

School Improvement Plan
Narrative Overview

Stanley Elementary School

OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL
2011-2012

Welcome to Stanley Elementary School . . . Home of the Cougars and **recipient of the 2010 School of Distinction Award!!**

Stanley Elementary is a supportive, caring and diverse community. We are a place where commitment and dedication to the success of each and every student is demonstrated by staff, students, and parents. We are a school where commitment and dedication to the success of each and every student is evident through academic rigor, high expectations for all, and relentless and urgent instruction of the State standards. We focus on the whole child by providing a variety of academic and social support services such as: Head Start, two full-day Kindergarten programs, a Parent Support Center, ELL and TITLE I resources, and strong center programs for Special Education.

Stanley is located in Tacoma's Hilltop area in one of the city's most revitalized neighborhoods. Our current school was rebuilt in 1987, has 21 classrooms, 2 computer rooms, library, gym, multipurpose lunchroom, and music room. Although most of our attendance is residential, the portion of our neighborhood along Center Street is home to light industrial business. The historical business corridor along Martin Luther King Way bounds Stanley to the east. We are located close to downtown Tacoma, making cultural activities and the arts available for our enrichment. Saint Joseph Hospital and the University of Washington Tacoma campus are nearby. Stanley shares the Hilltop Park with our neighbor to our east, the Al Davies Boys and Girls Club.

The diverse student population of approximately 280 students is made up of 41.9% Black, 11.2% Asian/Pacific Islander, 6% Pacific Islander, 7% Hispanic, 9% White, and 2% American Indian. Our Special Education students represent 13% and ELL students 1.9% of our total student body. In addition, our Free and Reduced Lunch percentage hovers between 84% and 89% during any given month.

Stanley has 18 classroom teachers with an average of 12.4 years of teaching experience. 84.2% of our teachers have a Master Degree and additional certification in their chosen field of study. Our partnerships with the University of Washington and Pacific Lutheran University provide pre-service teachers to our classrooms to support our children's academic success. In turn, our master teachers mentor our future teachers using best practice instructional strategies and a healthy climate for school culture.

Stanley offers students the opportunity to be placed in reading and math levels that sustain learning goals over time. We currently offer an uninterrupted 90 minute reading block and a 70 minute math block school-wide. Stanley also receives funds through TITLE I, a federal program, to provide additional reading and math assistance to students. Our Before and After School

tutoring sessions are attended by students who need additional support in math and reading. Stanley offers special education pull out and four self-contained special education classrooms. Many of these students also participate in partial and full inclusion, allowing them the opportunity to take part in regular classroom activities, while at the same time having their special needs met with individual support.

Our 5th Grade students have the opportunity to take part in before school band and orchestra at Jason Lee Middle School. We take pride in the fact that our library is open before and after school to make sure children have many opportunities to check out books! Our PTA, along with generous donations from community organizations, has spent considerable time and effort over the past five years to purchase various books for students of all ages. Health and Physical Education is also alive and well at Stanley. Our children are given opportunities to participate in afterschool intramurals, the All City Track Meet and Young Athletes.

Stanley's Community partners include Metro Parks, Al Davies Boys and Girls Club, Urban League, Peoples Center, Peace Lutheran Hilltop Scholars, St. Leo's Backpack Food Bank, Multicultural Daycare Center, University Washington Tacoma, Pacific Lutheran University, Readiness to Learn, MOCHA, Rotary 8, and Comprehensive Mental Health, and area churches. The community partners support our children with their time and generous donations.

PROGRESS TOWARD PREVIOUS YEAR'S GOALS 2011-2012

Our students' progress in the area of **Reading**, as measured by the Measurement of Student Progress (MSP), demonstrated overall that our students are continuing to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in this area. 3rd Grade students performed with nearly 66.7% of students meeting standard in Reading. While this progress represented growth in our 3rd Grade scores, we did not achieve the expected results as measured by our 5th Grade students. We are not satisfied with our current indicators of growth on the MSP and are therefore intentionally focusing our efforts to significantly improve our students' achievements in this area. We look to higher achievement as measured by the 2012 MSP.

In the area of **Mathematics**, we see a significant area of improvement needed. Our student's performance as measured by the 2011 MSP did meet our established targets. Although we are pleased with these results, we will continue to focus our teaching strategies on math talk and student involvement as measured. If we are to see a significant increase in the level of student performance in mathematics as measured throughout the school year with formative assessments and in a summative manner on the 2012 MSP, significant emphasis on mathematics, along with multiple layers of support across our school district and within our school, is needed.

OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT 2011-2012

Continuous Improvement Process and Stakeholder Participation

The content of this plan represents the ongoing work and goals established within our school for the 2011-2012 year. The goals and strategies in this plan represent and are influenced by the ongoing work of our staff members within grade level teams and as a part of whole-staff work sessions. The specifics of our attached Action Plan set forth our school-wide reform efforts and are a result of our staff's review of student assessment data, the prioritization of staff and team goals, and the articulation of specific next steps in our work toward student achievement. We continue to have an **Instructional Facilitator in Math and Reading** who will be working closely with our staff to increase student engagement in our core subjects. Another change is **creating a collaborative math committee** to focus on school wide assessment and math vocabulary strategies. We believe that these changes will have a positive impact on our students reaching standard in these areas. The establishment of goal and focus areas for our school's work is also established in partnership with our SCDM and/or SIP team which includes parent representation. Our PTA is focused on supporting learning at the classroom level, specifically through the infusion of the support of the arts as well as opportunities to work with various families through field trips, parent nights and health and safety issues affecting our community. Our TITLE I affords us the opportunity to both share and seek input from our stakeholders in the development of school areas of focus. This ongoing process influences our work and the establishment of our goals.

Review of Data to Establish Improvement

Achievement

Spring Data (expressed as a percentage of students meeting standard)

Grade 3	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Reading	67.4	56.4	50.0	41.8	63.3	66.7
Mathematics	48.9	60.0	42.1	36.4	52.1	66.7

Grade 4	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Reading	75.0	60.0	61.1	50.8	57.8	56.8
Mathematics	45.9	35.0	61.1	41.0	46.7	60.0
Writing	66.7	67.5	64.8	63.9	75.0	64.3

Grade 5	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Reading	69.2	65.5	74.4	78.0	65.1	37.1
Mathematics	23.1	56.9	51.2	66.0	45.2	57.1
Science	14.8	27.6	20.9	30.0	14.5	34.3

The school-wide data from the 2010-2011 MSP indicates marginal strength in **Reading** performance. This data matches the progress as measured in our primary classrooms using District and classroom-based assessments. Our students' performance on the Reading portion of the 2010-2011 MSP indicates that our students made adequate yearly progress in 3rd Grade but did not meet adequate yearly progress in 4th and 5th Grade. Our work in this area continues. Teachers are coming together to review student work and continue ongoing formative assessments to ensure instructional decisions that support student learning in the classrooms and layers of intervention are provided through our TITLE I reading program. (See action plan for specific intervention strategies.)

In the area of **Mathematics**, our student's performance at all grade levels did not meet the state standard. Our instructional focus in this area will be the implementation of our new math program as we work to increase the level of academic success in mathematics. The District's support of this work with the infusion of math coaches, ongoing Professional Development for teachers, coaches and principals as well as our school's weekly grade level collaboration sessions and the development of intervention and enrichment plans will all contribute to the work that is designed to significantly and positively influence our students' achievement. (See action plan for specific intervention strategies.)

Attendance

At Stanley we believe daily attendance is critical for the success of every child! We have established a three tier approach to working with and supporting families who find it difficult to have their children attend school on a daily basis. We seek to support families using our Counselor, Family Interventionist Specialist, and our School Nurse.

Attendance

(Average daily attendance K-5)

2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
93.9%	93.8%	93.3%	96.4%

Planning for Transitions (between grade levels and grades)

Research tells us that students who struggle with school are most likely to "fall through the cracks" when transitioning from one grade span to the next. As part of our counselor's guidance activities, 5th Grade classroom visits to talk to students about middle school expectations occur after winter vacation and in late spring middle school counselors come to our school to develop their 6th grade schedules. Towards the end of 5th and 6th Grade, teachers meet to discuss students who have exceptional learning needs. Our transition from area preschools, daycare centers and Head Start continue to be strength in our building. In early March, a collaborative team is established to partner with early childhood providers in our area to offer ongoing visitation and information about transitioning to the public school system. Families are invited to Stanley to meet with the staff members throughout the spring and summer months. In addition, Stanley staff

visit the early childhood centers to meet and greet the students at their learning sites. In late August, our Kindergarten teachers conduct “*Kindergarten Camp*” for three days for our new Kindergarten students. This provides an opportunity for the children to preview the school, meet new friends, and have families questions answered prior to the start of school. We will continue to be a part of the Head Start Transition Grant that brings together community early childhood centers in our area. Monthly meetings are held to align early childhood goals with Tacoma School District Kindergarten curriculum and expectations for student success.

Characteristics of High Performing Schools

It is difficult to isolate just a few of the characteristics of high performing schools as they are so interrelated and foundational to the work. We know that we really need to move in each of the nine areas of school improvement as outlined by the state, however there are three that emerge as needing particular attention in this year’s work. A **Clear and Shared Focus** is promoted through the strong alignment of staff about our beliefs and values regarding working with children, learning, and our climate. This year we will focus on differentiating instruction around math so that our teachers are identifying and supporting the learning needs of our diverse student population. Our **BERC report indicated we needed improvement on collaboration and communication within our learning environment**. Our goal this year is to work continually on promoting **High Levels of Collaboration and Communication**. We will address this characteristic through formal structures such as our weekly collaboration time that is built into the school day, regularly scheduled staff meetings, and small team meetings in our TITLE I and Special Education programs. These will work in conjunction with our more informal strategies for regularly communicating and working interdependently with staff about school-wide initiatives, teaching and learning goals, daily routines and procedures, and connecting with our school community. Finally, **Effective School Leadership** is demonstrated by a range of staff members at Stanley. Small teams gather to set goals and one or more team members take the lead for moving tasks forward and sharing with the whole group. Various staff members participate in District and State level leadership opportunities so as to bring the work back to our entire staff and lead particular ventures. In all of these large, and in other daily small situations, staff members are empowered and take the initiative to make decisions and move our professional work forward for the benefit of students and their learning.

Professional Development Opportunities

A great deal of the staffs’ learning at Stanley is a result of our teachers coming together regarding student work and learning from each other while constantly seeking to improve their practice. More formal Professional Development from the District will add to our school-based training around our focus area of Math and Reading. Our academic Coach and Principal will continue to lead the way in implementing the elements of the *5 Dimensions of Teaching and Learning* ensuring the appropriate use of Learning Targets and Student Engagement. Our teachers are also involved with two book studies this year covering the topics of student math engagement and culturally responsive teaching. In addition, our teachers have the opportunity to participate in a pilot program “*Teaching Black Male Learners*.” One teacher per grade level will commit to learning about best practices for narrowing the achievement gap of their African American male student. Our staff will also participate in a teacher to teacher support classroom observation using cooperative learning strategies to increase teacher knowledge of having students engage and take ownership of their learning.

Highly Qualified (HQ) Teachers

- Provisions for staff training in Tacoma include opportunities, incentives and compensation. The District provides a broad spectrum of classes on assessment, standards-based instruction and best practices in the content areas. Staff members receive extra pay to attend these classes and clock hours/university credits are frequently offered. The District also encourages school-based trainings that support the school's SIP goals with building-based optional day pay for certificated staff. In addition to classes, Instructional Facilitators at each TITLE I school provide ongoing, job embedded staff development. ParaEducators and other staff receive workshop pay to attend both District and school workshops, and are encouraged to participate in all Reading and Math curriculum and assessment Professional Development.
- Parents are informed in the Parent Handbook of their right to know their teachers and ParaEducators qualifications.
- HQ ParaEducators meet a rigorous standard of quality and can demonstrate knowledge and ability in instructing reading, mathematics and writing.
- Tacoma School District actively recruits Highly Qualified staff with our job fair, letters of intent, recommendations to hire and applicant searches. We seek to attract and keep Highly Qualified staff at our school by providing opportunities for quality staff development and professional growth.

All teachers in Tacoma are required to meet the NCLB Highly Qualified teacher requirement. Human Resources sends each school a list of the teachers with their teaching qualifications. The school Principal signs an attestation form to confirm all staff are highly qualified. In the event that a staff member does not meet the Highly Qualified requirements, a NCLB HOUSSSE Plan of Assistance is developed for the teacher. To support teachers working to achieve Highly Qualified status, along with all staff striving to provide excellent instruction, our school's professional

Recognition of Non-Academic Learning

At Stanley Elementary, we believe in educating the whole child! This belief is demonstrated by a strong emphasis on creating a focused, structured, and nurturing environment. We look for opportunities to recognize and promote non-academic learning with a particular focus on integration of the arts. Students are provided opportunities to explore the arts through drama, visual arts, music and movement. Children are offered alternative and enrichment experiences such as choice of music, sports and technology options at lunch, art methods with PLU teachers, Before-School Band and Orchestra explorations and After-School Intramurals. In addition, our students participate in the All City Track Meet and Young Athletes. Overall, we work to promote the values of helping others, giving back to community, and the building of a collaborative work culture.

Safe and Supportive Learning Environment

The Stanley Elementary School staff is purposeful and intentional in its work to create a safe and supportive environment. Built upon the three school-wide expectations of Respect, Responsibility, and Safety, our staff believes in direct instruction, modeling, and ongoing practice of expected behaviors and attitudes for learning. We have adopted the **Compassionate Schools and the Positive Behavioral Support programs** and consistency exists across all classrooms and grade levels in this area. There is a pervasive attitude that all Stanley students belong to all Stanley adults. A no-tolerance approach to behaviors that violate safety and respect is combined with a supportive safety-net through our Behavioral Specialist as well as a Counseling Program for whole groups, small groups, and individual students. Working together we actively and explicitly promote a safe and supportive learning environment for all students.

Equity Issues

The District's focus on cultural competency and the Action Plan for closing the achievement gap will drive our school's efforts this year. Our performance data trends on the WASL, and now the MSP shows that we have **narrowed the gap** between our Caucasian student population and African American and Latino males in both math and reading. Our Professional Development in Math and Reading will address culturally competent teaching strategies that can be applied to all subject areas. Intervention activities that include additional time for struggling students will be built into the day, as well as provided after school. Many of our students are part of the Free or Reduced Lunch Program, and we acknowledge that their learning needs cannot be met if their basic needs at home go unmet. Therefore, we will continue to work with our community partners such as the Urban League, MOCHA, DSHS, Readiness to Learn, Comprehensive Mental Health, Boys and Girls Club, Rotary 8, Hilltop area churches and St. Leo's Food Bank to provide outside resources to support our families in need. Our staff members will also be attending and participating in a yearlong special project "Teaching Black Male Learners".

Technology

Stanley continues to build upon the use of technology to enhance student learning in a variety of ways. Technology within the classroom includes some access to computers, the daily use of document camera/LCD projector bundles, opportunities for word processing, internet research for learning, and the use of a Technology Lab and a school wide Computer On Wheels.

Parent, Family and Community Involvement

We believe strongly in the **power of parent and family involvement** in our school and have worked hard over the years to develop a strong parent involvement component into our school program. We are fortunate to enjoy rich and intentional support from our PTA as they funnel their energies and resources directly back to our students and their learning. Additionally, we have used our TITLE I money to provide for family curriculum nights where we have taught parents how to help students with academic needs. This year we will have several evenings where we bring parents onboard with our new math program so that they know how to help their children at home. We know that many of our parents work and are unable to volunteer in the classroom so we provide these opportunities for parents to be involved in very meaningful ways in their child's education. We do however, have a number of volunteers who regularly work with children to support learning, who help monitor progress in reading and math, and who make positive relationships during lunch time activities. Beyond working with families, we regularly

seek out ways to partner with our greater community through such strategies as mentors from the neighborhood church, an Annual Food Drive to support our families in need during the holidays, Back to School supply donations, After-School Enrichment Programs, and the Hat and Glove Program. We are fortunate to have access to the Readiness to Learn program and to a full time Family and Behavior Specialist who works directly with families needing additional resources to support their children for academic success.

Coordination of Fiscal Services

Much of what we are able to do to support student learning comes from our **TITLE I** funding from the School District. **TITLE I** also provides technical assistance and NCLB support. **Curriculum and Instruction** provides Professional Development. **Research and Evaluation** provides data and instructional support, while **Purchasing** supports expenditures. **Human Resources** facilitates staffing and provides Highly Qualified information. The **Tacoma School District** provides technical assistance for school improvement including **School, Family and Community Partnership** liaisons, **Finance, Elementary Directors** and **Instructional Coaches**. Categorical and basic education funds are tracked separately in Tacoma, but the following programs work together to meet the needs of all students and support the school wide program goals. Through the work of the Professional Learning Community School wide planning and SCDM team, **TITLE I**, **ELL**, **Special Education** and the **Homeless** liaison team with basic education we are able to improve academic achievement in Reading and Math and coordinate services for identified students and families. **TITLE I** Instructional Facilitators help teachers coordinate intervention instructional services for our students with high academic needs. **TITLE I** also works closely with homeless services within the District. Fundraising through our PTA allows us to have one field trip per classroom this year.