

From a “D” to an “A:”

A Journey to Academic Excellence

South Lake Elementary School

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3 Principals
with 3 perspectives of the same school!

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Principal Apollo Elementary
“The Early Years”

Donna Neill

Principal Pinewood Elementary
“A + Plan and AYP”

Nancy Nichols

Principal South Lake Elementary
“Kicking it up a Notch”

The Early Years

Identify causes that prevent success

- Administration
- Teaching staff
- Classroom Management
- Parents
- Students
- Community

Existing Conditions Administration:

- Vision and expectations
- Inconsistency

Teachers

- Low morale & respect
- Negativity
- Sabotage
- Lack of skills
- No standards
- Need for assistance

Parents

- Lack of involvement & support
- Programs were not implemented successfully to educate parents
- Lack of positive relationships

Students

- Behavior
- Student beliefs

Community

- Interactions
- Resistance to change

Solution Strategies

“When there is shared vision, all are proud to be part of the organization. They are motivated to give their best because they are on a team that is committed to important values.”

(Brubaker, 1994)

Solution Strategies: Teachers

- Quality
- Attract & retain
- Encourage negative teachers
- Extinguish the attitude of failure

Teachers

- Teacher turnover
- Ruby Payne training
- Establish a support base
- The “right way” to teach
- Celebrate & learn
- Meet regularly

Teachers

- Staff Development
- Empower teachers
- Monitor
- Accountability

Parents

- Communicate
- Involve
- Listen

Students

- Expectations
- Standardize procedures
- Parents & teachers
- Celebrate success

Community

- Publicity
- Build relationships
- Pizza night discounts
- Variety Shows
- Revamp PTO
- Family Nights

Next Steps

- Develop a passion and commitment for the kind of learning environment that you envision.

“Shared Leadership” is a must for survival.
Act as one, supporting each other.

Discipline Issues: Why be concerned?

How does it affect your school?

Classroom

Are classrooms set up for potential problems? Look at teacher assignments and classroom arrangements.

Bus

Are bus procedures in place? Do bus drivers have a plan?

Cafeteria

How are cafeterias monitored? classrooms set up for potential problems?

Staff

Does the staff believe in what you believe?

The Struggles Every One Faces

- Be prepared for resistance. Change is sometimes hard to accept.
- Be prepared to go to the mat for what you believe.
- Be prepared for holes in the work force. Make good hiring choices. Hire respectful employees.
- Be prepared for the approach to force you into compliance with others' vision.

- Remembering Heifitz: “go to the balcony and look down at the dancers” has given us a whole new perspective on managing the school. This ability to reflect while the action is taking place will enable you to develop multiple viewpoints.
- One of the most important things...is listen to your own voice. This insight is so very important when making judgments and decisions that affect the school community.
- Believe that you can make a difference!

Now AYP

1999 – D

2000 – C

2002 – B

2003 – A AYP – No ☹️

We have the “A” -- We need
AYP!

Inclusion

- 2003 – 2004 began mainstreaming SLD
- 2004 – 2005 began mainstreaming Primary EH
- 2005 – 2006 full inclusion with the ability to self-contain (VE) if necessary

Benefits of Inclusion

- ESE student achievement rose
- Fewer behavior problems
- Higher self-esteem
- Greater acceptance by basic students
- 2004 & 2005 – AYP status attained!

Small Group Rotations

- One or two teachers or instructional assistants go into a basic classroom to provide small group instruction while classroom teacher does the same
- Student rotate from teacher to teacher

Benefits of Small-Group Rotations

- Lower student/teacher ratio
- ALL student closely monitored
- Differentiated instruction to attain standards/skill mastery
- Immediate intensive intervention
- 2004 & 2005 – AYP status attained!

Remediation / FCAT Prep

- Lowest 25% and any other students identified as below grade level attend remediation in lieu of activities
- Instruction is driven by FCAT test item specifications targeting areas of student deficiency

Benefits of Remediation & FCAT Prep

- Lowest 25% and other below grade level students receive help intensive help in deficient areas
- Close monitoring of the lowest 25%
- Instruction with a different teacher in varied presentation styles
- 2004 & 2005 – AYP status attained!

TRIP Manuals

- Teacher Resource for Instructional Procedures
 - Standardized Test Data
 - By the Numbers
 - Sunshine State Standards
 - Test Item Specifications
 - ESOL
 - ESE Modifications
 - D & D Test Scores / Friday Quizzes
 - Reading
 - Math
 - Grade Specific Information
 - Goals
 - NCLB
 - Professional Development Plan

Benefits of TRIP Manual

- Pertinent information at teachers' fingertips
- Insures a laser focus
- Student data accessible for weekly team meetings
- No one slips through the cracks
- Accountability
- 2004 & 2005 – AYP status attained!

Student Goal Setting

- Student and teacher develop realistic goals
- Initially based on previous years' FCAT results
- Updated after each D & D assessment (school based formative assessment)
- Goal achievement rewarded

Benefits of Student Goal Setting

- Student's take ownership of learning
- Students are motivated to improve
- Self-reflection as a learning tool
- Success breeds success with students
- 2004 & 2005 – AYP status attained!

Teacher Manipulation of Data

- Teachers access and disaggregate class / student data
- Determine areas of teaching weakness / strength
- Analyze students' strengths / weaknesses

Benefits of Teacher Data Manipulation

- Greater sense of ownership / accountability for classroom success
- In-depth knowledge of each child
- Instruction focused on success for all
- Struggling student identified and targeted
- 2004 & 2005 – AYP status attained!

Meeting with all Level 1 & 2 **Students and Parents**

- Administration meets with all Level 1 & 2 students and their parents
- Teachers meet with all Level 1 & 2 students and their parents
- Periodic follow-up meetings throughout the year

Benefits of Meeting with Level 1 & 2 Students and Parents

- Realistic view of students' current achievement level
- Information about what we are doing to meet the student needs
- Parent support for teacher/school efforts
- Assistance may be provided at home
- When parents care – students care
- 2004 & 2005 – AYP status attained!

Teacher Professional Development Plans

- Individual teacher PDPs are focused on professional development resulting in increased student achievement
- PDPs (action research) are based on measurable outcomes

Benefits of Teacher Professional Development Plans

- Professional development targeted for individual teacher needs and interests
- Results of action research is evaluated and analyzed
- Meaningful professional development
- Improved student achievement
- 2004 & 2005 – AYP status attained!

Now AYP

- 1999 – D
- 2000 – C
- 2002 – B
- 2003 – A AYP – No ☹️
- 2004 – A AYP – Yes 😊
- 2005 – A AYP – Yes 😊
- 2006 - ? AYP - ?
- We have the “A” -- We have AYP!

The Journey from a “D” to an “A”

Demographics

Number of students	470
F & R	79%
African-American	52%
White	48%
ESE	22%

A+ Plan and AYP Data

Year	Grade	AYP
1999	D	
2000	C	
2001	C	
2002	B	
2003	A	No
2004	A	Yes
2005	A	Yes
2006	A	Yes

Barriers to Success

Personnel- staff turnover

Student behavior

Teachers did not feel responsible
for student success

2006-2007

**How will South Lake
kick it up a notch?**

- Continue strong academic focus
- Continue inclusion of ESE student into basic classrooms
- Continue small group instruction for reading
- Continue the focus on Writing for Grade 4 and 3
- Continue dedicated science teacher for Grades 5 and 4
- Continue small group skill instruction for lowest 25% in reading
- Continue to monitor DIBELS assessments K-6

NEW for 2006-2007

- Implement small group instruction for math
- Implement small group skill instruction for lowest 25% in math
- Closely monitor science instruction in Grades K-3 and Grade 6
- Create a strong leadership team with the new assistant principal
- Teachers will develop goals for 2007 FCAT performance