

World's Best Workforce Summary Report

Naytahwaush Community Charter School

2014-2015 School Year



Child-Centered...Community-Based...Ojibwe Culture and Language...Service Learning

Introduction

Mission

Naytahwaush Community Charter School Mission Statement

The Naytahwaush Community Charter School is a child-centered environment where learning is relevant and respects the traditions and wisdom of community, family and self.

Vision

Naytahwaush Community Charter School Vision Statement

The Naytahwaush Community Charter School is a place where children are respected as individuals, as community members with a rich cultural heritage. NCCS will appreciate the wide resources available by using them to enhance curriculum through experiential and service learning activities. NCCS will promote the whole child through challenging academics, community involvement and fostering healthy life choices.

Introduction

The Naytahwaush Community Charter School, after ten and a half years of operation, maintains steady student enrollment figures, high student attendance rates, increased supplemental support to students and high teacher retention rates. We are thankful for the support of our community.

Many of our five year olds start kindergarten without the necessary preparation for success. In spite of the adverse situations some of our students face in their lives, we are determined to find ways to help them overcome great challenges and experience academic success.

Our community school has grown from serving 78 students to 117 students. Without any efforts in recruiting we have reached, if not exceeded, our building capacity.

In the summer of 2012 we were designated by the Minnesota Department of Education as a Priority school for our low MMR rating. We applied for and were granted a federal School Improvement Grant. As a result we implemented a number of successful strategies that helped us increase our math and reading proficiency scores by more than 10% (a 15.5% increase in math and an 11.9% increase in reading).

Due to our significant academic gains, we became eligible for Celebration School status. We applied for and were awarded the honor in December 2013.

Our staff has tripled in size since we opened our doors in the fall of 2005 and our staff retention rate remains steady at over 90%. This is an important factor where building relationships with students and families requires trust and longevity. It is also important in staff development, team building and investment of resources.

Student Enrollment and Attendance

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
2008-09	25	12	15	8	12	6	8	86
2009-10	19	24	13	15	9	13	8	101
2010-11	17	19	27	15	17	9	14	118
2011-2012	25	15	21	24	13	19	8	125
2012-2013	18	18	14	19	20	12	15	116
2013-2014	18	15	16	14	15	17	10	105
2014-2015	27	14	14	17	11	18	16	117
2015-2016 est	18	24	14	12	10	6	17	101

The Naytahwaush Community Charter School is located in a remote village in northwest Minnesota on the White Earth Indian Reservation. We are rural, small and have a high rate of poverty with 95% of our students receiving free and reduced meals. 100% of our students are Native American and 24% of our students receive special education services. Our enrollment for the 2014-2015 school year was 117 and our attendance rate was 92.37%.

Two other schools on the reservation share our demographics: Pine Point (a public school) and Circle of Life (a Bureau of Indian Affairs school). Ogema, Waubun and Mahnomen (other public schools) on the reservation serve both native and non-native students. Mahnomen, the district in which our school is located, serves 78% Native American students, 77% free and reduced meals and 20% special education students. They had a 90% attendance rate in 2014-2015.

We are approaching maximum capacity so we are not recruiting students from neighboring communities, although a few of our students do come from the city of Mahnomen. We receive inquiries from families in neighboring towns who would like to send their children if transportation was available. The White Earth Reservation Transit is able to pick some students up in Mahnomen, Waubun and White Earth.

School Management and Administration

School Leader Qualifications and Professional Development Plan

Terri Anderson, is a licensed principal and superintendent in the state of Minnesota.

School Leader Review

The board evaluates the executive director during March of every year. The evaluation instrument used is based on specific job expectations, responsibilities and goals. The board chair shares the results with the director prior to the board meeting. The entire board then reviews the results with the director. The director creates a plan to address areas that need improvement.

Staffing

Name	File Folder Number	Assignment/ Subject	Left During 14/15	Not Returning 15/16
Emily Justin	464716	Special Education		X
Lesley Miller	402072	First Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Becky Estey	282430	Fourth Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Elizabeth Sarff	436117	Third Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brent Miller	388187	Sixth Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kayla Schimanksi	452929	Kindergarten	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jody Bettin	433388	2 nd Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gayle Gish	270346	Reading Specialist/Coach	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crystal Littlewolf	452659	Ojibwe Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guy Schermerhorn	401661	Special Education	X	X
Christine Sakrismo	469305	Special Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Veronica Weaver	414332	5th Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ty Nelson	443745	Academic Interventionist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Teacher Performance Review

Teachers received three formal evaluations by the Director and a mini-observation every week by the Director.

General Employee Performance Review

All staff were evaluated annually by the Director using Team Member Targets for Excellence that indicate if employees Do Not Meet, Partially Meet, Meet or Exceed specific performance targets.

District Advisory Committee

The District Advisory Committee met every month during the school year. Members included parents (Mary Tibbetts, Kim Bjerk, Katy Snetsinger, Carla Tibbetts, Karen Wadena, Judy Gonzales, Miss Keezer, Sharon Porter), teachers/staff with students at our school (Curt Uran, Jen Doerfler, Brett Tibbetts, Guy Schermerhorn, Crystal Littlewolf), our school counselor (Amber Blue), our assessment coordinator (Kent Estey), school board members (Liz Lenoir, McKenzie Wark) and our director (Terri Anderson).

Annual Public Meeting was March 26, 2015

Academic Performance Goals

Math Proficiency

The percentage of all students enrolled Oct 1 in grades 3-6 at the Naytahwaush Community Charter School who earn achievement levels of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all math state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will increase from 42.3% in 2014 to 50.3% in 2015 (increase of 8 percentage points each year). **Goal not met**

Reading Proficiency

The percentage of all students enrolled Oct 1 in grades 3-6 at the Naytahwaush Community Charter School who earn achievement levels of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all reading state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will increase from 41.3% in 2014 to 49.3% in 2015 (increase of 8 percentage points each year). **Goal not met**

Science Proficiency

The percentage of all students enrolled Oct 1 in grades 3-6 at the Naytahwaush Community Charter School who earn achievement levels of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all science state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will increase from 20.7% in 2014 to 24.7% in 2015 (increase of 4 percentage points each year). **Goal met**

Reading Growth

The average growth score on the state reading accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) for all students enrolled the full academic year and taking the same test in consecutive testing years in grades 3-6 at NCCS will increase from 0.4284 in 2014 to 0.4334 in 2015 (increase of 0.005). **Goal not met**

Math Growth

The average growth score on the state reading accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) for all students enrolled the full academic year and taking the same test in consecutive testing years in grades 3-6 at NCCS will increase from 0.0552 in 2014 to 0.1552 in 2015 (increase of 0.005). **Goal not met**

Results:

1. During the 2013-2014 school year, NCCS was named a Celebration School by the Minnesota Department of Education when we increased our MMR in one year from 4% to 56%. Since then we have not had the same kinds of gains, although we remain committed to staying the course and expect to gain steady momentum in growth.
2. We did not make our 8% increase goal in math and reading. We did make our science goal. With so much catching up to do, we know we need to target high growth every year for all of our students.

Percent Meeting or Exceeding on MCAII Reading, Not Including MTAS. 2014-2015 School Year

	<u># of Students Tested</u>	<u>Percent Meeting</u>	<u>Percent Exceeding</u>
Grade 3	16	12.5%	0%
Grade 4	10	10%	0%
Grade 5	14	36%	14%
Grade 6	15	20%	7%
Grade 7			
Grade 8			
Grade 11			

Overall	55	18%	.05%
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Percent Meeting or Exceeding on MCAII Math, Not Including MTAS. 2014-2015 School Year

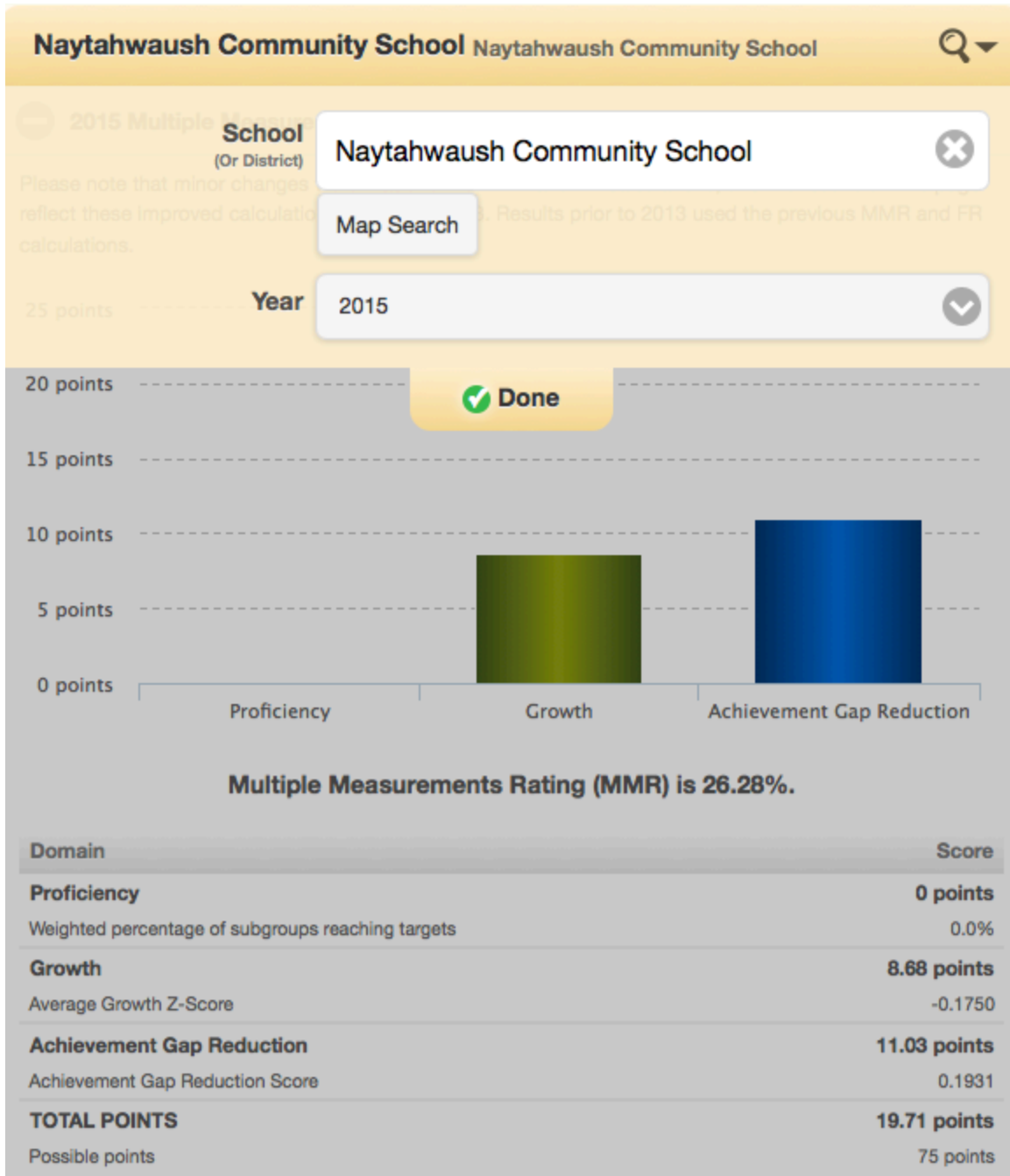
	<u># of Students Tested</u>	<u>Percent Meeting</u>	<u>Percent Exceeding</u>
Grade 3	16	19%	0%
Grade 4	10	30%	10%
Grade 5	14	36%	0%
Grade 6	15	7%	0%
Grade 7			
Grade 8			
Grade 11			

Overall	55	22%	.01%
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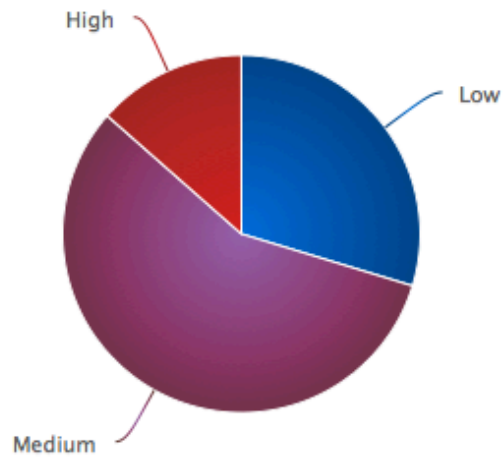
Percent Growth on MCA II Reading/Math, 2014-2015 School Year

	<u># of Students</u>	<u>% In Each Category</u>
%Not Prof, High Growth	3	8.1
%Not Prof, Med. Growth	15	40.5
%Not Prof, Low Growth	5	13.5
%Prof, High Growth	2	5.4
%Prof, Med. Growth	6	16.2
%Prof, Low Growth	6	16.2
TOTAL*	37	99.9%

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2014 - 2015 Student Growth, all students



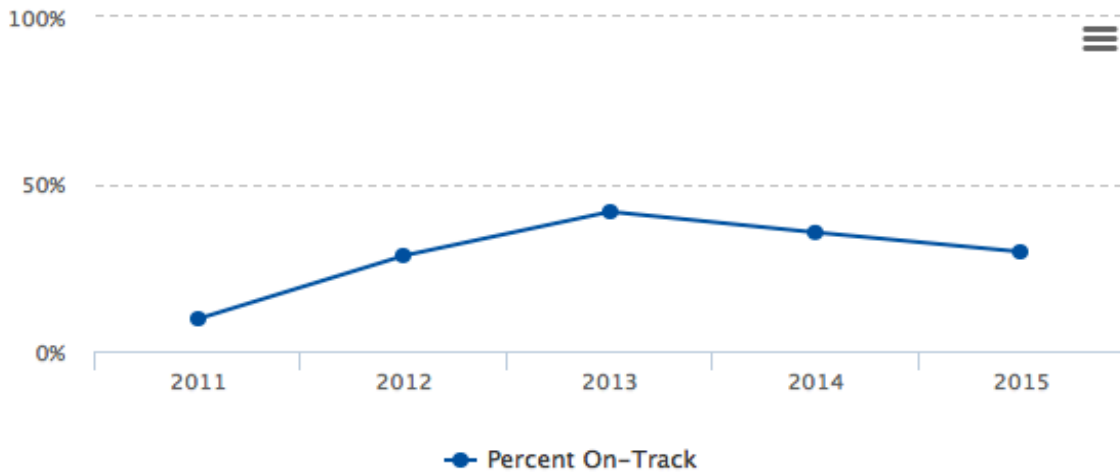
Growth Level	Count	Percent
Low	11	29.7%
Medium	21	56.8%
High	5	13.5%

2014 - 2015 Growth by last year's proficiency status, all students

Growth Level	Proficient Students		Non-Proficient Students	
	Count	Percent of Total	Count	Percent of Total
Low	6	16.2%	5	13.5%
Medium	6	16.2%	15	40.5%
High	2	5.4%	3	8.1%



Students "on track" for success



Year	Percent On-Track
2011	9.7%
2012	28.6%
2013	41.7%
2014	35.5%
2015	29.7%

Data to Inform Instruction

We no longer make decisions based on opinion. Rather we look at the data and details of our factual reality to determine that to which we give our fierce commitment and focus. In our case, it has been the historically low academic performance of our students. As good as our intentions may have been, our state test results have contributed to the achievement gap that exists between our Native students and their non-Native peers throughout the state. Or another way, and perhaps better way, of framing this is the gap that exists between our almost 100% Free and Reduced Lunch Rate students and their more affluent peers in other public schools. So our educational philosophy is to make decisions-based on data and to deliver high quality teaching and learning with laser like focus. We have a student support group that meets every Tuesday morning to look at the needs of each of our students. Members include the director, special education staff members, reading interventionists, our school counselor and our student advocate who tracks attendance. The group reviews teacher referrals and monitors data.

2015 Multiple Measurement Rating Comparisons

Ponemah	13%
Pine Point	15%
Bagley	17%
Waubun (5 th /6 th)	21%
NCCS (3 rd -6 th)	26%
Ogema (3 rd /4 th)	29%
Mahnomen	30%

NCCS Data History

Year	Math Proficiency	Reading Proficiency	Science	Growth Points	Multiple Measurement Rating
2011	14%	31%	0%	----	2%
2012	22%	23%	0%	1	4%
2013	37%	35%	17%	17	47%
2014	34%	25%	0%	22	33%
2015	29%	29%	30%	9	26%

Parent Satisfaction

100% of our families surveyed said that NCCS provides a quality education for their children. 100% of our families said they would recommend NCCS to other families. While we have always had strong support, we continue to build stronger relationships with families as we reach out to them in a variety of ways. Each fall all of our staff members make home visits. We have a Family Fun Friday once a month where we get excellent family participation. 77% of our families attended conferences in fall 2014 and spring 2015.

NCCS Highlights

1. Ojibwemowin:

- Students attend a daily Ojibwemowin class in which our Ojibwe teacher has created an exemplary curriculum and program
- Success for the Future features student created multi-media projects

2. Healthy Life Choices:

- Full-time counselor for mental health support to students
- After school football, basketball, cheerleading and track for boys and girls
- An annual 5K for students, families and community
- Snowshoeing and skiing at a local school forest and a sliding hill on school site
- Transition support for our 6th grade graduates during their junior high and high school years

3. Academic Excellence:

- Benchmark Literacy and Math Expressions for core instruction
- Reading and math specialists, coaches and interventionists
- Professional Learning Team meets weekly
- Consistent and comprehensive teacher evaluation with weekly observations
- A summer reading program where staff visits homes to work with students
- Daily Wadiswan for students to receive math intervention from the classroom teacher, along with wellness and community culture components

4. Proactive Behavior Management:

- Nurtured Heart and Responsive Classroom philosophy and common practice
- Fewer and less severe behavior problems than previous years
- Full-time interventionist for mental health support to students
- Student Advocate and Student Support positions

5. Service and Experiential Learning:

- Intentional, expected school-wide and theme-based projects and contributions

6. Family and Community Connections:

- Monthly Family Fun days
- Weekly newsletter
- Home visits before school starts and during the school year

6. Organizational Effectiveness:

- All staff evaluation and accountability
- Policy development and compliance

- Board Governance Award
- High staff retention rate

Program Challenges

With 95% of our students qualifying for free and reduced breakfasts and lunches, our staff is aware of the ways in which our students are impacted by poverty. Being born into high poverty settings can cause negative physical and environmental hardship on the lives of children. For this reason, we have started working closely with Indian Child Welfare and White Earth Mental Health to file mandatory abuse and neglect reports and referrals for counseling and therapy. We also work closely with families, knowing that our students' basic needs need to be met in order to attain maximum academic success.

Because many of our kindergarteners start school far less prepared than their peers from other parts of the state, we have started to work more closely with Head Start and the Naytahwaush Community Foundation's Learning Center that provides preschool programming for children who are on a waiting list for Head Start.

It is notable that our school serves a social equity purpose as well as an educational one. Many of our families don't feel that the traditional education system has respected, valued or understood the Ojibwe culture. Our families and White Earth Tribal Council members are thankful that we provide daily Ojibwe instruction and cultural integration. Because of our numerous student created multi-media language projects, the Tribal Council has chosen our school to pilot a language revitalization project that empowers our students to share the Ojibwe language with our community and beyond. This initiative ties in well with our other service learning and Success for the Future projects in which students often use various forms of technology to create podcasts, videos and books to share what they are learning. Our Success for the Future project supports reading and math skill development with student created, culturally relevant multi-media projects.

Strategies we use to improve student achievement are: the integration of Ojibwe language, Benchmark Literacy, Math Expressions, Cognitive Guided Instruction, Responsive Classroom, Nurtured Heart and progress monitoring in reading and math with daily intervention. We know that reading is the foundation for success in all other academic areas and that many of our students are at least two years below grade level in reading. We also feel a sense of urgency, understanding that some states determine how many future jail beds they will need based on how many of their third graders are unable to read.

Innovative Practices and Implementation

Ojibwe Language and Culture: Our students receive daily Ojibwe language instruction. Teachers learn the language along with their students and integrate Ojibwe language and culture throughout the curricula. In conjunction with our Success for the Future program students create Ojibwe language multi-media projects including podcasts and newscasts. They write scripts, do the film recording and editing, all of which are published on our website. The integration of Ojibwe culture and language is important because it makes our students proud of who they are and motivates learning in other subjects as well.

Responsive Classroom and Nurtured Heart: Every classroom begins the day with a morning circle time to help build and reinforce a caring school climate. Our teachers implement Responsive Classroom and Nurtured Heart, both of which use a positive approach in managing student behavior. Through support from the Northwest Minnesota Foundation our students are part of the STAR (Students Teaching Attitudes of Respect) program. This positive student leadership program supports our proactive, rather than punitive, behavior management model.

School-Wide Opening Circle: Every Monday morning our entire student body and staff meet in the gym to kick off the week with a positive note. Students take turns helping lead announcements, lunch menu and birthdays. Students also share special events and projects and assist our Ojibwe language teacher with sharing the word/phrase of the week.

Service Learning: Students identify and address real community needs to help make our community a better place. For example, our community doesn't have its own newspaper or other media sources so students publish a weekly newsletter, podcast and news program that are shared with community and families. Such activities make our students proud of their ability to help others. Our projects are school-wide and theme-based. For example, we have a Veteran's Appreciation program that all classes prepare a piece to share at the community celebration.

Family Connections: Every fall, before school begins, all of our staff visits homes to meet with students and families. Building relationships with families is an important part of our school program. Every month we have a Family Fun Day with a schoolwide theme. Our family activities and special events are well attended. Relationships are key in building trust between our staff and families. We work hard to nurture positive communication and a team approach to helping each child become successful.

Summer Academic Program: We had a reading program both onsite and with home visits throughout the summer months and coordinated with our summer foods program.

Extended School Day: We added a half hour more to our school day for additional instruction.

Master Schedule: We created a master schedule that requires 120 minutes of reading instruction, 90 minutes of math instruction and 45 minutes of writing instruction daily.

Career and College Readiness: Students research potential professions and share presentations with their families. They also listen to guest speakers talk about their jobs. We have an annual report of all NCCS graduates to track graduation, schooling, jobs, incarceration, etc.

NCCS's Implementation of the Turnaround Principles

Our Need

Three years ago our staff found out we had the second lowest MMR in the state at a grim 4%. We were devastated and felt an urgent need to look at our data and ask, "What can we do differently, intentionally and immediately to get the results our students need and deserve for success?"

Turnaround Principle 1: Strong Leadership Team

We applied for and received the School Improvement Grant that required us to rapidly execute the Department of Education's School Turnaround Principles. We formed a leadership team who came up with a focused plan and has since guided its implementation. In a year's time we increased our MMR from 4% to 56% and were named a Celebration School. We did this by focusing on both *what* we do and *how* we do it. Our rating was 32% last year and we expect a steady increase over the next few years as we stay the course. Our leadership team has evolved to include our entire staff.

Turnaround Principle 2: Focus on Core Instruction

Our challenge was clearly our immediate need to improve reading and math achievement for our students. We researched curricula and chose Benchmark Literacy and Math Expressions and have received significant coaching and professional development in the implementation of both.

Turnaround Principle 3: Increased Learning Time

We created a master schedule that includes 2 hours of balanced literacy, 45 minutes of writing and 75 minutes of math. We added an hour to our school day so we could maintain daily Ojibwe, phy ed, science, social studies, wellness and technology classes for our students. We also boosted our daily intervention support for students in need.

Turnaround Principle 4: Quality Teachers to Deliver Results

Knowing that effective teaching is the key to student learning and success, we focus on quality teaching and learning through coaching, peer review and weekly walkthroughs. We have created Practice Profiles that show what is expected in every reading, writing and math lesson. All of our teachers get observed once a week and are given specific

feedback regarding best practices in management and instruction. We have learned as a team that whether it applies to students or staff, what gets measured, gets done. Teachers introduce a learning target “I can” statement for every lesson so students know what their learning responsibility is and can demonstrate it at the end of the lesson.

Turnaround Principle 5: Data to Inform Instruction

We no longer make decisions based on opinion. Rather we look at data to inform our instruction. We are transparent about sharing what students know with students, our staff and parents. At the entrance of our building is a data wall that displays standardized and formative test results for each student and class.

Turnaround Principle 6: Safe and Caring School

We also look at academic progress, attendance, counseling, behavior and referral data at a weekly student support team meeting to meet the individual needs of our students. Every Monday morning our students help lead an all school opening circle in our gym where recognitions and announcements are made, Ojibwe is spoken and sung and students share their learning.

Turnaround Principle 7: Family and Community Engagement

As a community school whose vision was created by parents and community members, engaging families is a priority. An active parent advisory group meets monthly and parents are surveyed annually. All staff make home visits before school starts in the fall. There is a monthly Family Fun day focused on showcasing student learning. And a summer reading program is delivered by staff in students’ homes or as part of our summer foods program depending on a family’s preference.

Future Plans

Stay the Course: NCCS will continue the good work we’ve started by staying focused on the ongoing implementation of the Turnaround Principles. We will continue to use data to inform our decisions. We will press for more accountability on all levels, knowing that what gets measured, gets done.

To view our WBWF summary report visit: nayatohwaush.org