

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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I. Introduction

A. General Comments

Rosman Middle School (RMS) is one of two middle schools in Transylvania County, North Carolina. It has an enrollment of approximately 286 sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students for the 2008-2009 school year. Fifty-one percent (51.7 %) of our students at RMS receive free or reduced meals. In addition, there are thirty one (31) students who receive special education services during the school day. Slightly over thirteen (13 %) of our students are served in the AIG program. About twenty (20) students were served in the 2007-2008 after-school (SOS) program and forty (40) students were served in the summer program

Rosman Middle School's major improvement activity was to make a deliberate restructuring of Tiger Time in the master schedule. Tiger Time has previously consisted of thirty-five minutes outside of the core class time that was loosely used for reading time, make-up work time, and general school issue maintenance time. In 2007-2008, RMS made efforts to give Tiger Time more structure and intentional purpose for academic coaching. No significant changes were made to the leadership structure during the 2007-2008 school year.

The NC School Report Card for RMS for SY 2007-2008 reflects a school with a highly qualified staff, a safe and caring environment. RMS was designated a NC School of Distinction 2007-2008 school year. The ABC's Accountability Report for 2007-2008 shows that sixty-six point seven percent (66.7%) of students tested at or above grade level in reading. This occurred even though the reading assessment was re-normed. Seventy-seven point four percent (77.4%) of students tested at or above grade level in math. These percentages have decreased since last year. In 2006-2007 a higher percentage of students tested at or above grade level in reading. In 2004-2005, RMS boasted both reading and math percentages to be just under 95%. 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 sixty-six point seven (66.7%) of RMS students were at or above grade level. This percentage shows that Rosman Middle School is still ahead of the state average. The 2008 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-six percent (96%) mark.

B. Globally-Competitive Students

Last year, our teachers began to participate in the Transylvania County's palm-pilot (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 used 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 by weekly grade graphs which must be signed by parents. Seventh grade 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 weekly newsletter is sent home with information on vision / mission, 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

The Teacher Working Conditions Survey (TWC) of internal and external stakeholders indicated a more negative perception than in previous years. However, students and parents not only agree that Rosman Middle School staff members care about them and treat them with respect, but also believe they are highly qualified in the classes they teach. This is due to after school remediation, Tiger Time, implementation of Plan B, attention given to the fine arts and sports programs, student involvement in extracurricular activities, and individual teacher attention. Although 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 multifaceted 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 priority team decided the Mendez Curriculum was an appropriate program to implement in the school. The Mendez Curriculum was supposed to begin in the 2007-2008 school year, but was not realized until October, 2008 for the 2008-2009 school year. The people in charge last year were Jo Hamilton, Scott Strickler, and Scott Russell. This year, the point people are Rhonda Chapman, Scott Strickler, and Eli Putnam.

Secondly, Rosman Middle School decided to recruit individuals and groups from the community to provide drug and alcohol education programs to parents, students, and staff. We hosted an open house program that was part of this action step. A special agent with the State Bureau of Investigation, Tom Ammons, conducted a drug awareness workshop for parents.

Next, our school established the next phase of the Bully-Free Zones Program. The Mendez Program is also part of this action step. A program of instruction was designed to be a part of Tiger Time instruction.

Additionally, our school counselor began a Peer Mediation Program for our student body. This program actually began last year and 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. This past year, our system's stakeholder survey indicated that students reported being respected by the RMS staff at a higher level than the county norm. Parents reported a lower than average response to the statement, "My child shows symptoms of test stress." Student survey items with averages lower than the county include a statement that students show respect for teachers, and that school buses are safe and orderly. Students continue to convey concern regarding school bus safety.

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. Last year we reached over 3,000 hours in volunteer service compared to 300 and 600 in the two previous years. Rosman Middle School has had to overcome turnover in leadership in the principal's position, and much success RMS has experienced is due to increased volunteerism. The Rosman community has always pulled together in times of need. Our students are truly our top priority.

Students notice and appreciate parents and 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 ensure 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 includes many professionals 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, our students' futures will continue to progress.

F. 21st Century Systems

Rosman Middle School is very proud of our designation as a School of Distinction for the 2007-2008 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 are now at ninety-nine (99%) completion 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. 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 has taken a great leap forward in the 2008-2009 school year. RMS and RHS have added an on-site Technology Specialist. This staff member is dedicated to providing 21st Century technology assistance to the staff and students of both schools. The addition of this staff position will serve to eliminate the greatest source of dissatisfaction with technology systems. For years, we have lacked access to the highest levels of 21st Century Technology. The 2008-2009 school year will be a new beginning in this area as far as the school is concerned. An even greater achievement (in the 2007-2008 school year) is the completion of a goal within our 21st century Action Plan. Because all staff has been successfully trained in the theory and practice of the Study Island Assessment/Practice Program, the SIT has successfully completed this strategy within the Action Plan.

II. Summary of Results

A. Globally-Competitive Students

The analysis of student performance data that was conducted for the 2007-2008 school year showed that overall, ninety-two point two percent (92.2%) of students at Rosman Middle School performed at or above grade level on the math EOG for the year. Scores for the 2007-2008 seventh grade writing test of seventy point six percent (70.6%) proficient were better than the previous year's rate of sixty point five percent (60.5%). However, this is not satisfactory for the staff.

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 shows them examples after the first benchmark that represent each goal. The students and teacher then pinpoint the student's weak point and they develop and commit to two strategies to improve this weakness. They then review their scores with each benchmark. If they show improvement, they receive a reward. This teachers also looks 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 2007-2008 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 do 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

Rosman Middle School (RMS) achieved the status of a North Carolina "School of Distinction" with an overall proficiency level of 82.04 % on the 07-08 EOG. RMS also scored at 70.6 % proficiency on the spring 08 seventh grade writing assessment. Very little analysis of student performance data was undertaken.

Rosman Middle School is dedicated to the social, emotional, physical, and academic development of our students. We are especially proud of our student performance results and do not allow economic status, exceptionality, social conditions, or philosophical differences with student accountability programs to become excuses for lack of academic growth. Goals for high student performance must be aligned with state and local goals. These goals must also take into consideration promotion standards as defined by the Transylvania County Board of Education.

Rigorous and relevant academic standards and assessment systems are in place for every student. The RMS School Improvement Plan encapsulates the district goals into our school level objective for the 2007-10 school improvement cycle. RMS has the goal that every student masters essential knowledge and skills. RMS also works to ensure that every student has technology to access and demonstrate new knowledge and skills that will be needed as a life-long learner to be competitive in a constantly changing international environment. The faculty will work to make sure that every student has the opportunity to graduate from high school with an Associate's degree or college transfer credit. Finally, RMS will work towards teaching every student to be a life-long learner and ready for work.

C. Healthy and Responsible Students

The School Improvement Team decided to focus on incorporating alternative methods of disciplinary consequences when possible. 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 has initiated a peer mediation program this year. This new 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 a powerful peer mediation program using student led conferences. Work will continue on the formation of the Rosman Reading Club (a club that will meet bi-monthly at night for parents, students and staff to read a common book and have discussions and activities based on their reading), and a Most Improved Student Tea to recognize students that have greatly improved from the beginning of the year to the middle of the year.

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 3,000 volunteer hours given to us by parents, community members and business people. That number is up from 300 hours last year and 600 from the previous year. Students and staff both indicated that there is less community/business involvement in our school than in years passed. The survey also reflected an increase in the number of staff who rated communication between themselves and administration as non-effective. The Teacher Working Conditions Survey (TWC) 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. The school improvement team attempted to address organizational and instructional effectiveness by developing a structure to promote a free-flowing instructional and curriculum communications. The RMS leadership team did not meet

regularly enough to effectively impact communication within the school, community, and its' constituents.

E. 21st Century Systems

Work has been attempted in the 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 eighty-two point zero four percent (82.04 %) on 2007-2008 EOG's. Analysis of the test data for the 2007-2008 school year also showed that ninety-two point two percent (92.2%) of students at Rosman Middle School performed at or above grade level on the math EOG for the year. RMS also scored at seventy point six percent (70.6 %) proficiency on the spring 2008 seventh grade writing assessment. Scores for the 2007-2008 seventh grade writing test of seventy point six percent (70.6%) proficient were better than the previous year's rate of sixty point five percent (60.5%). Again, however, though this change represents progress in the right direction, this level of performance is still not satisfactory for the staff.

In the coming school years, Rosman Middle School 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 the availability and guidance of the RMS school improvement plan to faculty, staff, parents, and students, enhancing existing programs, and various other team projects.

Finally, the two lowest areas on the Teacher Working conditions (TWC), 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 ways 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 staff's most important resources --- 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's Leadership Team has initiated a book study for this school year. The faculty will read and research best practices as outlined in Results Now by Mike Schmoker. This activity will yield a high quality staff development activity, CEU's, and help foster awareness of a larger variety of best practices for the teaching staff. 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 indepth contacts and efforts in communication with the student and their home environment. This intense communication system is maintained through systematic and deliberate communications with the parent.

By the end of the 2009-10 school year, Rosman Middle School will be an Honor School of Excellence. Currently Rosman Middle School has six (22 %) 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 always make Adequate Yearly Progress as outlined within 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 ensure the success of all students under our care. By the end of the 2008-2009 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 Honor School of Excellence. The staff has set a goal of seventy-five (75%) or more students passing the seventh grade writing test with a Level III or higher for the 2008-2009 school year. Additionally, by the end of the 2009-2010 school year eighty (80%) or more students will have achieved a Level III or higher score on the writing test. Rosman Middle School will continue to meet monthly and work on the aligning 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 teacing strategies, best practices, and data analysis. A renewed effort will be made to maintain the focus of all staff development activities. Finally, staff development activities will be designed and scehduled according to data driven decisions tied directly to student performance.