at a lower level and do not always address different learning styles or modalities. This was shown to be inconsistent across grade levels. Many of the teachers seemed not to understand multiple assessments or their value in the classroom.

Special Education - See above. In addition, the use of alternative forms of assessment have been observed, such as performance assessment, which include the use of rubrics, particularly in resource center replacement classes.

2.1h Samples of student assessments are shared among teachers and analyzed to inform instruction and to revise curriculum and pedagogy.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- District interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

There was little evidence of student assessments shared among teachers to be analyzed to inform instruction and to revise curriculum. Student work is occasionally analyzed, but results are inconsistently used to guide teaching and learning.

Special Education - All teachers are maintaining student samples in the form of a portfolio. All teachers state that they compare student's work to previous performance and celebrate their progress. They also use student, assistant and parent feedback as a means of determining their instructional effectiveness.

STANDARD 2

NEXT STEPS

1. School level professional development providers should model specific strategies to analyze student work and adjust instructional strategies to be used to meet achievement needs, and guide teachers in the analysis of student work so that assessment can drive instruction. School leadership should support the professional development providers to insure implementation.
2. Literacy Coach in consultation with the Office of Language Arts Literacy should provide administration with a list of approved assessments for the Harcourt Trophies K-5 adoption.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A variety of rigorous and authentic assessments should be used to measure student progress. Teachers should use the data gathered from these assessments to reflect on their own teaching practices.
2. Leadership and teachers need to identify and communicate high academic expectations more rigorously. Increase visitations to high performing schools as well as high performing classes within the building with a focus on identifying successful instructional strategies.
3. Students should have frequent and ongoing opportunities to self evaluate and reflect on their learning.
4. Teachers should collaborate more frequently, purposely and effectively at all grade levels in designing authentic assessment activities, open response items and scoring guides.
5. Teachers should develop rubrics with students.

Special Education –

Special education teachers need a myriad of professional development programs that would allow them to better meet the needs of the students they serve:

- How to modify and supplement the required general education program to the functional level of their students
- Additional specialized Reading Programs for their population, e.g. Project Read, Language, etc.
- Alternative Assessment: Performance, Authentic, Portfolio
- Analysis of state test results and assessments for the purpose of informing instruction and pedagogy
- The development of a process and logistical structure that requires analysis of test data and assessment and collaboration that yields specific instructional and pedagogical decisions for special education students

STANDARD 3 -INSTRUCTION: Instruction engages all students by using effective, varied and research-based practices to improve academic performance.

3.1a There is evidence that effective and varied instructional strategies are used in all classrooms.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- Classroom schedules

Findings:

The school's literacy and math curriculum are designed to provide effective and varied instructional strategies. Some classes demonstrated evidence of having such strategies in place, however the majority of teachers relied on teacher-directed whole class instruction. Some teachers indicated they felt uncomfortable moving away from text-based instruction. In many classes, students were not academically engaged, as lessons did not begin on time, ended before the class period ended or were not following the posted schedule. During student and teacher interviews it was indicated that alternate instructional strategies were utilized but during observations these were rarely seen. Classroom activities occasionally required students to use higher-order thinking or problem solving.

Special Education - Some teachers were aware of how to accommodate multiple intelligences, learning styles, and differentiated learning, but, for most, lack the formal training that would allow them to take implement these strategies at more sophisticated levels. There were projects displayed in some classes in which students might have completed as a application of learning. Overall teachers are providing students with a good range of group and individual learning strategies. There is evidence that these strategies are discussed and shared among self contained teachers.

3.1b Instructional strategies and learning activities are aligned with the district, school and state goals and assessments.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- Quarterly Principal's Report

Findings:

Approved assessments, linked to instructional strategies and learning activities aligned with district, school and state goals and assessments are listed in the quarterly report, but the suggested plan of action is not specific enough to address these goals. Although a few teachers mentioned specific areas of demonstrated need on which they focused instruction, other teachers said they were not sure how to use assessment data to close the achievement gap. In some K-5 classrooms, Harcourt assessments not recommended for use were displayed on bulletin boards and contained in student assessment folders. Math alignment is solely based on published material. Although district personnel have provided professional development in aligning curriculum to student needs state and local goals and assessments, teachers did not implement this knowledge. Some learning activities require students to complete assessment tasks similar to those on the state assessments.

3.1c Instructional strategies and activities are continuously monitored and aligned with individual student needs.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- Planbooks
- Student work

Findings:

Instructional strategies and activities are not continuously monitored and aligned with individual student needs. Although one teacher noted that the Harcourt program lent itself to small group instruction and differentiated instruction, another said the unit assessment “could” be used for grouping decisions. Upper grade teachers reported homogeneous grouping and whole class instruction using the leveled materials with the whole class, rather than differentiating materials to meet varying needs. Literacy plans are very sketchy, merely filling in the blanks of a suggested planner, with no detail about how skills will be addressed. A checklist included in teacher planbooks is checked off by administrators although little corroborating evidence was gained in classroom visitations. Observed mathematics instruction took on a whole class approach. Teachers are not using formal or informal assessment data to modify their instructional practice. Instructional strategies and activities do not accommodate the learning needs or variety of learning styles of students.

Special Education - There is no evidence that this is occurring beyond the auspices of the required school wide curriculum. This program has not accommodated the diverse needs of a special education population who present a myriad of academic, social and behavioral issues to a classroom. Most teachers were aware of how to accommodate learning styles and multiple intelligences, but need and desire more training.

3.1d Teachers demonstrate the content knowledge necessary to challenge and motivate students to high levels of learning.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- District interviews
- Classroom observations
- Professional Development Log

Findings: There is evidence that the school, district and outside sources provide professional development activities and coaching in “best practices.” As this site must make a shift from SFA, and because implementation is not fully operational, the district continues to provide professional development to assist in developing protocols for analyzing data and adjusting strategies to ensure student learning. Professional Development Logs detail modeled lessons, coaching and follow up visits. All teachers are not prepared to teach the required content material. Teachers participate in professional development, but the professional development does not always address content knowledge and current professional practices.

Special Education - Most teachers lacked training and knowledge in specialized reading programs that are designed to educate special needs students with significant reading problems. They do, however, demonstrate content knowledge in each of the subject areas in which they were observed.

3.1e There is evidence that teachers incorporate technology in their classrooms.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Principal's PowerPoint Presentation
- Classroom observations
- Student interviews
- Lesson plans

Findings: Interviews suggest that teachers incorporate technology in their classrooms and some computer generated material was displayed in classes and in hallways. However, although teachers and administrators described a process for using technology daily, many classrooms had computers turned off or broken. Students varied in their report of technology availability and few students were observed using computers in classroom visits. Some classes visit the technology lab weekly. School leadership has a technology policy or procedure, but it either does not address the instructional impact of technology or is not implemented.

Special Education - Each classroom in the school, including special education classes, has 2 stand alone computers for their use. Most teachers feel this is inadequate to actually integrate their use into the instructional program. They can only be used by individual students for reinforcement through CAI programs and is used for word processing. The Internet is not available. There has not been any real attempt to group students in their use because special education teachers feel that their students do not work well in groups. Teachers feel they need more training as well as more computers.

3.1f The district and school ensure that instructional resources are sufficient and that all instructional materials are aligned to the curriculum.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Student interviews
- Classroom observations
- Parent interviews
- Requisitions
- School Leadership Council interviews

Findings:

The district and school ensure that instructional resources are sufficient and that all instructional materials are aligned to the curriculum. Classrooms had an abundance of materials on display. Everyone interviewed reported that materials were available to them upon request of the administration or the School Leadership Council. Instructional resources are sufficient in all content areas to support the school's implemented curriculum.

Special Education - Teachers have ample materials to implement the required school wide curriculum, and feel that they have sufficient resources to supplement these programs as well. They do not have a budget per se, but feel that their needs are being met through requests to the building administration. Again, there are not sufficient computers. In terms of human resources, science coordinators provide demonstration lessons and teachers have stated the the CST does provide assistance upon request and do provide counseling experiences to their students. Literacy and math coaches do provide instruction on program implementation, but not specific adaptations to the special education population.

3.1g Teachers examine and discuss student work collaboratively and use this information to inform their practice.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- Professional Development Log

Findings:

Teachers frequently cited opportunities to meet collaboratively to discuss student progress, however, there is little evidence that student work samples are actually brought to the discussions. Some teachers said they did not know how to use the information they received from the assessments to bridge the achievement gap, although the professional development log from the Language Arts Literacy Resource Teacher Coordinator cites such work being done at grade level and/or vertical planning meetings. Some teachers have received training in protocols for analyzing student work in some content areas and grade levels, but the protocols are not always implemented.

Special Education - Special education teachers meet with each other on a structured and assigned basis and do use these meeting to, among other things, discuss student work and progress. They also meet within subject areas with general education teachers and coaches.

3.1h There is evidence that homework is frequent, evaluated and tied to instructional practice.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Principal's PowerPoint Presentation
- Classroom observations
- Student interviews
- Teacher planbooks

Findings: Homework does not extend student learning. Homework is frequent, however, most assignments are worksheets from practice workbooks and spelling assignments. The principal presented a homework policy with recommended number of minutes per grade level. Students and teachers did not agree on the amount of time spent doing homework. Teachers and students reported that varying percentages of students complete the assignments. Some teachers have a policy for positive and negative consequences regarding homework. However expectations for completion of work are limited.

Special Education - All teachers indicate that homework is assigned and completed and when it is not, parents are called.

STANDARD 3

COMMENDATIONS

Teaching staff, parents and students were overwhelmingly complimentary to the administration's dedication and efforts.

The abundance of supplies and materials in the building to implement programs is commendable.

NEXT STEPS

1. Review schedules to insure classes are conforming to district mandate of 90 minutes of uninterrupted Language Arts Literacy and grade appropriate math mandates. .
2. Hold teachers accountable for the transfer of theory from professional development sessions into practice.
3. Limit display of worksheets and test results. Work samples that reflect ongoing products or projects should be submitted or made available for administrative review on a continuing basis.
4. Limit classroom displays to products that reflect ongoing student work with specific teacher recommendations for improvement as opposed to commercial products and worksheets.
5. Seek assessment guidance from the Offices of Language Arts Literacy and Mathematics to review which assessments have been recommended for Harcourt Trophies and Everydy Mathematics program in grades K-5 and Connected Mathematics in grades 6-8. Limit formal assessments to those assessments that give the most informative data, align to state assessments and do not take large amounts of time away from instruction.
6. Focus attention at grade level and vertical meetings on work samples, writing process stages and reader responses to allow teachers the opportunity to practice analyzing work to inform their instruction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Address classroom management issues so they do not continue to adversely impact on instruction.
2. Continue in-class support, including demonstration lessons and interclass visitations. Institute regular opportunities for teachers to visit exemplary teachers identified in collaboration with the district Resource Teacher Coordinators and school administration.
3. Writing and math portfolios should be kept current and reflect growth across time. Increased focus should be placed on allowing children to return to, and complete, unfinished products.
4. Administrators should actively monitor planning and classroom instruction. Daily classroom visits should be participatory events that allow administration to evaluate the in-depth coverage of subject matter and the active participation of students in differentiated groupings focused on specific needs identified in the Principal's Quarterly Report.
5. Examine computer logs to determine how much time students actually spend on researching and producing products on the computer and address discrepancies.

6. Homework should be an extension of classroom instruction. It should be rigorous and challenging. High expectations for completion should be present.

Special Education –

1. Special education teachers need a myriad of professional development programs that would allow them to better meet the needs of the students they serve:
 - a. How to modify and supplement the required school wide curriculum to the functional level of their students
 - b. Specialized Reading Programs for their population, e.g. Wilson, Project Read, Langauge, etc.
 - c. Multiple Intelligences
 - d. Learning Styles
 - e. Cooperative Learning
 - f. Brain Based Learning
 - g. Questioning Techniques
 - h. Behavior Management
 - i. Integrating Technology into the Everyday Instructional Program.
2. Additional computers or mobile labs should be provided so that teachers can offer technology as an integral component of their instructional programs. Network online computers would be a huge plus, in terms of offering the use of the Internet for instructional purposes, but also as a means of providing opportunities for collaboration.

STANDARD 4 -SCHOOL CULTURE: The school functions as an effective learning community and supports a climate conducive to performance excellence.

4.1a The principal and school leadership are responsible for and support a safe, orderly, and equitable learning environment.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Non-instructional interviews
- Classroom observations
- Principal's PowerPoint Presentation
- Student interviews

Findings:

The principal and school leadership are responsible for and support a safe, orderly, and equitable learning environment. Without exception, everyone interviewed cited the principal as providing a safe environment. All are confident that the principal ensures their safety through his classroom visits, his highly visible manner, his leading by example, by making himself accessible to parents, students and

teachers and his no nonsense approach to achieving school goals. The principal describes his school as a safe and orderly environment with a limited number of acts of vandalism. Some staff reported numbers of students out of classrooms during the school day and in afterschool programs. School leadership adopts classroom management and discipline policy and procedures however, implementation of these procedures are not consistent.

Special Education - Only one special education class is located in the same area as non-disabled peers. All other special education classes are located in one corridor and the resource center replacement classes are totally isolated off the cafeteria and gymnasium respectively. All self-contained classes house 14 to 16 students spanning three grade levels with, in some classrooms, several personal and classroom assistants. Teachers have expressed that it would be more desirable to have smaller classes and fewer assistants, that adding more adults does not ameliorate the negative educational effects of classes of this size. There has been no attempt to locate these classes throughout the building to reduce the stigma that can sometimes occur when these classes are grouped and isolated in this fashion. The CST facilities do not offer confidential and private testing or conferencing areas. This a major problem for obvious reasons: test reliability and parent comfort and confidentiality, which is required by law.

4.1b The principal and school community (e.g., teachers and parents) foster the belief that all children can learn at high levels.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Local curriculum documents and units of study
- Teacher interviews
- Support staff member interviews
- Classroom observations
- Principal's PowerPoint Presentation
- Student work samples

Findings:

Administration and many teachers spoke about high expectations, however only the kindergarten teachers acknowledged that their students were achieving at higher levels this year than last. Upper grade teachers spoke of not understanding how to use data to change instruction to close the achievement gap. Classroom displays of student work did not reveal high expectations, but rather worksheets and spelling tests. Writing folders did not reflect sustained work on revising and editing even though that has continually been an area of need for students taking the GEPA. Planbooks and homework assignments refer to skills, but do not reflect multileveled approaches to instruction. Students spend much of their instructional time in whole class instruction and completing assignments not designed to tap higher order thinking. School leadership and teachers express a belief that they hold high expectations for all students however, it is not always apparent in practice.

Special Education - This appears to be the operating assumption underlying the required school wide curriculum. However, the special education staff does not believe that the needs of their children can be met through the implementation of this program alone.

4.1c Teachers hold high expectations for all students academically and behaviorally, and this is evidenced in their practices. There is evidence that teachers care about students and inspire their best efforts.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Student work samples
- Teacher interviews
- Support staff member interviews
- Classroom observations
- Student interview
- Principal's PowerPoint Presentation

Findings:

Teachers spoke about no nonsense attitudes, strict school and class rules and the school being a "family". They cite numbers of former students who are now attending colleges. There are multiple systems in place for rewarding good behavior and academic achievement. However, there is an undercurrent of acceptance of the status quo. Staff spoke of neighborhood issues of violence and parenting, students spoke of peers not behaving, teachers spoke of students below grade level expectation and of having done everything possible to help them achieve. The quality and demands of work samples and classroom practices often did not match the stated expectations.

4.1e Teachers accept responsibility for student success/failure.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Local curriculum documents and units of study
- Teacher interviews
- Student support staff member interviews
- SLC member interviews
- Classroom observations
- Quarterly Report

Findings:

Some teachers do not accept responsibility for student success/failure. There was no articulation by teachers about accountability for changing instruction to meet student needs. The principal's quarterly report, while citing areas of need, does not define specific alternate strategies to address student needs and measures that will immediately alter instructional practices. Failure to adequately differentiate instruction, seek guidance in analyzing student work samples, and provide students with the opportunities to extend their learning through challenging activities will not allow students to achieve at proficient levels on demanding state assessments. Many teachers do not reflect upon the impact of their instruction on the success of their students as a way to improve student achievement.

4.1f The school matches teacher strengths and experience with the needs of students. The school assigns staff to maximize opportunities for all students to have access to the staff's instructional strengths.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Local curriculum documents and units of study
- Principal interviews
- Teacher interviews
- Support staff member interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

The school is making some attempts to match teacher strengths with student needs in order to maximize student achievement. The teacher-student ratio is adequate. There is no evidence of scheduling to provide flexible grouping and re-grouping to match strength of staff with needs of students.

Special Education - This is a strong special education staff, however special education students, in the majority of cases, have no opportunity to access the general education staff with supplemental aides and supports. In addition, although the district provides a number of personal assistants, they have not been trained to deal with the specific disabilities of the students to which they are assigned. In addition, students are often assigned to a resource center replacement classes in which multiple subjects are taught during the same class period to numbers of students that exceed state code.

4.1g Teachers communicate regularly with families by meetings, phone calls, notes and e-mail about their children's progress.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher, support staff, parent and SLC interviews
- Principal's PowerPoint Presentation

Findings:

Teachers communicate regularly with families about their children's progress through notes, flyers, phone log, homework notebooks and positive postcards. There are also numerous opportunities for parents to participate in school functions, scheduled for various time slots to accommodate differing schedules. Classroom newsletters will become a monthly additional resource for parent information. Students are also involved in many after school and Saturday activities on-site. The school exceeds the requirements of the district policy regarding communication about student progress to foster a school culture of collaborative learning and dialogue.

Special Education - Currently there are no IEP progress report being sent to parents that would indicate the progress that students are making on their IEP goals and objectives. Some teachers are calling parents when students are not doing their homework.

4.1j Student achievement is highly valued and publicly celebrated (for example, displays of exemplary student work, assemblies).

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Classroom and hallway observations
- Student, teacher, parent, SLC and support staff interviews

Findings:

Student achievement is highly valued and publicly celebrated. At both the school and class level, multiple avenues for honoring achievement have been noted: Principal's list, honor roll, photo display, pizza party, quarterly grade level awards ceremony, auditorium programs, Treasure chest of incentives, CMCD dollars and foodbank rewards were all cited. School staff members regularly and equitably recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of students for academic success, including formal and informal recognition.

Special Education - The special education staff does value the progress of their students. Most classrooms display student work above subject area learning centers. Teachers state that progress is celebrated through rewards.

4.1k The school supports the physical, cultural and intellectual needs of all students, which reflects a commitment to equity and an appreciation of diversity.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher and support staff member interviews
- Principal's PowerPoint Presentation
- Student demonstrations
- Community involvement programs

Findings:

The school maintains a holistic approach to educating students. Numerous and varied activities support their athletic, cultural and intellectual needs. Clubs and activities offered encompass many needs and schedules. After-school and Saturday activities, and support systems are global enough to attract and meet the needs of all students. Student Leadership cadre is not based on scholarship, so often disenfranchised students are able to assume leadership responsibilities. A significant number of community involvement programs have been established to involve parents in voluntary and educational activities. Families and the community are involved in significant ways to remove barriers to learning for all students.

Special Education - Again, the special education program is offering a very exclusionary program, with a majority of students receiving their instruction in self-contained classes, and little opportunity to interact with non-disabled peers. Some special education teachers support in-class support and feel that if they could be assigned to a general education class with some of their students, they could make the necessary modifications to the academic program and could control student behavior to the point that the child could derive educational benefit from such a placement. Diversity is dealt with through segregation of the most diverse students.

STANDARD 4

COMMENDATIONS

1. The school should be commended for the variety of outreach programs available.
2. The celebration of student success is continuous, varied and pervasive.

NEXT STEPS

1. Examine, with the assistance of the Office of Language Arts Literacy, components of the Harcourt Trophies series to determine which represent higher order skill development. Focus instruction and monitoring on these challenging components.
2. Display student work that exhibits proficiency and represents work that has been edited. The school leadership (principal, vice principal and literacy coach) should review samples of student work with teacher assessments and provide feedback to teachers on the quality of the assessments and growth across time.
3. Under the guidance of the Administration, Literacy Coach and Resource Teacher Coordinators from the Office of Language Arts Literacy, examine data displayed on assessment walls. Use grade level meetings as an opportunity to be self-reflective of teaching practices. Incorporate work samples, collegial discussion and professional resources into the meeting to insure growth of professional understanding of how differentiated teaching practices impact on student achievement. Incorporate similar practices for mathematics.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Focus student leader cadre in a peer program designed to support a culture of student mutual respect and responsibility for good behavior.
2. Examine disenfranchisement of school support staff. Include their requests in budgetary considerations.
3. Increase level of supervision during lunch, at dismissal and during the after school program.
4. Institute a plan for grouping and regrouping of students to meet student needs.
5. Create an exit strategy for students exiting tutoring.
6. Update the school website and encourage teacher web pages.

Special Education –

1. CST, special education staff and general education staff should be trained together in inclusionary practices so that a full range of program options can be offered to special education students. The

CST needs to apply the required Oberti test which presumes a general education placement with supports and only deviates from that assumption within the context of that test. Currently special and general education staff have not been trained in modifications and accommodations that can be made for special education students attending general education classes and the academic and social and emotional benefits that can result for all students.

2. The use of space has to be explored so that private and confidential space can be provided to the CST for the purpose of testing and conducting conferences with parents and staff.
3. There has to be a serious attempt to remove most of the special education classes to areas in which their non-disabled peers are educated. This could be accomplished by simply moving some of the general education classes to that location and placing the special education classes in a more suitable area with general education classes.
4. A specialized reading program should be explored and adopted into the special education self contained and resource room replacement classes. Also additional supplementary materials are needed to meet the diverse needs of these learners in terms of their functional levels and their unique learning styles. Also more computers are needed if the expectation for technology integration can ever be accomplished.

STANDARD 5: STUDENT, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The school works with families and community groups to remove barriers to learning in an effort to meet the intellectual, social, career and developmental needs of students.

5.1a Families and the community are active partners with the school and district in the promotion of programs and services for all students.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Support staff member interviews
- Classroom observations
- Principal's PowerPoint Presentation
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Findings:

The school has an extensive plan to work with families and community groups to meet the intellectual, social, career and developmental needs of students. Personnel from Communities in Schools and Big Brothers/Sisters are active members of the school staff. Students are involved in numerous after-school and Saturday programs, both academic and recreational. Student leader cadre participants are not chosen based on academic performance, so students often disenfranchised are able to assume leadership roles. Parent volunteers are active. Numerous trips extend student exposure to outside cultural events. Interactive communication among home, school and community is proactive.

5.1b The school ensures that that ALL students are taught what they are expected to learn and are tested on, with specific attention to special education and English Language Learner students.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Three-year operational plan
- Teacher interviews
- Support staff member interviews
- Classroom observations
- Review of teacher end of the year reports

Findings:

English Language Learner - In some instances the scheduling interferes with scheduling in the regular classroom. There also appears to be time gaps between the time instructions starts and the actual time the students arrive at the ELL classroom.

5.1 d Students receive necessary additional assistance to support their learning in and beyond the classroom.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher and support staff interviews
- Classroom observations
- Review of teacher end of the year reports and three-year operational plan

Findings:

Multiple opportunities are provided in after school and Saturday academies. The school has the services of a Reading Recovery Teacher, Literacy Coach, two literacy tutors as well as District Language Arts and Mathematics coordinators. There are community links including SES, SCEEP, Platform Learning and a link to various universities.

Special Education - The PRC is a new committee, but has received a number of referrals already this year. It is comprised of key school staff, including the building VP, but has not participated in the valuable training provided by the state or are in possession of the equally valuable resource manual that is also provided by the state. It appears to be functioning well with the referrals that they are receiving, however approximately 90% of CST referrals have not received any PRC intervention. This is in contradiction to a major purpose of the PRC committee, i.e to provide required pre referral interventions.

The CST is providing some counseling to students, crisis intervention and some assistance in the academic program, but is very limited. The CST is inundated with initial referrals, reevaluations and annual reviews which take almost all of their time. They have had great difficulty keeping pace with required timelines, but have done admirably given the demands on this team, with no secretarial support. They have no secretarial assistance which could relieve the team of all clerical functions and provide them with more time to provide needed services in the building. In addition they lack the advantages of a computerized network IEP system which would allow teachers to directly input information for annual reviews and reevaluations.

5.1g The school supports and implements all components of NCLB school improvement – choice, SES, parent involvement.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Three-year operational plan
- Teacher, support staff interviews
- Classroom observations
- Review of teacher end of the year reports and parent sign-off forms

Findings:

The school has a variety of methods to distribute the parent involvement policies. School leadership has established procedures to identify and implement the programs. However, all teachers have not had training on student identification and program implementation.

STANDARD 5

COMMENDATION

Administration, Communities in Schools and the Parent Liason should be commended for their extensive efforts to increase family and ccommunity participation in school activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. All teachers should be further trained to be better informed as to how to identify students who may be in need of additional services.

Special Education -

1. The CST staff could also be used to train staff in inclusionary practices, although is often better served through outside consultants with follow up with internal staff.
2. The use of space has to be explored so that private and confidential space can be provided to the CST for the purpose of testing and conducting conferences with parents and staff. Also consideration should be given to providing a secretary to provide clerical services to the team and PRC chairperson. This would have the same effect as hiring additional CST members in that it would provide additional time to team members to provide direct services.
3. The PRC committee should add to their responsibilities an annual report to the professional development committee and/or principal the themes of the issues that are presented to the committee so that appropriate professional development activities can be implemented. The principal should personally outline how he sees its importance to the school and declare its use as an expectation to the staff. In addition a member of the CST should be assigned to this committee and all referrals should be required to go through the PRC before they go to the CST. Finally, it is important the PRC members participate in the state training that is provided for I&RS committees and that sufficient resource manuals are purchased for the PRC team members.

STANDARD 6 – PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

The school and district provide professional development opportunities based on an evaluation of individual and collective teacher needs.

6.1a There is evidence of a school wide professional growth plan that supports collaboration among staff and decreases isolation and fragmentation.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- District professional development plan
- Teacher interviews
- Administrator interviews
- Student Support Staff interviews
- Quarterly Report
- Sample Professional Improvement Plans (PIP)
- Three Year-Operational Plan

Findings:

Professional development (PD) planning is done on an annual basis. There is evidence that numerous opportunities for PD exist in the areas of Language Arts Literacy (Harcourt Trophies, McDougal Littell, Fountas & Pinnell, Curiosity Corner, and Reading Recovery), Mathematics (Everyday Math, Connected Math) and behavioral management for students (Consistency Management Cooperative Discipline-CMCD). Members of the staff also received Children's Literacy Institute (CLI) training.

Most staff development activities are planned by the members of the central office (e.g. Division of Teaching and Learning, Resource Teacher Coordinators), the school's Literacy Coach and point persons (e.g. CMCD managers). In addition, training has been provided through organizations such as the National Writing Project of Rutgers University. Teachers meet on a weekly basis in grade level and content area meetings.

There is very little evidence to suggest that the SLC plays a role in determining the type of PD that is established to support the core content areas. However, the sub-teams of the SLC have participated in the planning of other events and activities that support the academic and social development of students.

Staff members, parents and students interviewed believe that the school administration has created a learning community whereby all stakeholders are encouraged to be life-long learners.

Special Education – Most of the professional development that the special education population has received is that offered to all teachers about the implementation of the required school wide curriculum. The implementation of this program enjoys collaboration among staff. Special education staff does participate in grade level meetings and collaborates among themselves. There is a dire need for professional development that would result in greater integration of special education students into the general education program, where appropriate.

6.1c District-wide professional development priorities are set by aligning the goals for student performance with the evidence of achievement and with the Professional Improvement Plans (PIP) of teachers and principals.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- District professional development plan
- Teacher interviews
- Administrator interviews
- Student Support Staff interviews
- Quarterly Report
- Sample Professional Improvement Plans (PIP)
- Three Year-Operational Plan

Findings:

There is evidence that professional development offerings are based on the analysis of state and local assessments (e.g. NJASK, GEPA, LAL assessments, Mathematics assessments, SPA) and at times individual needs of personnel.

The professional development offerings are aligned to the district and school's learning goals and are reflected in the PIP of school staff and the three-year operational plan. Some of the areas that have been identified include LAL (e.g. guided reading, writing process, and differentiating instruction through use of learning centers) mathematics (e.g. use of manipulatives, open-ended questions), strategies to improve the classroom environment (e.g. CMCD), analyzing assessment data to inform and modify instruction and the use of rubrics (e.g. writing).

Special Education - PIPs activities are selected from a list of choices. A meeting is held with the administration in order to collaborate on the activities.

6.1e Professional development is high quality, frequent, tailored to teacher needs and school-based when possible.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of district professional development plan, quarterly report, sample PIPs and three-year operational plan
- Teacher, administrator, support staff interviews
- Classroom Observations

Findings:

There is evidence that professional development is offered and provided on a regular basis throughout the school year by members of the central office staff and school personnel. Members of the teaching staff receive PD from the Literacy Coach and the RTC for mathematics and LAL on a weekly and as needed basis. The district and school is providing more job-embedded PD to the staff via the use of the Literacy Coach and RTC (Math and LAL). The RTC for LAL has only begun working with the school since February of 2005 and the Literacy Coach is completing her first year in this role and is responsible for delivering services K-8.

Teachers have opportunities to reflect, discuss and process new learning through grade level and content area meetings. However, there is evidence to suggest that this time is not always used to focus on student work, modify instruction via the use of assessment results and to focus on improving instructional strategies.

There is evidence of variations in the implementation of the school curriculum/programs (e.g. LAL, mathematics, CMCD). In some instances full implementation is not apparent and follow-up is not always provided to support the introduction of new concepts and strategies.

Most professional development is provided in a group setting and on an individual basis (e.g. classroom observations, feedback and modeling – RTC and Literacy Coach). The regular use of non-traditional avenues such as, on-line PD or the use of cable television is not evident.

Special Education - All professional development is tied to the school wide curriculum

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND EVALUATION

6.2c The school leadership uses the employee evaluation and the individual professional growth plan to connect improvements in teaching practice with individual classroom goals.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Administrator and teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- Sample Professional Improvement Plans (PIP)

Findings:

In most instances, the PIP process is a collaborative process that requires both staff and administrator input/discussion. Usually, staff members complete the PIP form and meet with a member of the administration to discuss the upcoming goals. At the end of the school year, a teacher evaluation is conducted to determine progress. In addition, teachers (new) are observed several times throughout the school year. School staff also indicated that the school principal and vice-principals were visible throughout the school buildings and classrooms.

The goals that are included in the PIP are consistent with the overall district and school goals, but do not always speak to individual goals. Although individual goals are not always included in the PIP, staff stated that they are able to attend additional PD as needed.

STANDARD 6

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. School Leadership in partnership with the district should continue to provide continuous, job-embedded professional development in the areas of LAL and mathematics with an emphasis on locating and utilizing the elements of the programs that will enable students to utilize higher order thinking and problem solving strategies and incorporating technology into lessons.
2. A clear plan should be established to determine how the services of the Literacy Coach will be delivered to the various grade levels.
3. The School Leadership should examine the use of grade level and content area meetings to be certain that the efforts of these meetings include a heavy focus on instruction (e.g. the review of student work using rubrics and reviewing data to inform and modify instructional practices/strategies to support the curriculum).
4. School leadership should examine the use of CMCD to be certain that strategies are being used effectively to impact classroom management. Professional development in this area should continue in order to assist staff in minimizing distractions to instruction.
5. Provide professional development that would result in the greater integration of Special Education students into the general education program where appropriate.

Summary Findings in: EFFICIENCY (QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP, IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WHOLE SCHOOL REFORM MODEL, EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL)

7.1a There is a shared vision that is understood and ingrained in the school's culture.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Administrator, teacher and student interviews
- Student pledge recited each morning
- Classroom observations – hallways and classrooms
- Web site
- SLC agendas and minutes
- Brochures, pamphlets

Findings:

All school community groups are involved by the school leadership in various manners to collaborate, to develop and implement the school's vision and mission. The focus of meetings emphasizes the need to use the mission and vision in making decisions regarding instruction. Although the school leadership verbally distributes and promotes the vision and mission, it does not appear to be ingrained in the school culture.

7.1b All instructional staff has access to curriculum-related materials and the training necessary to use curricular and data resources that enable students to master the CCCS.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Administrator, teacher and student interviews
- Student pledge recited each morning
- Classroom observations – hallways and classrooms
- Web site
- SLC agendas and minutes
- Brochures, pamphlets

Findings:

Student performance data and other information is analyzed and disaggregated for consideration for academic programmatic decisions. The establishment of priorities for student academic performance is guided by these analyses.

The district provides the data analysis to the school. This information is then discussed by the SLC and faculty. Some staff utilize this data and other data to inform instruction. However, the evidence is limited in classroom practice (student work, groupings, improvement strategies).

7.1d The leadership team analyzes disaggregated data that are used to assist teachers to adjust their instruction and to develop PIPs.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Administrator, teacher and student interviews
- Student pledge recited each morning
- Classroom observations – hallways and classrooms
- Web site
- SLC agendas and minutes
- Brochures, pamphlets

Findings:

The data is analyzed and the intent to use it is defined in PIPs. However, it is unclear how instruction is adjusted to meet needs. Plan books do not verify any adjustments .

While the SLC reviews the data and participates in setting goals, there is not indication of their participation in the identification of curricular gaps and measures to be taken to meet the individual needs of students. There are no benchmark timelines.

7.1f Leadership ensures that time is protected to focus on curricular and instructional issues.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans, student code of conduct, district calendar and information guide
- Administrator, teacher and student interviews
- Student pledge recited each morning
- Classroom observations – hallways and classrooms
- Web site
- SLC agendas and minutes
- Brochures, pamphlets

Findings:

In general, structure and support is provided to ensure quality instruction. However, in the lower grades the timing of the breakfast program infringes on the timely initiation of instruction in the morning. It is also noted that at times classroom management strategies negate appropriate use of instructional time. Frequently classes were observed not utilizing instructional time appropriately such as not beginning on time, not focusing on instruction and ending the lesson before allotted time.

7.1g Leadership plans and allocates resources, monitors progress, provides organizational support and removes barriers to continuous school improvement.

Finding for this indicator based on:

- Teacher, administrator and SLC interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

Resources are allocated as is appropriate with regard to the vision, mission and priorities of the school. While leadership attempts to monitor progress and support modification of instructional practices, such adjustment is limited.

7.1k The principal demonstrates highest priority to academic performance, sustaining a learning environment that promotes development of teacher leaders, and efficiency of operations.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Administrator, teacher, student and SLC interviews
- Review of faculty meeting agendas, professional development documentation
- Three-year operational plan
- Classroom observations of principal on a daily basis

Findings:

The principal demonstrates high priority for academic performance through his focus on same at faculty and grade level meetings. He also visits classrooms on a daily basis and conducts formal and informal observations. It is not clear what level of feedback is given to all teachers. Teachers are encouraged to visit other sites to observe good practices. They are also supported in requests to attend workshops given within as well as outside the district.

STANDARD 7

COMMENDATION

Notice is made that Saturday, after school and evening programs have been established to address student needs. The principal regards these programs as one of his priorities and considers his presence at them to be important. It is also noted that these programs are staffed in large part by the school's teachers.

NEXT STEP

Web site needs to be updated and the mission statement needs to be inserted for the community to view.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Teachers need to be able to communicate the mission and vision statements. During faculty and grade level meetings further emphasis needs to be placed on the connection between the vision and mission statements and the implementation of instruction in the classroom.
2. Identify those classrooms where classroom management is not adequate to allow for maximum use of instructional time. Provide additional supervision, coaching and professional development in these instances.
3. Review of data with teachers as to progress of individual students to meet benchmark timelines needs to be conducted periodically throughout the school year.
4. Better use needs to be made of grade level meetings to discuss program and adjustment of strategies to modify and improve instructional practices.

STANDARD 8: The school maximizes use of all available resources to support high student and staff performance.

8.1c The instructional and non-instructional staff members are assigned to serve the learning needs of all students.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Student Support Staff interviews
- three-year operational plan
- Quarterly Report
- District Professional Development Plan

Findings:

School leadership ensures that staff assignments are made to address the specific needs of students and all staff is certified to teach in their assigned areas.

There are approximately 30 paraprofessionals and personal aides (special education) who collaborate with classroom teachers to meet the needs of students within the classroom or as determined by student IEP. The evidence suggests that the primary role of paraprofessionals and personal aides is to redirect student behavior. Some of these individuals provide assistance to students in the completion of class assignments and homework. They also serve as hall monitors throughout the school day. It does not appear that these individuals are being used in a manner that will enhance student learning. In fact, some teachers reported that they would like to see a decrease in the number of paraprofessionals and personal aides that are in the classroom (e.g. some classes could have approximately 16-18 students, a teacher and 3-4 paraprofessionals and/or personal aides).

Teachers collaborate during grade level and content area meetings. They also meet on an informal basis to discuss instructional strategies/ideas and to share resources (generally not intentional). New teachers are provided mentorship.

8.1d There is evidence that the staff makes efficient use of time to maximize learning and that the school schedule reflects instructional priorities (e.g., uninterrupted 90 minute block of literacy instruction in primary grades, classes begin on time, and classes continue until the end of the time period).

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Administrator interviews
- Student Support Staff interviews
- SLC interview
- Classroom Observations

Findings:

Although there is an expectation that instructional time will be protected, there is evidence to suggest that this is not always the case. Classroom observations revealed that lessons did not always begin or end as scheduled (e.g. students eating breakfast, teachers distracted by student behavior and students arriving to class late).

The school staff utilizes the CMCD approach to assist with classroom management. It does not appear that all staff is effectively utilizing the CMCD strategies and students are not always responsive to the use of these techniques in the classroom (e.g. hand signals, greeters, class rules).

Through the implementation of the new literacy program (Harcourt Trophies, K-5), McDougall Littell and the mathematics programs (Everyday Math and Connected Math), teachers have reported that they are able to provide more time on tasks for struggling students, whereas in the past they were unable to do this due to the implementation of a prescriptive model. Additionally, students are provided with tutorial services, after school and Saturday programs in an attempt to extend learning and provide remediation.

There is evidence to suggest that the extra-curricular programs that occur during instructional time serve as an extension of classroom instruction and reinforce student learning of various concepts (e.g. Robotics program, field trips).

8.1e Staff promotes team planning vertically and horizontally across content areas and grades that is focused on the goals, objectives and strategies in the report on instructional priorities (e.g., common planning time for content area teachers; emphasis on time on task, and integrated units).

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Administrator interviews
- Teacher interviews
- Student Support Staff interviews
- SLC interview
- Classroom Observations
- Master Schedule

Findings:

Interviews and documentation revealed that resources are made available to support teacher collaboration. All teachers are expected to attend grade level and content area meetings on a weekly basis. During these meetings teachers have the opportunity to receive PD, to discuss student work and instructional practices. However, there is evidence to suggest that these meetings are not always used in a manner which maximizes these types of efforts.

Lesson plans were generally not visible in the classrooms and there was evidence to suggest that lesson plans were not generally shared at collaborative meetings.

There was very little evidence to suggest that staff members evaluate the impact of vertical and horizontal planning on student performance.

Student work appears to be analyzed on an individual basis (by classroom teacher) and samples are not consistently shared at grade level meetings (using rubrics) to develop a consistent perspective on the quality of student work.

RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND INTEGRATION

8.2d State and federal program resources are integrated (Safe Schools, NCLB, IDEA) to address student needs.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Administrator interviews
- Student Support Staff interviews
- SLC interview
- Quarterly report
- School-based budget
- Purchase Orders
- Review of three-year operational plan

Findings:

Interviews and the review documentation revealed that funds are allocated to support the identified needs of students and school goals. The school also has several community organizations that support their goals and provide services to students (e.g. Big Brother Big Sister, Newark Police Department, Kids Corp, Drew University, Food Bank, Costco, Sister to Sister, SCEEP and First Class Gym).

STANDARD 8

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. School Leadership should ensure that instructional time is protected.
2. School leadership should continue to provide PD to all staff and teachers in classroom management and provide follow-up to ensure effective implementation.
3. School Leadership should ensure that paraprofessionals are given multiple opportunities throughout the school year to increase skills/learn additional strategies that will provide support to classroom instruction.
4. School leadership should ensure that grade level and content area meetings follow a written agenda that focuses on areas such as, the review of student work (using rubrics), writing process, and instructional strategies. Follow-up should be conducted to ensure that the results of these meetings evolve into practice.

STANDARD 9 – COMPREHENSIVE AND EFFECTIVE PLANNING:

The School Leadership Council/NCLB Planning Committee develops, implements, evaluates and adjusts its Report on Instructional Priorities/School Improvement Plan to communicate a clear purpose, direction, and limited goals focused on improving teaching and learning.

DEFINING THE SCHOOL’S VISION, MISSION, BELIEFS

9.1a There is evidence that a collaborative process that engaged the school community was used to develop the vision, beliefs, mission, and goals.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- SLC agendas and minutes
- Review of three-year operational plan
- Administration interviews
- Teacher interviews
- SLC interviews
- Perception survey

Findings:

Teachers and administrators participated in the development of the school’s vision, mission and goals. The SLC had a strong role in the process. Other stakeholders such as students, parents, and community members appear to have had a limited role.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROFILE

9.2a There is evidence that the School Leadership Council (SLC) planning process involves collecting, managing and analyzing data to annually update the comprehensive needs assessment and to develop the three-year operational plan or School Improvement Plan.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- SLC agendas and minutes
- Review of three-year operational plan
- Administration interviews
- Teacher interviews
- SLC interviews
- Perception survey

Findings:

The school leadership analyzes data for areas of strengths and limitations. However, this analysis does not transfer to implementation for improvement in the classroom. Other than the district evaluation system, there is no summary of data related to the actual school progress and strengthening the classroom practice and student performance. All strategies in the plan have been implemented but there is not data to evaluate the impact of each strategy.

ANALYZING INSTRUCTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

9.4b Data from multiple assessments are used to identify student and school goals and document strengths and limitations of instructional and organizational effectiveness.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- SLC agendas and minutes
- Review of three-year operational plan
- Administration interviews
- Teacher interviews
- SLC interviews
- Perception survey

Findings:

Goals are established from various data. However, they are focused on information regarding achievement and do not address implementation of instructional strategies in the classroom to help students close achievement gaps.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE THREE-YEAR OPERATIONAL/IMPROVEMENT PLAN

9.5a Strategies in the three-year operational plan or School Improvement Plan are aligned with student and school goals; identifies resources, timelines and persons responsible; and contains an evaluation plan that evaluates the degree to which it achieves the goals and objectives for student learning.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- SLC agendas and minutes
- Review of three-year operational plan
- Administrator, teacher and SLC interviews
- Perception survey

Findings:

Goals and objectives seem to be clearly identified. The three-year operational plan does not seem to include an intentional focus on closing achievement gaps through use of specific instructional strategies.

9.6b The principal and SLC regularly evaluate the degree to which it achieves the goals and benchmarks for student learning set by the plan.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- SLC agendas and minutes
- Review of three-year operational plan
- Administrator, teacher and SLC interviews
- Perception survey

Findings:

Attempts are made to summarize the data regarding the school's progress. Data is collected; improvement is noted in some areas, but not in all. AYP has not yet been met.

STANDARD 9

NEXT STEPS

1. Data must be used not only for information but to identify specific gaps to allow teachers to plan specific instruction and grouping to meet the needs of each student.
2. Training and continuous support should be provided by Literacy Coaches and RTCs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The school's vision, mission and goals should be a focus at public meetings held for that purpose in order to involve parents and community members more thoroughly in the process.
1. Benchmark timelines for achievement of skills need to be identified to assess progress and adjust instruction for specific remediation.
2. Specific strategies need to be identified in order to close achievement gaps.
3. While the SLC does positive work in addressing the cultural aspects of the school it needs to focus further on improvement of academic programs and delivery of instruction.

MATHEMATICS

Summary Findings in: ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE (QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION)

Summary Findings in: Academic Performance (Quality of Instruction)

STANDARD 1-CURRICULUM: The district P-12 curriculum is rigorous and aligned to state standards.

1.1b The district initiates discussions among schools regarding curriculum standards and frameworks to ensure they are clearly articulated across all levels (P-12).

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of local curriculum documents, units of study and lesson plans
- Teacher and district interviews
- Classroom observations
- Applicable section of Math Protocol

Findings:

There is some evidence that the district initiates and facilitates discussions regarding curriculum standards. New programs have most of standards built in. The districts Mathematics department has a comprehensive math calendar that encompasses the building of content knowledge and pedagogy. Teachers are required to attend full day staff development workshops. In addition teachers have opportunity to attend summer workshops and weekend workshops. There seems to be no direct links between schools other than meetings at District workshops.

1.1e The curriculum requires all students to take courses with sufficient academic rigor to prepare for college preparatory courses and pass the HSPA, and provides specific links to life and career options.

Finding for this indicator based on:

- District and teacher interviews
- School and Community Perception Survey
- Applicable section of Math Protocol

Findings:

Math assignments in Everyday Math sometimes contain segments that are real-life related. Connected Math assignments usually contain this real-life related piece. The school does have a Career Day once a year. In interviews with the school social workers, they informed us of their discussing career goals and options with the kids. However, this seemed to be few and far between. Courses do have academic rigor as a goal but, they do not seem to be used in that manner.

1.1f The district works with supervisors and faculty to systematically monitor, evaluate and adjust the curriculum based on the evidence of student achievement.

Finding for this indicator based on:

- Review of the three-year operational plan
- Review of the SLC manual
- Review NJASK3 and 4 Assessment Results
- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- Applicable section of Math Protocol

Findings:

The findings point to partially implemented district and school process that include professional development days and grade level/cluster meetings in school to address curriculum issues. A five year curriculum review cycle is in place for evaluation, reviewing and monitoring the curriculum.

Curriculum review does take place as evidenced by the implementation of the new Math program in the building. The district monitors curriculum implementation through school visitations.

1.1g The curriculum provides access to a common academic core for all students including, but not limited to, special education and ESL students.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Intensive Early Literacy Report and Plan
- LAL and math local curriculum documents, units of study and lesson plans
- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- Applicable section of Math Protocol

Findings:

Although a curriculum committee exists in the school it's role in the school is not specified and it's impact is not obvious. Evidence points to a strong effort to accommodate the learning needs of all students through a variety of in-house programs and activities that include both in school and after school programs. The program supports expectations for high academic performance and provides the opportunity for all students to access a curriculum that is aligned with NJCCCS standards.

Lessons do not seem to reflect completion of grade level curriculum which prepares the student for the upcoming grade level. The lack of rigor in lessons lends itself to this unpreparedness. The school does accommodate special education students and has one to one aides with some children to help them access the academic core.

STANDARD 1 - MATHEMATICS

NEXT STEPS

1. Have the building math teachers, as well as district coaches, with strong skills in writing rubrics, using manipulatives and facilitating group work conduct peer training sessions to address these skills.
2. Identify model teachers and initiate inter-school visitations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The central focus of math lessons should be concept, not process or fact.
2. Someone with pedagogical strengths in math should be selected as a facilitator to act as a coach to model the “math as concept” approach.
3. Use technology so teachers can track performance on the ASK3, ASK4, pre-GEPA and monthly assessments, both individually and aggregated by classroom. This data should be used to identify priorities in the current curriculum and modify the next year’s planned curriculum. Cluster analysis should be done for each of these assessments.
4. There needs to be implementation of a curriculum committee to oversee and regulate content and make adjustments where needed. The curriculum committee members need necessary training to make specific suggestions to adjust curriculum and curriculum delivery.

STANDARD 2 -CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION: The district and school use multiple evaluation and assessment strategies to continuously monitor and modify instruction to meet student needs and support proficient student work.

2.1a Assessments created by teachers, school and district are frequent, rigorous, aligned with NJ CCCS, used to gauge student learning and adjust teaching to individual needs.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Local curriculum documents and units of study
- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- Applicable section of Math Protocol

Findings:

Assessment seems to be given on a regular basis and are aligned only so far as the program books are. There is not enough rigor in the teacher designed assessments in most cases. Teacher designed assessments seem to be used infrequently and many do not seem to be familiar with multiple assessment strategies and tools. There seems to be a lack of monitoring and adjustment. Though school leadership implements procedures to ensure that classroom assessments are frequent they are not consistently used to ensure continuous student progress.

2.1b Teachers collaborate to design authentic classroom assessments aligned with the CCCS.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Local curriculum documents and units of study
- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- Applicable section of Math Protocol

Findings:

There is little evidence teachers collaborate in the design of authentic assessment tasks. There is a new Math program throughout the grades (Everyday Math in the lower grades and Connected Math in the middle grades) and there is a great reliance upon the built-in assessments in the programs themselves. Many of the teachers are still busy learning the programs.

Lack of teacher made assessments that require students to use inquiry, problem solving and higher order critical thinking skills.

District personnel have stated that authentic assessments have been shown to teachers, but they have not been implemented. Grade level common planning meetings occur, but they lack evidence of outcomes.

2.1c Students can articulate the academic expectations in each class and know what is required to be proficient. Academic expectations are clearly communicated, evident in classrooms and observable in student work.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher and student interviews
- Classroom observations
- Applicable section of Math Protocol

Findings:

There are rubrics posted in most rooms, although they are the standard ones. Some teachers did state in interviews that they have made and used student created rubrics. There was no observable evidence of the this. There was no evidence of teacher created rubrics. Student interviews showed an understanding of what is necessary for proficiency, but many had only a sketchy understanding. Some students had low expeditations and stated that their teachers shared that feeling of low expectations.

2.1d Test scores are used by the district and school to identify curriculum gaps.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher and district interviews
- Classroom observations
- Applicable section of Math Protocol

Findings:

There seems to be more done on a district wide basis with the usage of test scores to identify curriculum gaps than a school wide effort. There seems to be too little analysis and what is stated as a need does not seem to bring about the modification of curriculum, instruction and assessment practices to meet that need.

2.1e Multiple assessments are designed and used to gauge student learning and to adjust teaching to meet individual student needs.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher and district interviews
- Classroom observations
- Applicable section of Math Protocol

Findings:

In some cases multiple assessments were used to provide meaningful feedback on student learning. Most assessments seemed to be used at a lower level and do not always address different learning styles or modalities. This was shown to be inconsistent across grade levels. Many of the teachers seemed not to understand multiple assessments or their value in the classroom.

2.1h Samples of student assessments are shared among teachers and analyzed to inform instruction and to revise curriculum and pedagogy.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- District interviews
- Classroom observations
- Applicable section of Math Protocol

Findings:

There was little evidence of student assessments shared among teachers to be analyzed to inform instruction and to revise curriculum. Student work is occasionally analyzed, but results are inconsistently used to guide teaching and learning.

STANDARD 2 - MATHEMATICS

NEXT STEP

Building professional development providers should model specific strategies to analyze student work and adjust instructional strategies to be used to meet achievement needs. Teachers in the analysis of student work so that assessment can drive instruction. School leadership should support the professional development providers to insure implementation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A variety of rigorous and authentic assessments should be used to measure student progress. Teachers should use the data gathered from these assessments to reflect on their own teaching practices.
2. Leadership and teachers need to identify and communicate high academic expectations more rigorously. Increase visitations to high performing schools as well as high performing classes within the building with a focus on identifying successful instructional strategies.
3. Students should have frequent and ongoing opportunities to self evaluate and reflect on their learning. In addition it is advisable for students to do peer evaluation of their work, especially open ended problems.
4. Teachers should collaborate more frequently, purposely and effectively at all grade levels in designing authentic assessment activities, open response items and scoring guides.
5. Teachers should develop rubrics on their own as well as with students.

STANDARD 3 -INSTRUCTION: Instruction engages all students by using effective, varied and research-based practices to improve academic performance.

3.1a There is evidence that effective and varied instructional strategies are used in all classrooms.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- District interviews
- Classroom observations
- Applicable section of Math Protocol

Findings:

The school's math curriculum is designed to provide effective and varied instructional strategies. Some classes demonstrated evidence of having such strategies in place, however the majority of teachers relied on teacher-directed whole class instruction. Some teachers indicated they felt uncomfortable moving away from text-based instruction. In many classes, students were not academically engaged, as lessons did not begin on time, ended before the class period ended or were not following the posted schedule. During student and teacher interviews it was indicated that alternate instructional strategies were utilized but during observations these were rarely seen. Classroom activities occasionally required students to use higher-order thinking or problem solving.

3.1b Instructional strategies and learning activities are aligned with the district, school and state goals and assessments.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Teacher interviews
- District interviews
- Classroom observations
- Applicable section of Math Protocol

Findings:

Approved assessments, linked to instructional strategies and learning activities aligned with district, school and state goals and assessments are listed in the quarterly report, but the suggested plan of action is not specific enough to address these goals. Although a few teachers mentioned specific areas of demonstrated need on which they focused instruction, other teachers said they were not sure how to use assessment data to close the achievement gap. Math alignment is solely based on published material. Although district personnel have provided professional development in aligning curriculum to student needs state and local goals and assessments, teachers did not implement this knowledge. Some learning activities require students to complete assessment tasks similar to those on the state assessments.

3.1c Instructional strategies and activities are continuously monitored and aligned with individual student needs.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Teacher interviews
- District school administrator interviews
- Classroom observations
- Applicable section of Math Protocol

Findings:

Instructional strategies and activities are not continuously monitored and aligned with individual student needs. Upper grade teachers reported homogeneous grouping and whole class instruction using the leveled materials with the whole class, rather than differentiating materials to meet varying needs. A checklist included in teacher planbooks is checked off by administrators although little corroborating evidence was gained in classroom visitations. Observed mathematics instruction took on a whole class approach. Teachers are not using formal or informal assessment data to modify their instructional practice. Instructional strategies and activities do not accommodate the learning needs or variety of learning styles of students.

3.1d Teachers demonstrate the content knowledge necessary to challenge and motivate students to high levels of learning.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- District interviews
- Classroom observations
- Applicable section of Math Protocol

Findings:

There is evidence that the school, district and outside sources provide professional development activities and coaching in “best practices.” Professional Development Logs detail modeled lessons, coaching and follow up visits. All teachers are not prepared to teach the required content material. Teachers participate in professional development, but the professional development does not always address content knowledge and current professional practices.

3.1e There is evidence that teachers incorporate technology in their classrooms.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- District interviews
- Classroom observations
- Applicable section of Math Protocol

Findings:

Interviews suggest that teachers incorporate technology in their classrooms and some computer generated material was displayed in classes and in hallways. However, although teachers and administrators described a process for using technology daily, many classrooms had computers turned off or broken. Students varied in their report of technology availability and few students were observed using computers in classroom visits. Some classes visit the technology lab weekly. School leadership has a technology policy or procedure

3.1f The district and school ensure that instructional resources are sufficient and that all instructional materials are aligned to the curriculum.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- District interviews
- Classroom observations
- Applicable section of Math Protocol

Findings:

The district and school ensure that instructional resources are sufficient and that all instructional materials are aligned to the curriculum. Classrooms had an abundance of materials on display. Everyone interviewed reported that materials were available to them upon request of the administration or the School Leadership Council. Instructional resources are sufficient in all content areas to support the school's implemented curriculum.

3.1g Teachers examine and discuss student work collaboratively and use this information to inform their practice.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- Applicable section of Math Protocol

Findings:

Teachers frequently cited opportunities to meet collaboratively to discuss student progress, however, there is little evidence that student work samples are actually brought to the discussions. Some teachers said they did not know how to use the information they received from the assessments to bridge the achievement gap, although the professional development log cites such work being done at grade level and/or vertical planning meetings. Some teachers have received training in protocols for analyzing student work in some content areas and grade levels, but the protocols are not always implemented.

Training that may address analysis of student work is optional. District documentation of professional development lacks detailing of the content of possible/offered trainings, and only lists that particular math programs will be addressed/taught – such as Everyday Math. Most teachers expressed the opportunity to occasionally and without regularity meet/confer with colleagues regarding their classes. They were not specific about whether addressing student work is a part of this dialogue.

3.1h There is evidence that homework is frequent, evaluated and tied to instructional practice.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Review of SLC notes
- Teacher interviews
- SLC interviews
- Classroom observations
- Student interviews
- Applicable section of Math Protocol

Findings:

Homework does not extend student learning. Homework is frequent, however, most assignments are worksheets from practice workbooks, worksheets and program. The principal presented a homework policy with recommended number of minutes per grade level. Students and teachers did not agree on the amount of time spent doing homework. Teachers and students reported that varying percentages of students complete the assignments. Some teachers have a policy for positive and negative consequences regarding homework. However, expectations for completion of work are limited.

STANDARD 3-MATHEMATICS

COMMENDATIONS

1. Teaching staff, parents and students were overwhelmingly complimentary to the administration's dedication and efforts.
2. The abundance of supplies and materials in the building to implement programs is commendable.

NEXT STEPS

1. Review schedules to insure classes are conforming to district 's grade appropriate math mandates, regarding time blocks.
2. Hold teachers accountable for the transfer of theory from professional development sessions into practice.
3. Limit display of worksheets and test results. Work samples that reflect ongoing products or projects should be submitted or made available for administrative review on a continuing basis.
4. Limit classroom displays to products that reflect ongoing student work with specific teacher recommendations for improvement as opposed to commercial products and worksheets.
5. Seek assessment guidance from the Office of Mathematics to review which assessments have been recommended for Everyday Mathematics program in grades K-5 and Connected Mathematics in grades 6-8. Limit formal assessments to those assessments that give the most informative data, align to state assessments and do not take large amounts of time away from instruction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Address classroom management issues so they do not continue to adversely impact on instruction.
2. Continue in-class support, including demonstration lessons and interclass visitations. Institute regular opportunities for teachers to visit exemplary teachers identified in collaboration with the district Resource Teacher Coordinators and school administration.
3. Math portfolios should be kept current and reflect growth across time.
4. Administrators should actively monitor planning and classroom instruction. Daily classroom visits should be participatory events that allow administration to evaluate the in-depth coverage of subject matter and the active participation of students in differentiated groupings focused on specific needs identified in the Principal's Quarterly Report.
5. Examine computer logs to determine how much time students actually spend on researching and producing products on the computer and address discrepancies.
6. Homework should be an extension of classroom instruction. It should be rigorous and challenging. High expectations for completion should be present.
7. There needs to be strong emphasis on conceptual learning rather than fact based. A hands-on exploratory approach needs to be seen a great deal more.

STATUS REPORT OF INTENSIVE EARLY LITERACY PLAN

Part 1: DATA ANALYSIS

	ACTION STEP	PROGRESS REPORT
1	All school level administrators will be trained by the district in the use of disaggregated data to improve student performance.	Training is on-going at Superintendent’s meetings, SLT meetings, and at summer sessions for principals to introduce Implementation Guidelines and analyze data.

Parts 2 and 3: COMPREHENSIVE READING PROGRAM AND STRUCTURES

	ACTION STEP	PROGRESS REPORT
1	During the LAL block, the school should evenly implement the following instructional strategies: small group instruction, direct instruction, attention to the individual child’s motivation and background knowledge, and other scientifically based reading research strategies and techniques including, but not limited to, guided reading and shared reading per N.J.A.C.6A.10A-3.2.6.	District guidance has been articulated via policy documents in Implementation Guidelines. Implementation Guidelines policy has been shared with principals, administrators, and teachers at workshops, Superintendent’s meetings, SLT meetings. Though part of the literacy block, differentiated instruction was not evident in classrooms.
2	The school should have teachers align instructional tasks to appropriate grade level NJ CCCS.	Curriculum is aligned and noted in planbooks. The core literacy program is aligned to the NJCCCS. All teachers have literacy guides aligned to the NJCCCS.
3	The school should establish a language-rich environment in each classroom as in N.J.A.C.6A.10A-3.2.7ii.	There is evidence of teachers having been trained in CLI. Classroom libraries are evident. Materials are provided for Writer’s Workshop. There is a need for the posting of more current authentic student work.
4	In order to facilitate the school’s implementation of the district’s writing curriculum, the school should continue to schedule time outside of the 90 minute block for the purposes of supporting writer workshops per N.J.A.C.6A.10A-3.2.4.iii. A ‘wrap-around’ technique, in which the writing block is contiguous to the reading block, is recommended. The reading block should be preceded, daily, by a shared reading activity that is linked, thematically to the writing block.	Teacher schedules reflect the ninety minute block. However, not all classes reflected adherence to posted schedule. Within that block there is a need for greater differentiation of instruction. The reading block needs to be preceded every day by a shared reading activity that is thematically linked to the writing block.

Part 4: ASSESSMENT

	ACTION STEP	PROGRESS REPORT
1	The Observational Survey will be used to screen reading in grades kindergarten through three as per N.J.A.C.6A.10A-3.2.c.5.iii.	Observational survey tracks student progress over time; there is a need to better utilize data gathered to differentiate student instruction.
2	Running reading records, observational survey and other instruments per N.J.A.C.6A-3.25.vi will be used as incremental assessments.	Observational surveys and interim assesments are delineated in the district’s Assessment Manual, and are also available on the district’s e-board. Incremental assessments need to be analyzed to differentiate student instruction.
3	Appropriate assessments will be used to measure literacy levels for ELLs and students with disabilities.	Leveled assessments instructionally appropriate and adapted for specific populations are utilized. More effective data analysis would better integrate the various student population groups.

Part 5: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

	ACTION STEP	PROGRESS REPORT
1	The school should continue to provide regular opportunities for teachers to discuss and analyze student work, intermediate progress measures, and assessment results and plan any modification in grouping and/or instruction that may be indicated per N.J.A.C.6A.10A-3.2.10.	Grade level meetings and district staff development days provide regular opportunities to discuss and analyze student work. Results of analysis need to be better utilized to inform instruction through vertical and horizontal grade level meetings focused on writing samples and reading responses .
2	The school should continue to use a scientifically based reading research program.	Harcourt core program fully adopted with all ancillaries in Grades K-5, together with Fountas and Pinnell Firsthand Phonics. McDougal Littell program with all ancillaries has been fully adopted in Grades 6-8. Additional professional development experiences are needed to insure full implementation.
3	Schools should continue to provide professional development and technical assistance regarding the selected scientifically-based researched program.	The district provides on-going staff development and coaching opportunities to insure implementation of the core reading program. The literacy coach in this school needs to assist teachers to a greater degree in order to provide for expanded implementation.
4	The school should ensure that all K-3 teachers are trained to implement the district’s writing program.	The district has provided staff development, coaching, and materials, including “Units of Study for Primary Writing.” Study groups would ensure expanded implementation of the writing program.

IN CONCLUSION

Members of the CAPA review team express their appreciation to the staff and community of Peshine Avenue University Prep for their gracious welcome and for their open interaction with us during our visit. We encourage the school community to review this report in depth, asking themselves deep reflective questions about the findings of fact and recommendations for action.

We also encourage school leadership to lead long-term reflections on the following:

1. What would the school look like if every child in it was proficient in all areas? How would it be different than Peshine Avenue University Prep today?
2. How can the school staff and students move to predicting student achievement through a comprehensive analytical instructional process?
3. How can the school take ownership of the results of the CAPA review to lead our school to proficiency?
4. What will assist teachers in moving from teacher directed, whole-class instruction to other models of teaching more suitable for meeting the needs of all students?
5. How can the school make good use of data to drive continuous improvement?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

District	Newark Public Schools		
School	Peshine Avenue University Prep		
Principal Name – Years in Building	Ivan Holmes – 9 years		
Grade Levels	PreK – 8		
Number of Teachers meeting NCLB HQT	54		
Number of Teachers with Emergency Certification	5		
Total Number of Classrooms	43		
Percent Special Education	12.2%		
Number – Self Contained Classrooms	6		
Percent Bilingual	7.4%		
Number of Bilingual Classrooms	1		
Number of Students	2004 - 865	2005 - 836	
School Leadership Council (SLC) or Title I Planning Committee (PC) Meets Monthly	Yes		
SLC or Title I PC has complete representation	Yes		
Intensive Early Literacy Visit and Complete Plan	Visit Date:	Completed Plan: 3/17/04	
Percent Parent Involvement	40%		
Whole School Reform (WSR) Model	District's Model		
Status of WSR Contract	NA		
Corrective Action Plan – Persistently Dangerous “Warning”	None		
Most Current Number of Students reading at grade level in 3 rd and 4 th grades.	3 rd - 25%	4 th 27.9%	Test: DRA & ASK3