

Hickory Public Schools District Improvement Plan

Draft

Revised 12/10/07

Evidence of Need:

Low test scores in reading and math among various subgroups indicate a need to look at both curriculum alignment and instructional practice. The data collected from the 2006-2007 classroom walkthroughs indicate needs in instructional practice:

- Classroom Walkthrough data show that only one of nine research based strategies was seen in over 62% percent of the classrooms and 37% of questions were higher order thinking skills according to Bloom's Revised Taxonomy of Thinking Skills. Additionally in only 13% of classrooms were students highly engaged.
- In grades 3- 8 reading the achievement gap between white and minority students ranges up to 16.8 percentage points, and there is a 33.2 percentage point gap between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers.
- In grades 3-8 math the achievement gap between white and minority students ranges up to 34.7 percentage points, and there is 24.8 percentage point gap between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers.
- The achievement gap between white and minority students on EOC tests ranges up to 50.2 percentage points, and there is 31.8 percentage point gap between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers.

During the 2007-2008 school year, additional data will be collected in regard to curriculum alignment and pacing.

Measurable District Goal 1:

Current data show that instructional practices do not meet the needs of all students. To address this concern the system will implement research based strategies targeting diverse learners. By the end of 2007-2008, instructional practice will be improved by:

- Increasing the total percentage of students' activities in the areas of analysis, synthesis and evaluation from 37% to 60% as measured by Teachscape Classroom Walkthrough observations.
- Increasing the percentage of highly engaged classrooms from 13% to 40% of Teachscape Classroom Walkthrough observations.
- Increasing classroom implementation of the nine research based instructional practices (CITW) as evidenced by a 30% increase in all strategies over the 2006-2007 classroom walkthrough (CWT) data.

North Carolina 21st Century Goal(s)/Indicators Addressed:

Globally Competitive Students

Evidence-based Improvement Strategies:

Marzano Research Based Strategies (Identifying Similarities and Differences, Summarizing and Notetaking, Reinforcing Effort and Providing Feedback, Homework and Practice, Representing Knowledge, Cooperative Learning, Setting Objectives and Providing Feedback, Generating and Testing Hypothesis, and Cues, Questions and Advanced Organizers)

Integration of Higher Order Thinking Skills

Actively Engage Students in Instruction based on the Rubric for Teachscape Classroom Walkthrough

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Tasks/Action Steps <i>What Will Be Done?</i>	Responsibilities <i>Who Will Do It?</i>	Resources <i>(Funding/Time/People/Materials)</i>	Timeline <i>By When? (Day/Month)</i>
<p>1.1 Train principals, administrators and Administrative Services Instructional Support Team (ASIST) on Teachscape</p> <p>1.2 Load software on PDA devices.</p> <p>1.3 Provide training on PDA usage.</p> <p>1.4 Set up schedule of walkthroughs, calendar of observations,</p> <p>1.5 Implement classroom walkthroughs</p> <p>1.6 Provide quarterly reports to schools.</p> <p>1.7 Analyze and discuss quarterly reports at principals' meeting.</p> <p>2.1 Communicate district focus on instructional strategies to teachers.</p> <p>2.2 Provide further training and discussion on 3 key indicators (Marzano's Research Based Strategies, Integration of HOTS, and Highly Engaged Students).</p> <p>2.3 Provide modeling, coaching and support for teachers in 3 key indicators.</p> <p>2.4 Observe implementation by conducting classroom walkthroughs</p>	<p>1.1 Ann Stalnaker, Tim Sims and Toni Massey/ Teachscape</p> <p>1.2 Technology Team</p> <p>1.3 ASIST/Toni Massey</p> <p>1.4 Tim Sims, ASIST list observations on calendar</p> <p>1.5 ASIST, Principals, Assistant Principals,</p> <p>1.6 Ann Stalnaker and Toni Massey</p> <p>1.7 ASIST</p> <p>2.1 ASIST</p> <p>2.2 ASIST</p> <p>2.3 ASIST</p> <p>2.4 ASIST and school administrators</p>	<p>1.1 Title I LEA Improvement Funds, Teachscape</p> <p>1.2 PDAs, Software, Technology</p> <p>Team opportunity to implement</p> <p>1.3 Toni Massey</p> <p>1.4 Shared calendar</p> <p>1.5 PDAs, 1 hour a week, ASIST</p> <p>1.6 Classroom Walkthrough software on web</p> <p>1.7 Classroom Walkthrough software on web</p> <p>2.1 CWT instrument, Marzano's classroom instruction that works, ASIST Team members, time at faculty meetings</p> <p>2.2 CWT instrument, Marzano's classroom instruction that works, ASIST Team members, time at faculty meetings, principals, Title I and II funding for staff development</p> <p>2.3 principals, instructional coaches,</p>	<p>1.1 January 2, 2008</p> <p>1.2 November 30, 2007</p> <p>1.3 January 2, 2008</p> <p>1.4 November 14 and ongoing</p> <p>1.5 November 14 and ongoing</p> <p>1.6 January, March and June Principals' Meetings</p> <p>1.7 January, March and June Principals' Meetings</p> <p>2.1 December 2007</p> <p>2.2 August- February 2008</p> <p>2.3 February – May 2008</p>

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Implications For Professional Development

Provide Teachscape Training and technology support for use of the PDAs.
Offer Marzano's Research Based Strategies
Review Classroom Walkthrough Training with Teachers.
Model and coaching in strategies to engage students.
ASIST supporting teachers through ongoing coaching sessions.

Implications For Parent and Community Involvement

Possible information sharing with Parents and community meetings
Share quarterly analysis of implementation with the HPS Advisory Council.

Evidence Of Successful Implementation (*How will you know that you are **making progress**? What are your **benchmarks**?*)

Teachscape training completed by the beginning of January and a roster of participants. Software loaded to PDAs by the end of November.
Walkthrough schedule completed and online shared calendar completed after walkthroughs. Quarterly reports discussed at principals' meeting each in January, March and June. In quarterly analysis meetings, report findings in relation to the 3 key indicators. Indicate if we are on target to reach goals.

Collecting sign-in sheets for coaching sessions. Feedback forms and/or SEA evaluation on coaching sessions or professional development activities.

Evidence of Outcomes/Evaluation (*How will you determine that **your goal has been reached**? What are your **measures**?*)

Teachscape data demonstrates increases in engagement, research based strategy implementation and use of higher level thinking skills.

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Evidence of Need:

Research indicates that issues of equity for students include not only how they perform, but also their access to and representation in various programs (i.e. Exceptional Children and Academically and Intellectually Gifted). To improve the outcomes for minority children we want to examine access and performance.

- Current data show a disproportionate representation of African Americans identified as BED and EMD as evidenced by the NC Risk Ratio (risk ratio of 5.73 for BED and 4.82 for EMD). Additionally, African American students are underrepresented in AG services.

In addressing the needs of diverse learners, most schools included goals for direct and systematic vocabulary instruction. In an effort to support the schools and as a research based strategy for improving outcomes and access, HPS will provide support and coordination for improving vocabulary instruction.

Measurable District Goal 2:

Current data show that we do not have equitable outcomes for all student subpopulations. To address this concern HPS will implement programs and provide support and professional development to reduce disproportionality in the EC and AIG programs. As a result in grades 3-8, the risk ratio for minority students identified as BED and EMD will be reduced to a risk factor of less than 3; there will be a 30% increase in minority student representation in AG programs.

North Carolina 21st Century Goal(s)/Indicators Addressed:

NC public school students will be globally competitive.

Evidence-based Improvement Strategies: The district will support equitable outcomes for minority students by providing a district-wide K-2 Nurturing Program, improved Student Study Team (SST) Procedures for all schools, support and professional development related to building student background knowledge and vocabulary.

K-2 Nurturing -- cited as recognized model for increasing minority student representation in AG programs (JAVITS grant) and as a means of reducing disproportionality

SST Procedures—effective SST procedures are required as a means of reducing disproportionality.

Building Background Knowledge—Research based program by Robert Marzano for developing vocabulary and background knowledge.

Direct and systematic *vocabulary instruction* has been cited by McRel and Learning Points Associates as an effective means to improve performance among minority students

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Tasks/Action Steps <i>What Will Be Done?</i>	Responsibilities <i>Who Will Do It?</i>	Resources <i>(Funding/Time/People/Materials)</i>	Timeline <i>By When? (Day/Month)</i>
<p>1.1 Create outline of K-2 nurturing plan</p> <p>1.2 Disseminate and discuss plan with principals</p> <p>1.3 Provide orientation for teachers on the K-2 nurturing plan</p> <p>1.4 Conduct training for Building Better Thinking Skills for K-2 teachers</p> <p>1.5 K-2 teachers will implement Building Better Thinking Skills Curriculum</p> <p>1.6 Model, coach, and support additional instructional strategies to teachers</p>	<p>1.1 Lorane Rohr and Christine Lange</p> <p>1.2 ASIST</p> <p>1.3 Lorane Rohr, Christine Lange, and ASIST</p> <p>1.4 Sandra Parks facilitated by Lorane Rohr and Christine Lange</p> <p>1.5 K-2 teachers</p> <p>1.6 Christine Lange</p>	<p>1.1 - 1.6 Margaret Gayle, Sandra Parks, Building Better Thinking Skills Curriculum (1.4 - 1.5), Christine Lange (1.5)</p>	<p>1.1 September 2007</p> <p>1.2 October 2007</p> <p>1.3 October 2007</p> <p>1.4 December 2007</p> <p>1.5 January-June 2008</p> <p>1.6 December 07-June 2008</p>
<p>2.1 Support School implementation of SST</p> <p>2.2 Monitor individual referrals to SST before evaluation</p> <p>2.3 Compile EC report (e.g. hit rates, demographics of placements, etc.)</p>	<p>2.1 ASIST</p> <p>2.2 ASIST</p> <p>2.3 Lorane Rohr, Amanda Byrd, Brian Smith</p>	<p>2.1 - 2.3 Revised SST procedures, SST referral folders, ASIST, probes, research based intervention manuals</p>	<p>2.1-2.2 Ongoing monitoring as students are referred-</p> <p>2.3 May 2008</p>
<p>3.1. Building Background Knowledge—Locate research based resources for dissemination in the district.</p> <p>3.2 Provide staff development to principals and teachers</p>	<p>3.1-3.2 Instructional Coaches</p>	<p>3.1-3.2 Instructional Coaches, Bobbi Siefert, Kindra Filson, Sheltered Instruction Materials, Presentation, Copies of materials, Lesson plans forms,</p>	<p>3.1 January 2008</p> <p>3.2 January through May 2008</p>
<p>4.1 Identify research based</p>	<p>4.1- 4.3 Instructional Coaches</p>	<p>4.1-4.3 Instructional Coaches, research based resources, Building</p>	<p>4.1 January 2008</p> <p>4.2-4.3 January through May 2008</p>

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<p>resources for direct and systematic instruction of content area vocabulary.</p> <p>4.2 Provide staff development to principals and teachers</p> <p>4.3 Work with school staff to identify and create content area vocabulary to be taught.</p>		<p>Better Thinking Skills curriculum, Sheltered Instruction instructional materials, Marzano’s classroom instruction that works</p>	
<p>Implications For Professional Development Provide training and review sessions on K-2 Nurturing, Building Better Thinking Skills, and SST procedures.</p>			
<p>Implications For Parent and Community Involvement Parent and Community Partner attendance at various meetings SST and Drop Out Implementation Team.</p>			
<p>Evidence Of Successful Implementation (<i>How will you know that you are making progress? What are your benchmarks?</i>)</p> <p>1- Completed K-2 Nurturing Plan, Feedback from training sessions, Evidence from classroom walkthroughs, Coaching plans, lesson plans, feedback from the teachers, evidence presented in ASIST team meetings</p> <p>2- SST procedures manual, feedback from review sessions, questions and follow-up from SST members, audit documents</p> <p>3- Resources, Attendance at training, Feedback at training, from classroom walkthroughs, Coaching plans, lesson plans</p>			
<p>Evidence of Outcomes/Evaluation (<i>How will you determine that your goal has been reached? What are your measures?</i>)</p> <p>1- Increased proficiency on K-2 assessments, Decreased achievement gap, Decrease in disproportionality, Increase in minority identification as AIG</p> <p>2- Appropriate referrals for EC testing</p>			

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<p>Evidence of Need: There is no data to indicate the level or effectiveness of support services being provided to underperforming students. Since the state mandated implementation of PEPs (Personalized Education Plans) as one part of the accountability policy, HPS has not systematically reviewed, monitored or evaluated their effectiveness. In addition, there has been no district-wide evaluation of the remediation programs tied to the PEPs in the nine schools. To ensure that remediation funds are spent wisely and that students are supported effectively, study of these programs is warranted. This will be a two year process. The first year we will research the support systems, menu of options and format of PEPs. The second year, the study will continue to evaluate the programs provided for remediation. HPS will undergo a two-year study to identify what support is provided to at-risk students and evaluate the quality of services provided to them. Research questions we will attempt to answer are: 1) Is there a need to improve implementation of PEPs in the schools?; 2) Are policies and support services in place for students at-risk of dropping out?; and 3) Are quality programs provided to underperforming students? We will attempt to answer the first two questions during the 07-08 school year and will continue with the third question in 08-09.</p>			
<p>Measurable District Goal 3: We lack data to support the effectiveness of our interventions for underperforming student subpopulations. To address this concern, HPS will conduct a study on support services provided to at-risk students.</p>			
<p>North Carolina 21st Century Goal(s)/Indicators Addressed: Globally Competitive Students and Safe and Healthy Students</p>			
<p>Evidence-based Improvement Strategies: NC requires PEPs be developed for students performing below grade level as an accepted means of improving performance. Both NCLB and NC allocate monies to be used for remediation services to at-risk students as an accepted means of improving performance. The continuous improvement cycle necessitates on-going evaluation of programs and processes.</p>			
<p>Tasks/Action Steps <i>What Will Be Done?</i> 1.1 Identify six students in each of the nine schools to act as a lens through which to view student support programs 1.2 Monitor and evaluate support services provided to these students throughout the year (PEPs, remediation services, outside resources such as DHR, Teen Up) 1.3 Meet monthly to discuss program evaluation notes. 2.1 Reconvene the district wide Drop Out Task Force</p>	<p>Responsibilities <i>Who Will Do It?</i> 1.1-1.3 ASIST 2.1 Ann Stalnaker 2.2 Drop Out Task Force</p>	<p>Resources <i>(Funding/Time/People/Materials)</i> 1.1 -1.3 ASIST Team, Student Rosters, PEPs, Remediation plans, access to student performance data 2.1 Teachers, Administrators, Community Members, Students</p>	<p>Timeline <i>By When? (Day/Month)</i> 1.1 December 2007 1.2 January through May 2008 1.3 January through May 2008 2.1 January 2008 2.2 February 2008 and bi-monthly</p>

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<p>2.2 Review attendance policies and procedures. Conduct ongoing evaluation as recommended by 2006- 2007 Drop Out Report</p> <p>2.3 Work with the Drop Out Task Force to interview students at risk of dropping out to learn more about support services provided to them</p>	<p>2.3 Ann Stalnaker, Drop Out Task Force, Guidance Counselors</p>	<p>2.2 Attendance policies and procedures, current research on attendance, Drop Out Task Force Report</p> <p>2.3 Interview Protocol from DPI,</p>	<p>thereafter February through May 2008</p>
<p>Implications For Professional Development Instructional coaches will research best instructional practices for remediation and student support via PEPs and provide training for administrators and teachers regarding creation and implementation of PEPs.</p>			
<p>Implications For Parent and Community Involvement Community participation on the Drop-Out Task Force</p>			
<p>Evidence Of Successful Implementation (<i>How will you know that you are making progress? What are your benchmarks?</i>)</p> <p>1-- list of students, notes on support services provided, evaluation of PEPs, evaluation of remediation services</p> <p>2--membership roster of Drop Out Task force, minutes of meetings, revised attendance policy and procedures, completed student interview protocols</p> <p>3—training materials on best practices associated with meeting student needs through the PEP process</p>			
<p>Evidence of Outcomes/Evaluation (<i>How will you determine that your goal has been reached? What are your measures?</i>)</p> <p>Completed Report of Program Evaluation (completed and disseminated to stakeholders)</p>			

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<p>Evidence of Need: Brown University conducted an organizational assessment of HPS and recommended that the district review and update policies and procedures for aligning district goals, School Improvement Plans, professional development offerings, and teacher Individual Growth Plans.</p>			
<p>Measurable District Goal 4: Based on an organizational assessment, there is a need for clear procedures and processes for school and district needs assessment and planning. In conjunction with the Education Alliance, Hickory Public Schools will develop a framework, procedures, and guiding document to ensure effective, ongoing and research-based improvement. By January 1, 2007, each of Hickory's schools will develop a quality improvement plan for the 2007-2008 school year.</p>			
<p>North Carolina 21st Century Goal(s)/Indicators Addressed: Leadership will guide innovation in NC public schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School professionals will collaborate with national and international partners to discover innovative transformational strategies that will facilitate change, remove barriers for 21st Century learning, and understand global connections. • School leaders will create a culture that embraces change and promotes dynamic continuous improvement. • Educational professionals will make decisions in collaboration with parents, students, businesses, education institutions, and faith-based and other community and civic organizations to impact student success. 			
<p>Evidence-based Improvement Strategies: Collaboration with National Partner to develop and create templates, terminology, rubrics, trainings and tools to guide the district and schools in the process.</p>			
<p>Tasks/Action Steps <i>What Will Be Done?</i></p>	<p>Responsibilities <i>Who Will Do It?</i></p>	<p>Resources <i>(Funding/Time/People/Materials)</i></p>	<p>Timeline <i>By When? (Day/Month)</i></p>
<p>1. Develop SI plan template & exemplars</p>	<p>1. Directors, Superintendent, Education Alliance</p>	<p>1. Planning time, materials supplied by Education Alliance, State and District initiatives</p>	<p>1. Summer 2007</p>
<p>2. Provide two or three one-day workshops on: SI planning, needs assessment, implementation & evaluation</p>	<p>2. Education Alliance</p>	<p>2. District Data, planning time, materials supplied by Education Alliance, State and District initiatives</p>	<p>2. September 2007/ Future TBA</p>
<p>3. Provide training on data analysis</p>	<p>3. ASIST</p>	<p>3. Data, simulation, Title I LEA Improvement Funds, Principal's Meeting, 1/2 Day Staff Development</p>	<p>3. October 2007</p>
<p>4. Develop formal review process for SI plans and provide formal feedback as a district team</p>	<p>4. Education Alliance, Directors, Superintendent</p>	<p>4. Time</p>	<p>4. November 2007 / Quarterly</p>

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<p>5. Train and support SI teams in facilitative leadership & effective teaming.</p> <p>6. Provide ongoing support for SI planning, data analysis, implementation, and evaluation of SI plans via principal meetings, networking meetings, etc.</p> <p>7. Develop SI guidance notebook</p>	<p>5. Dr. Martha Hill</p> <p>6. Education Alliance, ASIST, Superintendent, SI Teams, Administrators</p> <p>7. Education Alliance, ASIST, Superintendent, SI Teams, Administrators</p>	<p>5. Time, critical friends strategies</p> <p>6. Data, Current SI plans, SI Teams, Administrators, Education Alliance, ASIST</p> <p>7. Time, created materials, developed materials and tools, collaboration</p>	<p>5. January 2008</p> <p>6. Ongoing</p> <p>7. May 2008</p>
<p>Implications For Professional Development: Provide professional development to administrative team and school leadership teams on needs assessment, data analysis, and school improvement planning. Identify processes or programs needed to implement effective school improvement planning (i.e. Critical Friends). Continue to collaborate with the Education Alliance to deepen common understanding of quality school improvement plans. Provide opportunities for collaboration and networking</p>			
<p>Implications For Parent and Community Involvement: Parents and community members have an opportunity to serve on each school's improvement team. HPS Advisory Committee will provide input into the district level plan, and the Hickory Public Schools Board of Education will review and approve all plans.</p>			
<p>Evidence Of Successful Implementation (<i>How will you know that you are making progress? What are your benchmarks?</i>)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Current templates and exemplars exist. 2. The drafts of school improvement plans provide evidence that schools have used the training materials (i.e. Tools) to develop their plans. 3. Principals and School Improvement Team members will provide feedback on the effectiveness of the data analysis training. School improvement plans will exhibit evidence of deeper analysis. 4. A formal written process for reviewing school improvement plans will be developed and included in the guidance notebook. Initial plans will be reviewed based on rubrics developed with the guidance of Education Alliance, and each school will receive feedback on the plan. 5. Collect rosters from training on facilitative leadership and effective teaming. Minutes from School Leadership Team Meetings, departmental/grade-level meetings, and faculty meetings will provide evidence of implementation of "Critical Friends" strategies. 6. Quarterly meetings to review progress on SI plans will be documented on each school's as well as the district's template. 7. The notebook is disseminated to all schools. 			
<p>Evidence of Outcomes/Evaluation (<i>How will you determine that your goal has been reached? What are your measures?</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Effective and ongoing SI planning and implementation occurs within each school. This process is guided by the Continuous Improvement Framework. SI teams and teachers are involved and share responsibility for SI. ▪ Sustainable School Improvement supported by the District leads to better outcomes for students. 			

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