

School Improvement Plan
Narrative Overview

Truman Middle School

PROGRESS TOWARD PREVIOUS YEAR'S GOALS
2009-10

In spite of our focused efforts to improve student achievement in math and reading for all students, we received scores that did not come close to meeting our expectations. Although, the scores were devastating to us we are inspired and motivated to set unprecedented achievement in 2011.

Our students' progress in the area of Reading, as measured by the Measurement of Student Progress (MSP), demonstrated overall that our students did not make Adequate Yearly Progress in this area. Students in grade six performed with 47.9% of students meeting standard in Reading. This represented a decrease over last year in our sixth grade scores. The same can be said for our seventh grade students (55.4% meeting standard) and our eighth grade students (60.5% meeting standard.) We are not satisfied with our current indicators of growth on the MSP and therefore will be intentionally focusing our efforts to significantly improve our students' achievement. We look to higher achievement as measured by the 2011 MSP.

In the area of Mathematics, significant improvement is needed. Our students' performance as measured by the 2010 MSP did not meet our established targets. We will rely on a critical emphasis on mathematics and district and school support programs in order to effectively address these concerns. We expect the 2011 MSP will reflect an increase in the level of student performance in mathematics.

Our focus on writing paid off for our seventh graders with nearly a 10% increase in students meeting the standard. Truman Middle School now has nearly 70% of our seventh grade students meeting the state standard in writing. A slight increase in eighth grade science was also noted.

OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT
2010-11

Continuous Improvement Process and Stakeholder Participation

Our school improvement plan outlines the goals and objectives for academic achievement in math, reading and writing, attendance, collaboration and school safety. The goals and strategies were developed collaboratively and approved by our School Centered Decision Making Team (SCDM) and staff. An emphasis at Truman Middle School this year will be on the improvement of math achievement. Math teachers throughout the district will be working together to implement best practices in the math classroom. The end goal is to ensure that all students are successful in algebra and beyond.

We believe that improvement in reading and writing hinges on synthesizing informational text, writing across the curriculum and the implementation of literacy strategies in all content areas. Parents can expect their students to participate in numerous amounts of reading, writing, listening, speaking and thinking activities. We encourage and welcome all parents to help us improve academic achievement school-wide.

Review of Data to Establish Improvement**Achievement**

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

Grade 6	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Reading	59.6	63.7	61.6	74.2	47.9
Mathematics	45.3	49.8	37.4	50.8	44.2

Grade 7	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Reading	71.0	66.5	68.9	56.0	55.4
Mathematics	50.5	55.4	50.7	38.2	42.1
Writing	64.9	68.8	72.6	63.9	69.9

Grade 8	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Reading	62.3	57.0	53.7	68.1	60.5
Mathematics	38.9	44.2	46.3	40.4	38.9
Science	37.7	38.2	39.3	47.4	48.8

The above information reflects data from the previous population of 600 Truman students and does not consider those from the Hunt transition for this current year. Currently, Truman is approaching 800 students. Our diverse community includes the following: 26% African American, 0.02% Korean, 0.08% Hispanic, 0.03% American Indian, 0.03% Vietnamese and 63% Caucasian and other.

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Attendance

(Average daily attendance 6-8)

2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
93.62%	93.58%	94.4%

The state requires a 95% daily attendance participation rate for student taking the Measure of Student Progress (MSP). Therefore, as a minimum Truman Middle School expects a 98% daily attendance. See our action plan for specific intervention put in place to meet this goal.

Planning for Transitions (between grade levels and grades)

Truman Middle School is proud of its dynamic transition plan for fifth graders transitioning into sixth grade. We realize how critical successful transitions are to student achievement in the middle level years. Therefore, we are working to enhance programs and systems to better support students needs academically, emotionally and socially. Currently, Truman staff and administration are working with feeder elementary schools and other middle schools to implement a systematic transition plan. Our challenge was substantial this year, given an additional two-hundred students, but we are proud to say that from our observations the transitions went smoothly.

Characteristics of High Performing Schools

Truman Middle School subscribes to the 9 Essential Characteristics of High Performing Schools. They are as follows:

- Clear and Shared Focus
- High Standards and Expectations for All Students
- Effective School Leadership
- High Levels of Collaboration and Communication
- Curriculum, Instruction and Assessments Aligned with State Standards
- Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching
- Focused Professional Development
- Supportive Learning Environment
- High Levels of Family and Community Involvement

Truman Middle School will focus its efforts on High Levels of Collaboration and Communication, High Standards and Expectations for All Students and High Levels of Family and Community Involvement.

In response to the BERC data we are implementing the following:

- High Standards and Expectations for all Students: Truman Middle School demands High Expectations for all students by increasing rigor through the Teacher Development Group (TDG) and Inquiry by Design (IBD). All students are encouraged to challenge themselves and are afforded the opportunity to take highly capable classes. Students are provided with additional academic support. Extended learning opportunities for students include weekly math tutoring, MSP practice in the classroom and MSP Saturdays. Teachers also offer individual tutoring sessions in all core content areas.
- Curriculum, Instruction and Assessments Aligned with State Standards: Staff continues to work on differentiated curriculum combined with high expectations for all students. Moreover, use of a common language to discuss instruction, combined with a constructivist approach to learning is supported. Writing across the curriculum is likewise supported by having all school writing events and assessing the writing with the MSP writing rubric. TM
- Focused Professional Development: TMS focuses their professional developed on Positive Behavior Supports (PBS), student engagement with a laser focus on student discourse and justify why, clear and focused learning targets that are based on state standards and data driven lesson design. In addition, staff are working continually on the development of Culturally Responsive Teaching.

Professional Development Opportunities

Based on the principle that adult learning is most effective when participants collaborate and share their experiences, Truman has developed an effective professional learning community. We emphasize team building, collaboration, the importance of student data analysis and effective strategies for working with students of poverty in our August staff development day. We expanded our PLC approach to grade and subject specialization across the district and we work effectively in grade level and subject area teams. Every staff meeting is a learning opportunity. Staff is also encouraged to attend district offered trainings in their own subject areas and pedagogy.

Specific programs include 100% participation by math teachers in district PLC's and TDG and 100% participation by language arts teachers in IBD in training and field tests. Building level participation in collaborative analysis of student learning, PLC's, calibration of writing through two all school writing events through staff scoring.

Highly Qualified Teachers (For Title I and Non-Title I schools)

- 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 supports and encourages school-based training 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. Para educators and other staff receive workshop pay to attend both district and school workshops. Para educators and other staff 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 Para-educators qualifications
- HQ Para-educators meet a rigorous standard of quality and can demonstrate knowledge and ability in instructing reading, mathematics and writing.
- Tacoma 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 send 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 HOUSSE 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 development/training is focused on best practices in reading and math.

Recognition of Non-Academic Learning

Middle school is a natural time to help students mature and prepare for high school. At Truman we foster essential social skills, like, effective communication, collaboration, leadership and cooperation. We encourage students to explore the arts and movement through drama, music and visual arts and we offer an extensive array of after school clubs and activities. Co-curricular activities include: sports, SPARX, journalism/yearbook, ASB, Gay/Straight Alliance and National Junior Honor Society.

Safe and Supportive Learning Environment

All students at Truman must feel they are safe, secure, and are members of a caring community. We have high expectations for behavior and we work tirelessly to maintain a safe campus. It is the expectation that students take responsibility for their behavior and recognize strategies for being successful. Truman Middle School is exploring Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) to encourage students to do the right thing. Through PBS students are encouraged to be strong role models for their peers and become responsible community minded citizens.

Equity Issues

Closing the achievement gap is paramount both district-wide and most certainly, at Truman Middle School. We realize that there are significant gaps between our Caucasian students and students representing other ethnicities in reading and math. Staff at TMS has attended professional development in Culturally Responsive Teaching and Culturally Proficient Schools and they are currently studying Teaching with Poverty in Mind. TMS has a commitment to meeting the academic and social needs of our diverse population. Specific programs for meeting students needs include: LAP math, math tutoring, ELL program, Autism program, Success Maker Reading, Special Education course offerings, and intervention reading at the sixth grade level. Extended Learning Opportunities include after school math tutoring each week Monday through Thursday, MSP skill and tools practice in classrooms and MSP Saturdays. Teachers utilize ongoing formative assessments and data analysis through SRI, STAR, DMA and individual classroom assessments. All students participate in two yearly writing activities using the MSP writing rubric. All language arts teachers are participating in district AP training to open avenues for all students. Teachers also participate in a CBA approach to social studies instruction and PLC work in math classes via TDG work.

Technology

We integrate technology into our classrooms as we prepare Truman students to work effectively in an increasingly technological world. With access to computer labs, computers on wheels, document cameras and LCD projectors, interactive smartboards and online textbooks and testing students are learning to use modern technology to find information and solve problems.

Parent, Family and Community Involvement

Truman Middle School recognizes that an active and involved learning community is necessary in order to achieve greatness. Our PTA is an invaluable organization that encourages parent involvement and supports staff and students in and out of the classroom. The PTA fosters community engagement via fund raising and volunteer opportunities. Truman's list of parent and community volunteers continues to grow. Truman sponsors a number of events which welcomes parents into the building. Some of these include Coffee chats with the principal, Student-led Conferences, Veteran's Day Assembly, Pep Assemblies, School dances, Honors Night, PTA meetings, Concerts, Sports activities, Drama presentations and academic improvement nights. More importantly the staff and administration at TMS provide information to parents on how they can advocate and support their student from home. Staff members provide

information to parents via phone, email, mail and their teacher swift sites. Other information is shared through the monthly PTA newsletter, weekly connect-ed. messages and flyers.

Coordination of Fiscal Services

The budget for Truman Middle School is determined by the district and based on student enrollment. The budget is coordinated in building by the principal and office coordinator. Fund raising through ASB supports student activities, while our PTA supports many classroom endeavors.