

Section 6: Implementation of the Plan and Documentation of Results

Annual Progress Report on the Implementation of the School Improvement Plan

School Name: Rosman Middle School
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Submitted On: Monday, November 2, 2009

I. Introduction

A. General Comments

Rosman Middle School (RMS) is one of two middle schools in Transylvania County, North Carolina. We had an enrollment of approximately 290 sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students for the 2008-2009 school year. Sixty-two point eighty-nine percent (62.89%) of our students at RMS qualify for free or reduced lunch. In addition, there are (23) students who receive special education services during the school day. Eighteen of our students are served in the AIG program. Approximately twenty (20) students were served in the 2008-2009 after-school (SOS) program and forty (40) students were served in the summer program.

Rosman Middle School's major improvement activity was to focus a deliberate restructuring of the master schedule. In 2008-2009, RMS made efforts to give Tiger Time more structure and intentional purpose for academic coaching. Our staff has indicated significant problems with the master schedule. All grade levels had different schedules for classes. We will look at a unified master schedule and at streamlining our structure so we can all have access to programs and functions.

The Preliminary data from the NC School Report Card for RMS for SY 2008-2009 reflects a school with a highly qualified staff, and a safe and caring environment. RMS was designated a NC "School of Distinction" for the 2008-2009 school year. The ABC's Accountability Report for 2008-2009 indicates that seventy-eight point seven seven (78.77%) of students tested at or above grade level in reading. This occurred even though the reading assessment was re-normed. Eighty-seven point zero five (87.05%) of students tested at or above grade level in math. Also, during the 2008-2009 school year (92.045%) of students tested at or above grade level in 8th grade science. Although we only met high growth in 3 areas (8th grade math, Algebra 1 and EOC proficiencies), we posted growth in all but one area over the previous years EOG test scores. In 2008-2009 a higher percentage of students tested at or above grade level in reading. RMS reading scores were significantly lower than previous years, due in part to a statewide re-norming of proficiency measurements. The state target goal was forty-three point two (43.2%) of students at or above grade level, and seventy-eight point seven (78.77%) of RMS students were at or above grade level. This percentage indicates that Rosman Middle School is still ahead of the state average. The 2009 AYP results report that RMS made adequate yearly progress, meeting thirteen out of thirteen target goals. RMS consistently produces an attendance rate near the ninety-five percent (95%) mark.

B. Globally-Competitive Students

Our school continues to participate in the Transylvania County's Teachscape (class room walk-through) program that entails short observations in every classroom. After receiving the results of this program, teachers were able to get an idea of what instructional practices were most often used in our classrooms and what practices were lacking. Teachers have also utilized planning time to allow for reflection on this data.

Much work was done to improve parent and student expectations and communications. Sixth grade teachers are requiring students to take more responsibility for their progress in class through weekly grade graphs which must be signed by parents. Teachers are requiring students to take more responsibility for their progress in class by monitoring their own grades with weekly progress reports which must be signed by parents. A newsletter is sent home with

information on each teacher's classroom agenda, expectations for the week, along with general school announcements. Additionally, a weekly parent e-mail is sent home with similar information, the newsletter as an attachment, and any additional notes from classes that may be necessary.

C. 21st Century Professionals

Students and parents continue to agree that Rosman Middle School staff care about them, treat them with respect, and are also highly qualified in the classes they teach. Our Leadership Team has helped the school administration develop, design, and implement staff development activities that are customized for our school needs. For example, one of the areas that keeps being identified on our stakeholders survey is the effective and efficient use of time. Our Leadership Team developed a professional learning community activity that involved action research based on a faculty book study on Mike Schmoker's Results Now. Although Survey Data analysis indicated that "adequate opportunities for professional staff development focused on instruction" remains stable, it is still not at an acceptable level for RMS.

D. Healthy and Responsible Students

This past year the RMS Committee for Priority 3 decided that our school would take a multi faceted approach toward achieving our school goal for this priority. First of all, a deliberate effort would be made to educate the RMS Students and parents on the harmful affects of alcohol and tobacco. The Mendez curriculum continues to be a teaching tool for our students to focus on alcohol and tobacco free lifestyles.

Next, our school established the next phase of the Bully-Free Zones Program. This next phase involves making better use of our peer mediation program. This would increase the involvement of our students in resolving peer conflicts within our school. The Mendez Program is also part of this action step. A program of instruction was designed to be a part of Tiger Time instruction as well as health class.

Additionally, our school counselor continued to refine the Peer Mediation Program for our student body. This program actually began several years ago and is being utilized to a greater degree . Anytime there is peer conflict that could potentially escalate into a discipline problem, the peer mediation group is called on to mediate the conflict. This program is a success according to our counselor, who is in charge of the supervision of the peer mediation program.

Finally, quarterly open houses are scheduled to invite our parents and community to participate in various parent education workshops. These parent involvement events are designed to welcome parents as a member of our school team. We solicit their input and also try to gather information from them as to how we can better serve their child. Student and parent survey items reported that students show respect for teachers and that school buses were safe and orderly. Parents and students continue to convey concern regarding school bus safety as well as safe school environments.

E. Leadership

At Rosman Middle School, leadership and educational priorities have traditionally reached far beyond the classroom. Students' needs are always at the forefront of any decision made.

Community members, business partnerships, and parents play a vital role in the overall health of Rosman Middle School.

Over the past few years, Rosman Middle School has seen a steady increase in volunteer hours as a result of parents, community, and faculty becoming more open to assisting students and programs in need. In 2007-2008, we reached over 3,000 hours in volunteer service compared to 300 and 600 in the two previous years. Although we had 2,456 volunteer hours for the 2008-2009, this number is slightly lower than last year however, this indicated that we continue to far exceed our community involvement from several years ago.

Rosman Middle School has had to overcome constant turnover in leadership in the position of principal, and much success RMS has experienced is due to an increase in community volunteer time. Now that we have some stability in the principal role, we should be able to make additional gains in many aspects. While we know that the Rosman community has always pulled together in times of need, it is our belief that school time here at RMS needs to be a consistent place in terms of educational expectations. Our students are truly the number one priority at RMS. Students notice and appreciate parents or volunteers who come to our school. Sometimes parents do not realize the impact their presence has on their child. It is a major goal of the RMS faculty to insure that parents are aware of their child's progress and participation in the many programs offered at our school.

Even though the main leadership focus usually comes from the principal, RMS has many professional individuals who are able to share and contribute in that role. With the strong leadership abilities found within the walls of RMS, and the innovative leadership roles forthcoming from the RMS community in growing numbers the future for RMS students look bright. No significant changes were made to the leadership structure during the 2008-2009 school year.

F. 21st Century Systems

Rosman Middle School is very proud of our designation as a "School of Distinction" for the 2008-2009 school year. Although we only have preliminary information at this time, it is reasonable to assume that we will once again have the same designation for the 2009-2010 school year. Surely, the fact that we are governed and supported by 21st Century Systems has had a major, positive contribution to our recognition status.

The 21st Century Classroom program has given teachers the opportunity to receive the latest in LCD projector technology in their classrooms. We have completed all installations with this project. The last training cohort is now in session. By the end of the 2008-2009 school year we will have completed this project with the exception of new staff members. On a district level, we will have to maintain a training cohort to properly train teachers new to Transylvania County. We would expect to remove this goal from the 2009-2010 Action Plan.

The goal to provide RMS staff opportunities to attend appropriate 21st Century technology workshops continues to be met through our Technology Specialist, teachers and administrators who are offering a variety of topics for instruction on Technology Tuesdays. These workshops allow teachers to hone their technology skills, enabling them to integrate 21st century technology in classroom instruction. An even greater achievement in the 2008-2009 school year is the removal of a step from our 21st century Action Plan. Because all staff have been successfully trained in the the Study Island Assessment/Practice Program, the SIT team has removed this item as successfully completed.

II. Summary of Results

A. Globally-Competitive Students

The analysis of the student performance data that was conducted for the 2008-2009 school year showed that over all, eighty seven point zero five percent (87.05%) of students at Rosman Middle School performed at or above grade level on the math EOG for the year. Reading EOG scores showed that seventy eight point seven seven percent (78.77%) of our students are on or above grade level.

One aspect of data analysis that drives instruction at RMS is our quarterly benchmark assessments. Several of our teachers instructed their students how to read and understand the scores. The teachers go over what each goal means and share examples after the first benchmark that represent each goal. The students and teacher then pinpoint the weak point and they develop and commit to two strategies to improve this weakness. They then review their scores with each benchmark. If the student shows improvement, they receive a reward. Teachers also look at class trends to help in determining overall needs of each class.

RMS Teachers restructure their Tiger Times quarterly based on benchmark results to target specific math and reading goal weaknesses. Each teacher uses the first benchmark as a baseline and then subsequent ones to determine how much a student is growing throughout the year goal by goal. Teachers use problems similar to those missed in the benchmark as warm-up exercises so students can learn from their mistakes. This group of teachers also invites students that fail a goal to attend after school remediation sessions to review that goal.

During the 2008-2009 school year RMS achieved one hundred percent (100%) proficiency on the state (NCDPI) computer skills test. It has traditionally been an expectation that students in grades six and seven complete as many computer activities through core classes as possible. In grade eight, time is spent during first semester teaching students computer skills through their social studies classes so that all eighth graders can be addressed with formal instruction. All modules are covered on areas to be tested. A variety of resources from other schools in North Carolina are also used, plus the web based program Study Island. A folder is compiled for every student with vocabulary, student guides, and examples. Each student will work from the folder, and then a few weeks before the test, take the folder home to study.

B. 21st Century Professionals

Our school Leadership Team desires for our faculty to undertake more investigation into our school's instructional practices. Very little analysis of student performance data was undertaken. In order to make more effective use of our instructional time we must make more efficient use of our time in analyzing our best practices. In turn, we must then become better at implementing and internalizing those practices in our everyday work. Our Leadership Team is attempting to put processes in place that will make the review of student performance data systematic. Student performance data reviews should always include quarterly failures, benchmark assessments, Study Island reports, and weekly meetings. All of our 21st Century Professionals staff development initiatives will revolve around setting collaborative activities that will foster self-reflection as individuals and as a faculty. The Leadership Team is structuring all their collaborative meeting discussions around the practice of self-reflecting on our instructional practices.

C. Healthy and Responsible Students

The School Improvement Team decided to focus on incorporating alternative methods of disciplinary consequences when possible. We currently serve twelve students in Plan B. These are students that are at-risk for dropping out of school if interventions are not introduced into their educational plan. Rosman Middle School was given the opportunity to establish a School within a School (Plan B) program that brought the alternative middle school program previously based at Davidson River School to our own campus. This program has been successful. The students involved in this program are meeting academic and behavioral goals that have been established for them through a team approach incorporating the information shared between parents, teachers, the school counselor and other outside agencies. Our full time school counselor continues to utilize the peer mediation program. This program trains and uses students to help mediate and oversee conflict resolution sessions with fellow students. In the first month of school, this group has been called upon with success. Additionally, the peer mediation group, our student recognition opportunities, classroom guidance opportunities, and individual and or group focus sessions has increased the academic progress, and reduced the emotional and behavioral issues of our students. Partnerships with Lake Toxaway Charities and Zeigler Trout Farm will continue, while the business relationship with Pepsi-Cola also remains solid. The committee continues to seek out as many businesses as possible to support student recognition opportunities, increase volunteer hours, and instructional items. Rosman Middle School will continue to work for the establishment of a powerful peer mediation program using student led conferences.

D. Leadership

At RMS we are consistently trying to maintain educational priorities that are responsive to the needs of family, community and business customers. This year, we had a total of over 2,456 volunteer hours given to us by parents, community members and business people. Students and staff both indicated that there is less community/business involvement in our school than in years past. However, volunteer hours show that the number of volunteer hours logged in have increased significantly over the last 3 years. The survey also reflected a decrease in the number of staff who rated communication between themselves and administration as non-effective. The Teacher Working Conditions Survey (TWCS) indicated that there was a major downward trend in two areas. The areas related to "facilities" and "effective use of time" were perceived as a problem at RMS. Personnel also reported receiving less respect from students. A program was implemented during the school year to reward students showing respect for teachers. Teachers nominated students and they received gift cards to local businesses.

The school improvement team attempted to address organizational and instructional effectiveness by developing a structure to promote a free-flowing instructional and curriculum communications. This communication structures involves monthly meetings that precede each faculty meeting. The Leadership Team meets the second Thursday of the month and the faculty meeting is designated to meet on third Thursdays. The RMS leadership team decided to meet monthly in order to effectively impact communication within the school, community, and its' constituents.

E. 21st Century Systems

Work has been attempted in this area of the RMS's 21st Century Systems; however, we are still below our school and district level expectations in this category. After continuing to study many

of the indicators in needs of improvement, it is anticipated that School Improvement Teams will make appropriate changes to the School Improvement Plan to ensure a high level of organizational effectiveness. During the past couple of years, the staff transitioned extremely well to the NCWISE information management system. The upgrading of technology equipment and services is continually improving. To help facilitate this process a list of staff members was created that would help troubleshoot areas of concern with technology issues. Additionally, a lead technology teacher was hired during the summer of 2008 to help facilitate technology needs and staff training.

III. Reflections and Lessons Learned

Rosman Middle School (RMS) achieved the status of a North Carolina "School of Distinction" with an overall proficiency level of (84.16 %) on the 2008-2009 EOG. Analysis of the test data for the 2008-2009 school year also showed that (87.06%) of students at Rosman Middle School performed at or above grade level on the math EOG for the year.

The reading EOG for school year 2008-2009 scored in at a (78.77%) proficiency rate. This showed a notable decrease from previous years. The state made significant changes in the re-norming of the test scores which made a difference in the overall percentages. Staff will continue to use different analysis of reading growth including use of benchmarks and using released test items to focus on specific goals to foster growth.

One additional piece of data from the 2008-2009 school year is the new science test scores. Overall 8th grade science test scores were impressive with a proficiency score of (92.04 %). Since this is the first year of reporting data from the science scores this is a very impressive start.

In the coming years, Rosman Middle plans to continue to make more effective use of common planning time among teachers to encourage more in-depth data analysis and discussions centered on student performance. Strategies to be used in obtaining this goal include: providing availability and enhancing the knowledge of the RMS school improvement plan for faculty, staff, parents, and students, enhancing existing programs and various other team projects is an additional strategy.

Finally, the two lowest scoring areas on the Teacher Working conditions (TWCS), facilities and effective use of time, will be addressed through our monthly Leadership Team meetings. The Leadership Team will be tasked with the responsibility of soliciting from the representative stakeholders various ways to improve the operations of our school's facility management. Additionally, a focus will be placed on streamlining and organizing the use of time to more efficiently manage one of our staffs' most important resource---time.

IV. Next Steps

Better communication will continue to be established for professional development opportunities. In addition, more instructional opportunities will be offered on our campus. RMS is conducting a technology course that will yield a high quality staff development activity. This course will help increase student achievement by more effectively utilizing the available technology resources in the classrooms. Rosman Middle School teachers have also implemented a "safety net" for at-risk students. This "safety net" provides a vehicle through which any student that is struggling academically, mentally, emotionally, or otherwise is identified. This identification is personalized by the staff members. Through this personal interest that is developed, the teacher makes more in-depth contacts and efforts in communication with the student and their home environment. This intense communication system will continue to be maintained through systematic and deliberate communications with the parent.

By the end of the 2009-10 school year, Rosman Middle School should be an Honor School of Excellence. Currently Rosman Middle School has six (22 %) of its staff members certified with National Board Certification. In addition, a commitment toward communicating more relevant professional development opportunities for the entire staff has been established. The focus for attaining more Nationally Board Certified teachers will continue to be supported by the staff and administration of Rosman Middle School. As more teachers attain this high honor, the thought is that more will be encouraged to attempt the process. Professional development opportunities will continue to be offered on campus, during planning periods and a variety of instructional workshops will continue to be implemented.

In conclusion, Rosman Middle School will continue to focus on meeting the academic needs of all students in our school. The ABC's accountability model will continue to drive many instructional decisions made at our school. Rosman Middle School's minimum goal requirement is to consistently make Adequate Yearly Progress as determined by the No Child Left Behind federal legislation. RMS will use the school "safety net" to improve and maintain effective communications with all stakeholders to help insure the success of all students in our care. By the end of the 2009-2010 school year, Rosman Middle School's ultimate goal is to attain high academic change status and again, also has a sincere desire to be designated as an Honors School of Excellence.

The staff is working on the revised writing test for the 7th grade class. All teachers have received writing Moodle training and will be scoring tests to help improve writing throughout the entire school. Rosman Middle School will continue to meet monthly and work on the alignment and prioritization of the curriculum. The leadership of RMS will develop and improve procedures and processes for monthly vertical planning sessions for faculty members. Grade level meetings will be specifically focused on discussions about teaching strategies, best practices, and data analysis. A renewed effort will be made to maintain the focus of all staff development activities. Staff development activities will be designed and scheduled according to data driven decisions based on student performance data.