



SESSION 3 REPORT – SCHOOL PLAN GUIDE REVIEW

NAME OF SCHOOL: 24TH STREET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

DATE OF SESSION 3: 11/27/2012

NAME OF ORGANIZATION REPORTING: *Building Skills Partnership*

NAME OF INDIVIDUAL REPORTING IN BEHALF OF THE ORGANIZATION: JUAN CARLOS VENEGAS

DATE THIS REPORT IS COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED: 11/28/2012

REVIEWING YOUR EDUCATION, YOUR OPTIONS

The participants were divided into small working groups. Each group was given the task to review the School Plan Guide submitted by the 24th Street Elementary School's planning team. The participants in the focus groups went over the proposed plan with the guidance of a staff member of the PSC team. The focus groups looked over the school plan to see if it met their expectations in the following areas:

- 1) Student Vision
- 2) School Vision
- 3) School Performance: Where is the School Now?
- 4) School Priorities

The following is the captured feedback, questions, and comments the session participants provided as they reviewed each area of the School Plan Guide.

Area One: Student Vision

During the small group discussion, and based on the amount of written feedback provided, session participants questioned the plan in regards to students that are not proficient or who are already behind. The following is the written feedback:

1. Will Common Core State Standards be implemented?
2. What is the plan for students that are already behind? How will these students be helped?
3. A vision should be clear and effectively communicated without the use of jargon about what the student will know and be able to do.
4. Everyone at the school should readily understand what the vision is that they are working towards.
5. What does the plan offer to kids that are not proficient?
6. What's in the plan for low performing students because the African American students are the lowest and English learners?

The participants also shared the following verbal and written feedback about the student vision and the need for students to have the adequate resources and programs in place for them to succeed at every level of their education:



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1. Parents want successful, disciplined, motivated, and confident students who are proficient readers, writers, and problem solving who are ready for middle school.
2. Students need to have the academic abilities to be able to go and succeed at any school.
3. There needs to be more TAs or have fewer students in the grades K-4, so that the students can pay better attention to the teacher.
4. What is in the plan to motivate the students to do better?
5. Will there be an incentive in the plan for students that are not proficient, so that we can motivate and inspire them to improve and go to a University.
6. How do we know if the school will really get better? All they do is talk, talk, and talk.

Area Two: School Vision

Session participants discussed in small groups and through written feedback the importance of a positive school environment, including school and student safety. The following is the written feedback provided on *school environment*:

1. We want a school that is safe and clean and a school that meets its expectations.
2. We want a safe and clean school with high expectation, high proficiency rates, and we don't want substitute teachers. We want teachers that are highly qualified and who are eager to teach and share their knowledge with our children.
3. We need a school with discipline and that is safe.
4. We need a school that breeds confidence and high expectations and one that is clean and safe.

Session participants also expressed an interest in having a stronger leadership to increase student outcomes and to ensure that things will actually come to fruition during this phase of proposed change. The following is the written feedback provided on *school leadership and parent/school partnerships*:

1. What will be done about the school's issues, because to this day, nothing much has been done, and if it's the same people leading the plan, how will they get the things done that they say they are?
2. We need strong leadership with consistent communication between school, teachers, and administration.
3. The administration needs to change and we need more capable teachers because the students need good leaders.
4. We need great leaders and leadership to carry out any vision.
5. We need our school to be cordial and attentive to the needs of the children and the parents.
6. The students are scared of the Principal.
7. African American parents don't always feel welcome at the meetings and they usually can't take off from work during the morning to attend meetings.
8. How will this plan be implemented if nothing has happened in the past and it's the same people that are leading this plan?
9. How will the plan be executed if it's the same people that have failed to create change over the years?



Additional comments/questions:

1. We need a solution to our problems.
2. What do you mean by protected by the teachers?
3. There are no discussions of high expectations for students.
4. We need teachers who are effective, caring, and respectful of parents and kids.
5. The school needs to make Universities more apparent around the school so that it can inspire teachers and students.
6. The vision does not include teachers or administrators it only discusses parents and students.

Area Three: School Performance: Where is the School Now?

During the small group discussion and based on the amount of written feedback provided, session participants discussed the importance of continuing to improve the proficiency rates and the need to have a clean campus. The following is the written feedback provided by the participants:

1. The school has many areas of improvement to consider.
2. There needs to be more intervention to create better prepared students.
3. English learners need more help.
4. African American students are the lowest performing group and need support and additional resources.
5. My question is regarding how you will address the needs of each subgroup of students is not answered. Simply focusing intervention resources in K-2 is not enough to address all subgroup needs.
6. The school is bad academically and dirty.
7. The school performance is bad.
8. We need a lot of changes in the bathroom and cafeteria.
9. We need to improve the cafeteria, the playground, the bathrooms and water fountains.
10. The school performance is way too low academically, and needs upgrades in the cafeteria and change within the office staff.
11. How will the plan help students in grade 3-5 and English learners?
12. The school is way too low academically and it's not safe.
13. How will we be assured that this plan will be actually implemented and that progress will occur?

Additional comments:

14. The children at 24th street do not feel protected. What does the plan propose so that the children will feel protected and stop fearing the Principal? The plan does not explain how this will be addressed so that the kids will want to attend this school.
15. Students need to be motivated to go to college.
16. The school is not being managed well and the school office staff does not have a good attitude.
17. The kids are being suspended too often for any small reason.



18. What disciplinary plan will there be aside from sitting a whole class of students with a specialized instructor just because one child is misbehaving?

Area Four: School Priorities

During the small group discussion, and based on written feedback provided, session participants discussed and questioned the effectiveness of the plan, the need for strong, leadership, and the areas that the new plan should focus on. The following is the written feedback provided:

1. How will the plan implement high expectations?
2. We want a capable leader.
3. Children are being suspended for any insignificant reasons.
4. What is the API goal for the school?
5. Who will make sure that the goals of this plan are followed through?
6. How will the responsibilities of the teachers and school staff be raised?
7. How can we evaluate and read the complete 25 page plan online that has not been given to us in Spanish? We were given a very brief summary and this not an effective way to evaluate this kind of plan.
8. They do not let us ask questions repeatedly and they just tell us that everything is in the plan; however, we haven't read the full plan online.
9. The school needs to continue to create a positive environment where everyone feels supported and leadership is formed at the parent, teacher, and administration level working in harmony.
10. The priorities that should be addressed are:
 - a. Strong leadership.
 - b. Effective teachers that motivate students to learn.
 - c. Safe and clean school.
 - d. A culture of high expectations.
11. The current administration is not capable of implementing the new plan and there needs to be a change.
12. We need to motivate students more to be on time and punctual with their deadlines and so that they participate in more activities.
13. The school needs to implement a discipline plan that is more comprehensive than the one that's currently in place.
14. We need an incentive program so that our students are motivated to go to college and obtain a degree.
15. We need teachers to be trained to current teaching methods and pedagogies.
16. We need more TAs to help our students.

Session 3 Report – Dialogues with Planning Teams

The 24th Street Elementary Planning Team engaged the participants in a presentation and dialogue about the proposed plans. This section is divided into two parts covering the dialogue: 1) The Planning Team Presentation, and the 2) Questions and answers portion of the session.

Part One: Planning Team Presentation

Mr. Whang and several other teachers and Ms. Saiki represented the Planning Team. Mr. Whang provided session participants with a quick summary of all four sections of their plan. The School Plan Guide was available in English and Spanish. Mr. Whang went over the strategies using a PowerPoint presentation and the “Tree of Hope” to demonstrate areas of the plan.

Consistent, quality first instruction will be used with the Common Core State Standards.

1. Increased responsibility for personnel through Teaching and Learning Framework, clearly defining ways to hold each other accountable through the School Leadership Framework and fostering an inclusive decision making process.
2. Develop “socially responsible” students through a school-wide positive behavior support (PBS) system.

In addition, Mr. Whang showed the participants how the plan is going to look different:

1. Flexible Planning – 80% of plan
 - a. Making sure that students are learning
2. Vertical Planning Teams
 - a. Make sure kids are ready for the next level
 - b. Instructional experts
3. Weekly Data Analysis to Guide Instruction
4. Relevant and Differentiated Professional Development
 - a. Teachers
 - b. Students
 - i. Parent conferences led by the student
5. Parent inclusion
 - a. Parent Committees
6. Allocate more resources to K-2
 - a. They need more time, help, and resources

Mr. Whang wanted to make sure to let the participants know that “this is not a plan for individuals (teachers, staff, etc...); this is a plan for the school that meets the needs of the students, parents, and community.”



Part Two: Questions and Answers

The following were questions directed to the team after sharing the presentation:

Question 1: What kind of intervention will there be for the kids that are behind in reading?

Answer: Once the issue is identified, the student will then be put on a plan of action and the appropriate resources allocated to that individual.

Follow up: How many resources will be invested?

Answer: As many resources as necessary that are needed to make sure the issues are determined and then corrected.

Question 2: How will growth be measured?

Answer: There will be exams that we will use to measure growth. Also, weekly and periodic assessments will be conducted as well under vertical planning.

Follow up: Do you currently use DIEBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills)? If so, will you continue to use this assessment method?

Answer: Yes. It is used in the grades K-2 and in other cases as well.

Follow up: How effective is it, in terms of moving kids up to the next level?

Answer: If used appropriately (two week interval), it does show growth/improvement.

Question 3: How are children going to be motivated to pursue higher education (college and university)?

Answer: We believe that everyone can go to college. However, by focusing on K-2, which is the foundation for college and by working with parents, this will help motivate all of our students to go to college. Also, by having assemblies and college pride days by allowing the students to wear universities' hats and t-shirts, we will make kids aware of the many options out there.

Follow up: Yes, this is fine, but we want kids to be motivated to learn and to want to go to college... This will not happen if kids are beginning to get exposed at the 4th and 5th grade levels and higher. This needs to happen at the earlier stages. As the culture is right now, kids are not even going to graduate from high school.

Question 4: My daughter who is in the 4th grade currently is behind the other kids and they keep telling us that these changes won't occur until next year... I want to know what will be done to help her now.

Answer: When we say next year we mean the next calendar year as in January. We will begin to implement these changes at the beginning of the next calendar year.

Clarification (PSC Staff): Although the team may begin to implement parts of the plan now, the overall plan is to be implemented in the 2013-14 school year.

Question 5: Why is it that there are some teachers that lack leadership and that are also not very effective?

Answer: We plan to support those teachers and help them with their professional development and ensure that they are meeting the needs of students and parents. We will ensure that teacher effectively communicate with parents and understand their needs. Also, we want to involve parents in the everyday procedures and workings of the school.



Question 6: Is the principal included in the plan?

Answer: I want to make sure that everyone understands that this is neither the principal's plan nor mine (Mr. Whang)... This plan has been written for the school. The principal is not writing the plan – the team comprised of faculty and staff and parents are writing the plan.

Question 7: How do you plan to help English Learners (EL) if there are no teaching standards at any level?

Answer: There is a standard and parents need to be involved more so that they can see the process and how the curriculum is applied.

Answer: There is state curriculum that helps EL students. EL instruction includes the Excel Test and comprehensive curriculum that focusses on the development of listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills. There is a 60 minute block that addresses and focuses on this. Also, each student has an EL portfolio that is shared with the students' parents as well as the expectations for the student and of the EL program.

Question 8: What are the 4 priorities of the plan?

Answer: There were initially four priorities, but now we have downsized to three and they are illustrated in the plan summary (Mr. Whang shows the participants where it is).

Follow up: The plan should focus on the school's leadership. The kids need training so that they can succeed in the classroom. We also want a clean school!

Clarification by PSC Staff: Many of your concerns are being addressed in the complete plan for the school, which is the 25 page document that we have here today. The one that was passed out was just a summary.

Question 9: What is the incentive for students to want to progress and pursue a college degree? If the root of the plan isn't right, then how will the fruits grow? The teachers need to be trained to be able to prepare and motivate our students.

Answer: If you look at the first page of the plan, teacher development will be addressed according to the specific needs of teachers. For example, a first grade teacher has different needs as a fifth grade teacher because the students have different development needs as do EL students versus our African American students and the special education students.

Follow up: How will teachers be brought up to date and to current and effective teaching methods?

District Staff Intervention: The plan will take care of all of this. These are very specific question and we are here to take questions regarding the plan.

Participant Comment: Every time we come to these meetings and we have questions, we are told that we are out of time and that everything is in the plan! We are here for our children and not just here to collect a salary like some of you. Some of you have been already or will be paid to be here, and if we have questions, then they should be answered, regardless of time!

District Staff Answer: The PSC staff is not here to answer your questions or concerns that are personal and so specific; they are here to push along the PSC process. The team of teachers will be here for you to speak with after the meeting and you may also make an appointment to speak with the school staff.



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Follow up: Maybe if the full plan was available in Spanish, then we could look through it and see the answers for ourselves. The presenters keep referring to the plan... It does not make sense that the plan is not available here today for us in Spanish.

Answer (Mr. Whang): This meeting is intended for a specific purpose and specific/personal questions are welcomed after this meeting and at any other time. Others and I will stay after this meeting to address those questions and concerns. Please feel free to come to my classroom to talk with me during non-meeting hours.



Session 3 Report – Participant Feedback Form Responses

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK FORM NARRATIVE & RESPONSES

The set of feedback forms was aggregated and written comments/feedback were clustered under themes if appropriate. There were a total of 16 forms collected.

1. Student Vision	Does Not Meets My Expectations	Partially Meets My Expectations	Meets My Expectations	Exceeds My Expectations
The writing team identified the skills and knowledge that students will gain to be prepared for the next level of learning.	11	5	0	0
The writing team has clearly identified what students will know, understand, and be able to do when they leave this school.	11	3	1	0
TOTALS PER COLUMN	22	8	1	0

The main theme from the written feedback collected was about the school leadership.

School Leadership

1. The Principal is not here. As the “leader” of this school, she needs to be here supporting the teachers.
2. Why isn’t the Principal here to support the teachers? The Principal does not even act as if she is the Principal... That’s why the school is the way it is, because there is a lack of leadership at this school.
3. We want to see results in regards to what is being proposed.
4. My question is why wasn’t the Principal of the school present tonight? Why doesn’t the Principal support the teachers that are presenting the plan?

Other

5. A vision should be clear and effectively communicate without the use of jargon; what the vision of the student is. Everyone at the school should really understand the vision because that is what everyone is working towards.
6. Why is it until now that you (the school) have a plan and only one plan?

2. School Vision	Does Not Meets My Expectations	Partially Meets My Expectations	Meets My Expectations	Exceeds My Expectations
The writing team has identified what the school culture will feel like for parents and students.	12	3	0	0
The writing team has identified what the school must do to make sure that all students are successful and prepared to go to the next school level and beyond.	11	3	0	0
TOTALS PER COLUMN	23	6	0	0



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The few comments for this section revolved around the leadership at the school.

1. The vision does not include what the teachers and administrators will do to ensure the school vision is carried out. There is no clear discussion of high expectations. We need great leaders and leadership to carry out any vision.
2. I don't think a plan in which the Principal is not a part of will work.
3. We want to be assured by that the very same people in this room will secure the plan.

3. Student Performance: Where is the School Now?	Does Not Meets My Expectations	Partially Meets My Expectations	Meets My Expectations	Exceeds My Expectations
The writing team identified areas within the school's performance that highlight areas of strength.	10	5	0	1
The writing team identified areas of concern where growth is needed.	9	5	1	0
The writing team demonstrated a thorough analysis of data to address the needs of all student groups.	11	5	0	0
TOTALS PER COLUMN	30	15	1	1

The written feedback from participants was the following:

1. The questions regarding how the needs of each subgroup of students will be addressed is not answered. Simply focusing intervention resources in K-2 is not enough to address the needs of all subgroups.

4. School Turnaround: School Plan Priorities	Does Not Meets My Expectations	Partially Meets My Expectations	Meets My Expectations	Exceeds My Expectations
The writing team identified the top priorities for the school to improve student achievement.	9	6	0	1
The writing team clearly demonstrated that they know where the school is now and what needs to be done to get to the school of the future where all students are high achievers.	8	8	0	0
The writing team identified various strategies that will be used to ensure the success of students.	11	5	0	0
The writing team identified support that is needed for their faculty and staff to turnaround the school.	11	5	0	0
TOTALS PER COLUMN	39	24	0	1



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The written feedback from participants was the following:

1. The priorities to be addressed at 24th Street Elementary are strong leadership from the Principal and teachers to implement the plan. All teachers need to be effective from day one to improve such a lower performing school. A safe and clean school where parents concerns are taken into consideration. Implementing a culture of high expectations.
2. The full plan was not presented in Spanish, so how was it possible to get any feedback and/or opinions?
3. The full plan was not available/presented in Spanish and this is ridiculous. They ask for questions and comments when this was just presented to us. We were only given a week to look at this.