

# SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT MID-YEAR REFLECTION 2019

**Directions for School Leadership Team:** As part of the February School Improvement Training we will engage in collaborative conversation and share best practices based on each school's Mid Year School Improvement Reflections. After input from the leadership team, each school is asked to bring this completed form to the training.

## **1. Has your school made progress towards achieving the goal?**

- A. *How do the structures and systems in place at your school ensure all facets of the school culture create predictable environments and a school climate that supports your SIP goal?*
- B. *What are the gaps that exist between your current state and your desired state?*
- C. *How will you address them between now and the end of this school year?*

- a) Our SIP goal is that teachers will implement high-quality strategies aligned to the Florida Standards with fidelity, so that student engagement and proficiency will increase in all content areas. However, this cannot happen if students are not in class. The number of suspensions and absences must decrease and rigorous teaching/learning must be occurring. Suspensions continue to be curbed due to guidance group interventions, visibility of administration, TAB (Think About Behavior) program, support staff behavior intervention visits, and teachers working together and supporting each other within the grades. Students' absences decreased from August 2016- to present, as compared to the same time frame for the 2015-2016 school year. BSA scores, I- Ready Diagnostic (intermediate) and BAS scores (primary) show that student achievement is improving as evidenced by data provided to administration by classroom teachers. Teachers, as well as the leadership team, keep track of attendances and tardies, in addition to academic student mastery and compare growth to previous assessments. These all support the SIP and show a positive trend for Walker Elementary. Our school is a Magnet school, and teachers continuously receive professional development in Performing Arts as a means to keep students engaged in school through Arts integration.
- b) As significant as our improvement has been since the beginning of the year, there are still gaps in academics, behavior, and attendance. Walker Elementary has implemented a free after school tutoring program for all students in grades 3-5, where currently 198 students are enrolled and are served by 20 teachers, thus providing a small student to teacher ratio. There is also an after school tutoring program called Firewall that focuses on 4<sup>th</sup> grade writing instruction; and a 21<sup>st</sup> Century program that provides after school project-based learning in grades K-5. However, administration and teachers are aware that while closing these gaps will take time, following the procedures that are in place will inevitably take the school to its desired state.
- c) Regarding attendance, teachers contact parents regarding excessively tardy or absent students. For those students where the issue seems chronic, the social worker is contacted for additional follow up. Regarding academics, teachers are working rigorously on closing the academic gaps that exist with assistance from support staff that provide additional support during an Intensive Hour, as Walker Elementary is an Extended Day school. Teachers use data to drive small group instruction within the Intensive Hour to strengthen students' skills in reading and in math.

## **2. Have alterable barriers been eliminated or reduced? (Alterable barriers are in-house infrastructure mechanisms such as scheduling, class structures, teacher attendance, student attendance, staff development plan, etc.)**

- A. *What evidence do you see that a barrier has been reduced or eliminated?*
- B. *What evidence do you have that the barriers are wide-reaching and will help you achieve your goal?*
- C. *If progress towards eliminating the barrier is not sufficient, where or what is the breakdown?*
- D. *Did you identify other barriers that could serve as effective re-entry points into the plan?*

- a) There are several alterable barriers that exist at Walker Elementary. For this school year, teacher attendance has not been an issue, and staff development opportunities have been widely available. The school has been offering parents opportunities for parental involvement through Family Nights such as Literacy Night, Science Night and Title 1 Parent Nights. While alterable barriers still exist, they are being

addressed. Student attendance and tardies, as well as student behavior, are being targeted, and academics remain a top priority.

- b) Administration, as well as our TAB (Think About Behavior) Behavior Technician, keep daily, consistent communication with students and families. The behavior technician feeds into the classes and addresses potential issues with the students in an effort to lower the number of students leaving the classroom for misbehavior and going into the TAB room. Visits from administration and support staff, as well as alert teachers, keep behavior under control as much as possible. These strategies are in place from Kindergarten to 5<sup>th</sup> grade, and as the students become more familiar with the new strategies in place, the goal of increased rigorous learning will inevitably be achieved.
- c) The school's challenge is student attendance and tardies, as well as academics. Teachers continue to follow the procedures in place to ensure students' parents are contacted to encourage attendance and arriving at school on time while using rigor when teaching the Florida Standards.
- d) Walker continues to educate parents through Title 1 Parent Literacy/Math Nights and Family Nights, which have contributed to an increase in academic gains. The school has also put into place strategies to improve tardies and absences, which the teachers follow up on daily. Teachers are also given vertical common planning time to address any issues within their grades. All of these are potential barriers. Title 1 Parent Literacy/Math Nights have proven to be successful in educating our parents.

### **3. Are your strategies being implemented with fidelity?**

*A. Were decisions to continue, intensify, modify, or terminate strategies or action steps based on specific evidence?*

Our school uses a variety of strategies to address the various barriers we face and to allow our school to meet its goal of implementing high-quality literacy strategies. The following are a few strategies being implemented:

The Cafeteria Incentive Program rewards positive behavior in the cafeteria on a monthly basis.

Student of the Week by the administration on Closed Circuit television recognizes students demonstrating character, thus addressing positive behavior.

The new BCPS Mindfulness program is implemented as a school-wide plan to increase positive behavior, increase character, and meet the social-emotional needs of students.

School-Wide Behavior Initiative in which students earn "Gold Coins" for following directions while transitioning in the hallways and in between classes.

Student of the Month program recognizes a student from each class that has demonstrated superior character traits all month long.

The Performing Arts Hour/Performing Arts Magnet Program decreases behavior issues, encourages school attendance and promotes parent and community involvement (for instance band performances are well attended by the community).

Camp Wildcat after school tutoring program addresses academic achievement.

The "Attendance Superstars" program rewards the top class per grade level that has the highest amount of students attending school each month, encouraging students to come to school each day.

Our "Walker Bucks" program rewards students for attending school, for positive behavior, and for striving for academic excellence by allowing our students to "shop" at our "School Toy Store", which is comprised of donations from Walker staff and donations from other schools.

These programs are all being implemented with fidelity, and as a Turnaround School, we continue to study our data, make necessary changes and monitor proficiency and mastery. All data indicates that our student achievement in all academic areas is improving due to the aforementioned programs.

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### **4. What are your benchmarks for success?**

*A. How will you progress towards your goal impact student achievement?*

*B. What is your desired state?*

*C. What gaps exist between your current state and your desired state?*

- a) All programs (for example, the aforementioned Camp Wildcat, Cafeteria Incentive Program, TAB, Walker Bucks, extended day, etc.) being used at Walker Elementary are being implemented daily, and this is how Walker Elementary plans on maintaining and increasing student achievement in all areas of academics, increasing

attendance and decreasing behavior issues. All staff and students are aware of the expectations set to positively impact our school.

b) Our desired state is to engage in high-quality literacy strategies leading to an increased academic performance in all students that attend Walker Elementary. This will be achieved by reducing suspensions, increasing positive behavior, and improving daily attendance. This is being done through a variety of aforementioned strategies including, but not limited to, intensive hour instruction during the school day, tutoring programs at the end of the school day, use of additional technology, and behavior support.

c) The gaps in student behavior are decreasing, as the student learns Walker Elementary Expectations. Teachers are working hard at increasing student mastery. We are confident that our aforementioned desired results will be accomplished, and our goal of ensuring that every student will show more than a year's growth in a year's time.

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