

Morton Street Middle School
5-16-2005 to 5-18-2005
Introduction

The New Jersey Department of Education conducted a CAPA (Collaborative Assessment for Planning and Achievement) review of Elementary School on 5-16 to 5-18-2005. This school is designated as “in need of improvement” for four consecutive years as defined in the *NJ Accountability Workbook*. *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) §1117: School Support and Recognition requires that the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) create and maintain a statewide system of intensive and sustained support for those Title I schools designated as “in need of improvement” for four consecutive years. As part of this required support system, the NJDOE developed the CAPA review process, which assigns teams of skillful and experienced individuals to provide schools with practical, applicable, and helpful assistance, increasing the opportunity for all students to meet the state’s Core Curriculum Content Standards. CAPA is required for all Title I schools in corrective action.

The CAPA review team activities included:

- A review of the documents collected for the school portfolio and data profile;
- 20 classroom observations;
- General observations, such as morning and afternoon arrival and dismissal, lunch in the cafeteria, and student restrooms;
- 23 interviews with teachers;
- 13 interviews with building leadership and administrators;
- 3 interviews with district administrators;
- 42 interviews with students;
- 11 interviews with school and student support staff; and
- 8 interviews with parents.

Following the study of documentation, and the conducting of interviews and observations, the team discussed each standard and its indicators. Based on these findings, the team offered its recommendations

Team members and their affiliation included:

TEAM POSITION	NAME	AFFILIATION
Team Lead	Keisha Smith-Carrington	NJ Department of Education
Principal	Katherine A. Trimarco, Ed.D.	Educational Consultant
Language Arts Literacy Specialist	Katherine A. Trimarco, Ed.D.	Educational Consultant
Mathematics Specialist	Naser Nesheiwat	District Supervisor of Mathematics Jersey City Public Schools
Special Education Specialist	Joe Jakabowski	Educational Consultant
Special Education Specialist	Michele Elek	Supervisor of Special Education Newark Public Schools
Parent	Shirley Johnson	Statewide Parent Action Network (SPAN)
Institution of Higher Education	Reggie Lewis	NJ Department of Education
District Liaison	Gus Truppo	Supervisor of Teaching & Learning Newark Public Schools
DOE Liaison	Carlos Rodriguez	NJ Department of Education

Academic Performance Standards

The following Academic Performance Standards address curriculum, classroom evaluation/assessment, and instruction.

- Standard 1:** The school develops and implements a curriculum that is rigorous, intentional and aligned to state and local standards.
- Standard 2:** The school uses multiple evaluation and assessment strategies to continuously monitor and modify instruction to meet student needs and support proficient student work.
- Standard 3:** The school's instructional program actively engages all students by using effective, varied, and research-based practices to improve student academic performance.

Learning Environment Standards

The following Learning Environment Standards address school culture; student, family and community support, professional growth, development and evaluation.

- Standard 4:** The school functions as an effective learning community and supports a climate conducive to performance excellence.
- Standard 5:** The school works with families and community groups to remove barriers to learning in an effort to meet the intellectual, social, career, and developmental needs of students consistent with 6A: 10A-3.6 Supports for Parents and Families and NCLB §1118 Parental Involvement.
- Standard 6:** The school provides research based, results driven professional development opportunities for staff and implements performance evaluation procedures in order to improve teaching and learning.

Efficiency Standards

The following Efficiency Standards address leadership, school culture and resources and comprehensive and effective planning.

- Standard 7:** School instructional decisions focus on support for teaching and learning, organizational direction, high performance expectations, creating a learning culture, developing leadership capacity.
- Standard 8:** There is evidence that the school is organized to maximize use of all available resources to support high student and staff performance.
- Standard 9:** The School Leadership Council and district planning team develops, implements, and evaluates a three-year operational plan/school improvement plan that communicates a clear purpose, direction and action plan focused on improving teaching and learning.

Summary Findings in: ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE (QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION)

STANDARD 1-CURRICULUM: The district P-12 curriculum is rigorous and aligned to state standards.

1.1b The district initiates discussions among schools regarding curriculum standards and frameworks to ensure they are clearly articulated across all levels (P-12).

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher, administrators, literacy coach interviews
- Review of lesson plans
- Classroom observations
- Class schedules
- Grade level meeting agendas

Findings:

There is limited vertical articulation across grade levels or genuine horizontal articulation within grades. Weekly grade level meetings are scheduled. Grade level meetings as constituted do not provide horizontal articulation among teachers. There is evidence that special education staff members attend grade level meetings, however, the sixth grade language arts literacy teacher and the social studies teacher do not attend grade level meetings with the math/science teacher. Seventh and eighth grade language arts literacy/social studies Teachers do not meet with math/science teachers at grade level meetings.. All meetings are chaired and facilitated with an agenda prepared by the administration. There is some evidence from agendas that meetings include discussion of the standards but observations do not support that efforts transfer to most curriculum taught in the classroom.

1.1e The curriculum requires all students to take courses with sufficient academic rigor to prepare for college preparatory courses and pass the HSPA, and provides specific links to life and career options.

Evidence for this indicator based on:

Classroom observations

- Teacher, student interviews
- Review of lesson plans
- Principal's Quarterly Reports

Findings:

The curriculum provides some connections that present post-secondary education and career options, but the effort is not intentional across the curriculum. In the review of lesson plans, it could not be determined that career planning is infused within daily instruction. Student interviews confirm that career planning was limited. Opportunities for application of skills, knowledge, and processes are not integrated throughout the curriculum. Existing programs in place consist of Career Day, Law Day, Job Shadowing Day, an aviation field trip, and quarterly professional guest speakers.

1.1f The district works with supervisors and faculty to systematically monitor, evaluate and adjust the curriculum based on the evidence of student achievement.

Evidence for this indicator based on:

- Review of the Three-Year Operational Plan
- Review of the SLC manual
- Review NJASK3 and 4 , GEPA Assessment Results
- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- Class Schedules
- Lesson Plan Review
- Language Arts Literacy Curriculum, Grades 6-8, 2002-2003
- Social Studies/Multicultural Guide, Grades 5-8, 2001-2002

Findings:

Evidence for the systematic monitoring, evaluation, and adjustment of the curriculum based on evidence of student achievement is limited. An activity schedule is considered to be the master schedule by the School Leadership Team. There is no evidence of a master schedule representing the actual instructional and curricular programming for this school. Individual teacher schedules, grades 6–8, were provided for our observation of classroom teachers, however, these schedules lacked completeness. There is no indication on the schedules that there are rotations in service to students in the rooms posted. The schedules indicate no time for travel between class periods or the lunch period. During observations, we found that classes did not begin at the stated times, cutting severely into the language arts literacy schedule.

The class schedules for language arts literacy teachers in grades 7 and 8 have blocks of time for language arts literacy / social studies integration. However, observations of these classrooms indicate that there was no integration of social studies. There was no information in the sample lesson plans that established a linkage of social studies and language arts. Comments written by administrators on the lesson plans do not indicate monitoring or recommendations for adjustment to the curriculum or instruction to incorporate social studies. The language arts literacy /social studies teacher schedules show a block of time for social studies instruction. Observations indicate that there is social studies instruction during the social studies period. Classrooms did not have the typical resources such as globes or maps. The textbooks appear to be aligned to the 1996 Standards and may not adequately represent the current curriculum. Students have access to newspapers.

The District Curriculum Guides in the teachers' possession do have the current New Jersey Core Curriculum Contents Standards in both language arts literacy and social studies. The RTC periodically visits the school. Reports indicate that most visits are a conference with an administrator or class visits. Evidence exists that the monthly writing samples are reviewed. There is little evidence to support that the effort leads to adjustment of the curriculum.

1.1g The curriculum provides access to a common academic core for all students including, but not limited to, special education and ELL students.

Evidence for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Teachers, administrators, district bilingual supervisor interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

All students observed in Language Arts Literacy classrooms received instruction in a common academic core, as evidenced by objectives directed to the whole class. The implemented curriculum did not discriminate among students. The curriculum did not challenge or elicit higher order thinking and problem-solving skills from students nor did it address individual student needs. All teachers observed during language arts literacy or language arts literacy/social studies were using the 'novel' for instruction with the whole class for the majority of the lesson. Most teachers read the text to the students, eliciting questions at the lowest levels of the cognitive taxonomy. There was the lack of contextual knowledge and real or developed experiences with historical periods, people, and events needed to interact with the content of the book. Many students had to be encouraged to follow the reading and were admonished that they were facing a test within two weeks. One of the observed classes had groups of students actively engaged in learning vocabulary words from the novel with the aid of dictionaries and the 'word wall.'

English Language Learners

The schedule provided to the CAPA Team for the ESL program was not in use and the students listed could not be corroborated as students requiring service. Some observations indicated serious issues including: service for appropriately classified ESL students, planning and good instructional practices for ELL learners, and the lack of reading and ancillary materials comparable to the general education population and appropriate for these ELL learners.

1.1h The principal and faculty work together to ensure that the district curriculum determines what is taught through the review of lesson plans and teacher peer review of curricular standards and the best method of teaching them.

Evidence for this indicator based on:

- Review of the SLC manual, three-year operational plan and lesson plans
- Review NJASK3 and 4 Assessment Results
- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

Feedback has been provided on some lesson plans. Some of the feedback is limited but some feedback offers more prescriptive information. However, there is no indication from the classroom observations that this review modifies instructional practices. There is insufficient evidence to support that conferences have been held to work on development of better practices or strategies to meet the needs of the students.

STANDARD 1

RECOMMENDATIONS

Language Arts Literacy

- 1 Construct a Master Schedule to maximize the instructional and curricular program for student achievement. When scheduling, consider how best to service students with clearly defined mandated periods of Language Arts Literacy and Social Studies. Look at the schedule for incorporation of vertical articulation across the grades. Use the weekly grade level meetings for all teachers to participate in grade articulation. The Master Schedule should include realistic allotments of time for movement from period to period, breakfast to first class, and lunch to subsequent period. A brief homeroom period may be a good consideration to ease the orderly transition of students to a departmentalized day. Require attendance in departmentalized classes to promote time on learning. At the beginning of the first instructional period, announcements should cease to protect instructional time.
- 2 Replace the 1996 Standards included in documents Language Arts Literacy Curriculum Grades 6-8, 2002-2003 and Social Studies/Multicultural Guide, Grades 5-8, 2001-2002 with the 2004 New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS) in language arts literacy and social studies.
- 3 Monitor, evaluate, and adjust the curriculum and instruction based on the evidence of student achievement on an ongoing basis,.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

1. The ESL program is in need of proactive guidance from the school administrators. Guidance at the school level and support from the District Bilingual Department is needed to ensure that classified English Language Learners (ELL) learners are provided an appropriate learning program. The District Bilingual Department needs to provide correct levels of learning and assessment data with specificity for students to receive individualized instruction. A correct schedule should be prepared. ELL students should not be prevented from participating in programs including physical education. Best practices should be taught and adherence to ESL and Language Arts Literacy Standards are essential to the program for the ELL learners. Lesson plans should be developed and reviewed by the school administration.

STANDARD 2 -CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION: The district and school use multiple evaluation and assessment strategies to continuously monitor and modify instruction to meet student needs and support proficient student work.

2.1a Assessments created by teachers, school and district are frequent, rigorous, aligned with NJ CCCS, used to gauge student learning and adjust teaching to individual needs.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans, student work folders, portfolios
- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

Language Arts Literacy assessments are not always rigorous, monitored, supported by rubric, and/or authentic. After January 2004 the quality of work in folders appears to have diminished. It was observed in some classes that portfolios contained unfinished assessments. Many portfolios have work without comment or limited comments. There does not appear to be an articulated school policy or written procedures to use assessment as a tool for learning.

2.1b Teachers collaborate to design authentic classroom assessments aligned with the CCCs

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Local curriculum documents and units of study
- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

There is insufficient evidence that teachers collaborate to design authentic tools that are aligned to the NJ CCCS. Within classes, there is uniform assessment without provision for student choice. Opportunities for students to demonstrate learning in varied and authentic ways are limited.

2.1c Students can articulate the academic expectations in each class and know what is required to be proficient. Academic expectations are clearly communicated, evident in classrooms and observable in student work.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Principal, vice principal, teachers, students, interviews
- Classroom observations

From information derived from all interviews and observations in classrooms, the focus for academic expectations is achievement on GEPA and District tests. The message to students in class is you need to learn to do well on the tests. Most students provided basic information about school expectations. An indication of passing or good work could be identified as a number on a rubric. If pressed for criteria for the numerical value, little detail was offered. Most students validated their competency on teacher approval with essentially no reliance on self-evaluation.

2.1d Test scores are used by the district and school to identify curriculum gaps.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher, principal interviews

- Review of lesson plans
- Classroom observations
- Progressive Data Analysis (PDA) forms

Findings:

Evidence exists that teachers have completed Progressive Data Analysis (PDA) forms. This process is perceived as burdensome as it does not appear to be useful. It does not appear to be used to drive instruction. Since December 2004, we did not find evidence to support an ongoing process. For 2005, we have seen a March and an April PDA for grades 6-8. Both PDAs focus on the District Monthly Writing Assessment. Neither PDA has specificity, clarity of the areas of strength/growth or genuine action plans.

2.1e Multiple assessments are designed and used to gauge student learning and to adjust teaching to meet individual student needs.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Review of Lesson Plans
- Classroom observations

Findings:

There is insufficient evidence in Language Arts Literacy classes to indicate that students choose ways to demonstrate learning based on multiple intelligences and preferred learning styles. Classroom observations indicate whole class instruction with questions at the lower level of the cognitive taxonomy directed to all students.

2.1h Samples of student assessments are shared among teachers and analyzed to inform instruction and to revise curriculum and pedagogy.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher, principal, vice principals interviews
- Classroom observations
- Student Portfolios

Findings:

There is insufficient evidence to indicate that student assessments are shared among teachers and analyzed to inform instruction. Student work does not indicate an analysis to revise instruction, curriculum, or assessment. Most portfolios have not been developed to analyze the progress of student work over time.

STANDARD 2

RECOMMENDATIONS

Language Arts Literacy

1. Conduct an in-depth analysis of current data aggregation and disaggregating to determine the best use of data to drive instructional and assessment practices. Consider the needs of all students including special education and English Language Learner students.
2. Evaluate and review with teachers the purpose of a Progressive Data Analysis (PDA). Development of the monthly PDA should be thoughtfully planned with specificity and a real action plan to accomplish goals. Teachers should be active participants in the study and development of the PDAs since they have the major responsibility for the delivery of instruction. To ensure implementation, school leadership should monitor on a continuous basis and provide feedback to the faculty.
3. Students need to be empowered to understand and value their work. Attention should be paid to the maintenance of quality work folders that reflects a progression of accomplishments. Students should have timely, informative feedback of their work as well as to be taught to use assessment tools/various rubrics to self-evaluate work.

STANDARD 3 -INSTRUCTION: Instruction engages all students by using effective, varied and research-based practices to improve academic performance.

3.1a There is evidence that effective and varied instructional strategies are used in all classrooms.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Review of lesson
- Classroom observations

Findings:

There is little evidence in language arts literacy classes that instructional strategies accommodate the learning needs and learning styles of students. Whole group instruction was the method observed in the majority of classes. There is insufficient evidence that monitoring or feedback by school leadership leads to modification of instruction to meet the needs of all students. However, an interview with a team of teachers and a reading tutor yielded information about collaboration on an interdisciplinary unit. The teachers were given two days of substitute coverage to develop the unit. The enthusiasm was genuine and the concepts they were able to develop were profound.

3.1b Instructional strategies and learning activities are aligned with the district, school and state goals and assessments.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

All language arts literacy teachers observed utilized the ‘novel’ for instruction. However, the associated learning activities did not employ diverse instructional strategies or creative learning activities. In most classes, the reading to the students and the singular strategy of whole class instruction encouraged passive behavior by the students.

3.1c Instructional strategies and activities are continuously monitored and aligned with individual student needs.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Teacher, administrator interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

Insufficient evidence exists to support that there is continuous monitoring of instructional strategies and activities. A review of lesson plans indicate that administrators comment on lesson preparation and make note of such issues as repetitiveness of particular lesson plans. However, it is not clear that this monitoring effectively modifies instruction. The disputed practice was observed in the plan book and in the classroom.

3.1d Teachers demonstrate the content knowledge necessary to challenge and motivate students to high levels of learning.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- Review of lesson plans

Findings:

Most language arts teachers did not demonstrate the content knowledge necessary to challenge and motivate students to high levels of learning. During interviews, the teachers articulated expectations for their programs and competently spoke about their planning and their content areas. However, most classroom observations indicate a low level of content, oral and written expression, and literacy skills. There were many positive working relationships between students and teachers.

3.1e There is evidence that teachers incorporate technology in their classrooms.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Technology Coordinator interview
- Classroom observations
- Computer Lab observation

Findings:

Some students were observed using computers, basically for word processing, in their classrooms. Other observations revealed that teachers, including a special needs teacher, were instructing their students in the computer lab. Also observed working in the lab was the technology coordinator with a full class of students, a group of student preparing a second edition of a school newsletter, and two special needs students learning PowerPoint presentation. The technology coordinator maintains a full teaching schedule as well as offers daily technology support to faculty.

All classrooms except the first floor classrooms and three classrooms on the fourth floor have been networked. The NJ School Technology Survey Report has been filed for this year. A survey of students, parents, and teachers has been conducted to look at strengths and needs. The data has been aggregated and a narrative will be prepared to cogently present the results.

3.1f The district and school ensure that instructional resources are sufficient and that all instructional materials are aligned to the curriculum.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- Review of lesson plans

Findings:

Instructional resources appear to be recent purchases with alignment to the curriculum. Books, leveled readers, and anthologies appear to be plentiful. Teachers indicated that the levels of the McDougal-Littell anthology are not suitable for all the readers in the class. Some teachers suggested independent books at the lower end of the reading levels. Some teachers wanted tapes for students who needed to experience listening to the text. Many teachers expressed concerns with the 'novel', including the level of reading for all students and the suitability/interest of the content.

3.1g Teachers examine and discuss student work collaboratively and use this information to inform their practice.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- Student Portfolios
- Grade Level Meetings

Findings:

There is limited evidence that language arts literacy teachers examine and analyze the work of their students to inform instructional practice. It appears that teachers informally discuss students in attempts to monitor behavior and increase work productivity.

3.1h There is evidence that homework is frequent, evaluated and tied to instructional practice.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher, SLC , student interviews
- Classroom observations
- Student Portfolios
- Review of lesson plans

Findings:

Everyone interviewed reported that homework is given every day but the purpose and relationship is sometimes unclear. Observations revealed that many homework assignments were to complete what had not been accomplished during class. Insufficient evidence exists to determine whether homework was monitored or completed.

STANDARD 3

RECOMMENDATIONS

Language Arts Literacy

1. Provide staff development on varied instructional strategies and higher order thinking skills. Model student-centered instructional activities. Collaborate with teachers to incorporate varied instructional strategies and higher order thinking in lessons. Provide staff development for upgrading content knowledge and professional practice to correspond to complex and sensitive topics in all areas of the curriculum.
2. Review lesson plans and monitor classroom implementation on an ongoing basis. Review homework assignments and ensure that they extend student learning and provide opportunities for authentic application. All homework should be evaluated with meaningful feedback provided to students.

STANDARD 4 -SCHOOL CULTURE: The school functions as an effective learning community and supports a climate conducive to performance excellence.

4.1a The principal and school leadership are responsible for and support a safe, orderly, and equitable learning environment.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher, student, non-instructional staff interviews
- Classroom observations

- Review of EVVRS violence/vandalism report
- Review of 2003/04 suspension report
- Parent surveys

Findings:

Many programs including After School Youth Development, SES, and 21st Century provide a safe and equitable learning environment. All of the individuals interviewed state that they feel safe in the school. The district discipline policy and procedures are in place. A referral system is established by the PRC committee for students experiencing behavioral issues. The school had a total of 18 suspensions (5.1%) for the 2003-04 school year. The EVVRS Major category totals by school report for 2003-2004 indicates two incidents of vandalism and one weapon incident. Classroom observations of the facility indicate that the building is extraordinarily clean and safe.

4.1b The principal and school community (e.g., teachers and parents) foster the belief that all children can learn at high levels.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Local curriculum documents and units of study
- Teacher, support staff interviews
- Classroom observations
- Review of the three year operational plan

Findings:

School leadership expressed a commitment to high academic expectations for all students. However, there is little useful time set aside for teachers to collaborate with support staff on instructional issues or to collaborate between grade levels to share successful instructional strategies. While the school's mission statement has been established, most teachers, students and staff are unable to articulate it. Since there is minimal understanding, goals and decisions are not made based on the mission statement.

4.1c Teachers hold high expectations for all students academically and behaviorally, and this is evidenced in their practices. There is evidence that teachers care about students and inspire their best efforts.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Local curriculum documents and units of study
- Teacher, student, support staff member interviews
- Classroom observations
- Review of three year operational plan

Findings:

Interviews with staff and teachers indicate that they demonstrate a belief that they have high expectations for all students. Students state that teachers have high expectations because they encourage them to do better. With few exceptions, lessons did not demonstrate the rigor correlated to high expectations nor was some the student work age or developmentally appropriate. Instruction did not foster higher order thinking skills. Classrooms in all grades were calm and orderly. There was evidence that the principles

of the behavior management program Consistency Management Cooperative Discipline (CMCD) were consistently applied.

4.1e Teachers accept responsibility for student success/failure.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Local curriculum documents and units of study
- Teacher, student, support staff member interviews
- Classroom observations
- Review of three year operational plan

Findings:

Weekly grade level meetings are supposed to include time for teachers to reflect upon their instructional practices and the impact these have on student performance. Teachers and staff members recognize the important role they have in the education of their students but there is little evidence that reflection on teaching practice is part of any formal structure other than the district professional development programs. Teachers do not provide students with opportunities to constructively evaluate their instructional performance.

4.1f The school matches teacher strengths and experience with the needs of students. The school assigns staff to maximize opportunities for all students to have access to the staff's instructional strengths.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Local curriculum documents and units of study
- Teacher interviews, support staff member
- Support staff member interviews

Findings:

It appears that students are randomly placed in classes. There is no evidence that student groupings are created based on instructional needs or staff strengths. There is no master schedule in place to support student needs or teachers' instructional strengths. The teacher-student ratio is lower than the Abbott requirement for all classrooms.

4.1g Teachers communicate regularly with families by meetings, phone calls, notes and e-mail about their children's progress.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Parent Liaison interview
- Support staff member, Principal, Teacher and student interviews

Findings:

Multiple methods are used to communicate with parents including home visits, phone calls, newsletters, flyers, cable television and the school website. Teachers are required to communicate with parents on a

regular basis. Each teacher maintains a log of parent contact. A school web page is available that includes the following information: school history, mission statement, technology resources, staffing, a listing of student clubs, and the SLC. Parents are welcome to make appointments with their child's teacher. Teachers communicate regularly with parents when there are concerns with student behaviors. Progress reports are sent regularly and in some cases teachers add specific comments for each student.

4.1j Student achievement is highly valued and publicly celebrated (for example, displays of exemplary student work, assemblies).

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Classroom and hallway observations
- Local curriculum documents and units of study
- Teacher, support staff, student interviews

Findings:

Student work is displayed in all hallways and classrooms, and is shared with parents during parent/teacher conferences and there is some evidence that it is shared with the community. Interviews indicate that assembly programs are held to recognize student achievements and the principal regularly recognizes students using the public address system. There is evidence that rubrics are used to evaluate student work and that the students are aware of the scoring rubrics.

4.1k The school supports the physical, cultural and intellectual needs of all students, which reflects a commitment to equity and an appreciation of diversity.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Support staff member interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

The staff exhibits sensitivity to the cultural needs of the students and community. The PRC committee has designed a process to support the various health and social needs of the students. School policy and practice demonstrate a commitment to equal opportunity and diversity. Multicultural considerations are integrated into the school curriculum, but not always at the highest level of intellectual rigor.

STANDARD 4

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A plan should be designed and implemented to provide all teachers with a common and collaborative planning time that allows for review of student work and reflection on instructional practices to improve student performance. A review of staff capacity should be made to determine collaboration, horizontally and vertically on student performance and classroom instruction.
2. Parents and staff should be surveyed regarding access and use of technology as a resource for communicating student progress and accomplishments, and other pertinent information. Continue to investigate strategies to inform the community on student progress.
3. Expand the method of communication between teachers and parents. Teachers should communicate with parents at least once a month using all communication modes available: phone, notes, home visits, letters, etc.. Communication should include student accomplishments and praise for appropriate behavior and demonstrations of good character.

STANDARD 5: STUDENT, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The school works with families and community groups to remove barriers to learning in an effort to meet the intellectual, social, career and developmental needs of students.

5.1a Families and the community are active partners with the school and district in the promotion of programs and services for all students.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher, parent, student, SLC, support staff member interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

There are very few parents involved in the school despite efforts to involve them. There are active community groups present in the school. There is no school policy related to staff and parents working together. Parent interviews indicated that the school initiates an “open door policy” for parents. Basically, parents visit the school when contacted by the school regarding their child’s behavior. Evidence indicated parental support only during Back to School Night, Parent/Teacher Conferences, and Student Performances. There is an SLC in the school with policies and procedures for sub-committees and recruitment. Currently the parents who are on the SLC committee cannot attend meetings due to scheduling conflicts. The election documentation validating the process for new membership is available, however, membership terms are not reflected in bylaws. Community representatives are actively involved in the development of the three-year operational plan.

5.1b The school ensures that that ALL students are taught what they are expected to learn and are tested on, with specific attention to special education and English Language Learner students.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Three-year operational plan
- Teacher, parent, student, SLC, support staff member interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

The school has an active community support team. There is an after school inclusion program. Targeted support services are provided in the areas of community and district-wide workshops, supplemental education services (SES), 21st Century Inclusion program, Saturday GEPA Academy and a high school fair to inform students about choices after graduation from the school. Services are open to all students as the school qualifies as school-wide Title I programming. Student achievement data is not used as the entrance criteria for school-based extended day and year programs. Enrollment is on a first-come, first-served basis. There is no evidence of a program evaluation. There were very few observations of technology being used.

5.1d Students receive necessary additional assistance to support their learning in and beyond the classroom.

1. The school jointly developed with, and distributes to, parents of Title I students a written parental involvement policy that describes the means for carrying out NCLB parental involvement requirements. §1118(b)
2. The school convenes an annual meeting of parents of Title I children to inform them of the NCLB parental involvement requirements. §1118(c)
3. The school has a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, staff and student share responsibility for student achievement. §1118(d)
4. The school builds capacity for parental involvement through use of the 14 mechanisms outlined in the NCLB legislation. §1118(e)
5. The school and district provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities and parents of migratory children. §1118(f)
6. The school and district inform parents of the existence of statewide parental resource and information centers. §1118(g)

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher, parent, student, SLC, support staff member interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

The Title I program and support services are integrated and support the learning needs of all students. There is no specific criteria for access to school-based after school programs. Students are assigned to the SES program and the 21st Century program on a first come, first served basis. The after school ASK 4 and GEPA programs are voluntary for 4th grade students and mandatory for the 8th grade students. There is some collaboration between classroom teachers and providers of extended school services, since some teachers are tutors, however, the collaboration does not fully address closing achievement gaps across

subpopulations. Documentation, observation and interviews indicate that services beyond the classroom are available. A review of the documentation and interviews did not identify a selection process for students to participate in these programs. There is no documentation to support the effectiveness of these after school programs. The school adequately reaches out to community agencies but needs to build capacity for greater parental involvement.

STANDARD 5

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Leadership and staff should develop clearly defined procedures to increase parental involvement in order to enhance student learning and performance. The school leadership should review its current structure and organizational focus regarding the involvement of parents in the school. A parent committee of the SLC should be formed to consider strategies and meetings that meet the needs of the parents. Programs should be developed to provide literacy and technology training for parents.
2. Leadership should develop, implement and monitor continuous and formalized collaboration among teachers, Title I SES programs, after school programs, and the 21st Century program to ensure coordination of the delivery of services that promote student achievement.
3. Develop a written parental involvement policy and include all stakeholders in the process.
4. Establish scheduled meetings of the SLC during a timeframe inclusive of parents and adapt, and strengthen long-range planning.

STANDARD 6 – PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

The school and district provide professional development opportunities based on an evaluation of individual and collective teacher needs.

6.1a There is evidence of a school wide professional growth plan that supports collaboration among staff and decreases isolation and fragmentation.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- District professional development plan
- Three-Year Operational Plan
- Teacher, administrator, SLC Interviews

Findings:

Morton offers a variety of professional development opportunities, as evidenced by its Three-Year Operational plan and related documentation. However, the school did not provide sufficient evidence of the existence of a school-wide professional growth plan that outlines ways to address the specific needs of teachers, including staff's long-term growth needs in literacy, mathematics, science, and other subject areas. supports for greater staff reflection and reducing isolation. Administrators, teachers, and members

of the SLC sub-committee conduct professional development planning annually. All teachers are eligible to participate in district-wide training offerings detailed in the district's professional development plan.

A review of attendance logs verify staff participation in various literacy and math workshops this year. A number of such professional development offerings can be found on the "Morton Street Language Arts Literacy Review" schedule: Writing (tools to analyze writer's strength), Reading (guided reading strategies, Read Alouds), analyzing student work, and progressive data analysis (PDA). However, the review list was developed for the 2003-04 academic year and repeated during the current school year. And outside of a few areas cited in the Three-Year Operational Plan for the upcoming year, the overall thrust of literacy could not be determined for this year, next year and beyond.

Extensive and ongoing training opportunities are provided for math instruction (per the Every Day and Connected Math Series). However, a complete listing of interdisciplinary training opportunities was not available. There is no clear sense of how overall professional development is integrated within and across all grades and subjects.

6.1c District-wide professional development priorities are set by aligning the goals for student performance with the evidence of achievement and with the Professional Improvement Plans (PIP) of teachers and principals.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Three Year Operational Plan
- District Professional Development Plan
- Sample anonymous PIPs
- Teacher, administrator, support staff members interviews

Findings:

According to the Newark District Professional Development plan, district-wide professional development opportunities are determined based on results of analysis of student achievement data. Yet it was difficult to determine how well the school aligns the needs of its teachers with the learning needs of students, the school's three-year operational plan, and district opportunities.

A review of a sample of professional improvement plans (PIPs) confirms the diligence of teachers in identifying a range of content-area and pedagogical needs. Grade level/common planning meetings, district and school-level professional development workshops, were often cited as the mechanism or "forum" to meet teacher needs. However, such activities lacked specificity in detail, including descriptions of topics to be addressed during workshops and meetings with colleagues.

The PIP process appears to be aligned to literacy and math priorities. However, despite a wealth of student assessment data, including the frequent use of PDAs, the district SPA, and state assessments, there is no evidence that this information is used when developing an instructor's professional growth plan. Teacher interviews suggest that the multiple use of assessments are overwhelming and are not viewed as providing a clear sense of how well students are doing overall. Teachers could not explain how information from PDAs are factored back into ongoing staff development to alter classroom instruction.

Despite a column on the PDA *for Staff Development Needs*, such follow-up supports to assist teachers in addressing student deficiencies (e.g., open-ended questioning) do not always occur in an effective and timely way. Grade-level and prep. meetings are not always maximized to model instruction and discuss challenges faced by large numbers of students identified in PDAs. Interviews revealed a desire for more input from teachers in setting and driving the agenda for these meetings.

6.1e Professional development is high quality, frequent, tailored to teacher needs and school-based when possible.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- District Professional Development Plan
- School and community survey
- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

Newark's District Professional Development Plan emphasizes sustained and continuous growth through job-embedded opportunities. Teachers are encouraged to avail themselves of these and building-level opportunities to improve their skills. However, several factors often prevent Morton faculty from receiving ongoing professional development supports tied to student needs. Interviews and observations confirm that grade-level prep periods involve limited inter-disciplinary discussions. In an effort to link language arts literacy and social studies (6-8th), math and science (6th, 7th and 8th), the district has provided training and supplementary materials to facilitate teacher needs in coupling these disciplines. In addition, despite the school's stated theme of "Literacy and Technology," there was little evidence that each teacher has been adequately trained to support the theme in his or her subject-area.

Opportunities for colleagues to discuss, reflect, and process new knowledge are limited. Common planning periods often occur among teachers within the same grade-level subject area only. Joint prep periods do not always involve the participation of the language arts literacy coach and resource teacher coordinator (RTC). Both offer a wealth of content-area knowledge and resources that would be invaluable in the planning of weekly sessions, as well as ongoing follow-up in areas of need identified by teachers. Despite the school's high classification rate (16%), professional development for the special education and regular education staff has not been systematically offered within the building to foster the improvement of the special education program.

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND EVALUATION

6.2c The school leadership uses the employee evaluation and the individual professional growth plan to connect improvements in teaching practice with individual classroom goals.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of sample anonymous PIPs
- Teacher interviews
- Administrator interviews

Findings:

The employee evaluation system is used to identify strengths and weakness in staff with the goal for improving student achievement. The school leadership is committed to conducting thorough classroom observations and providing feedback essential to enhancing teacher practice. There is limited evidence that monitoring or feedback by school leadership transfers to modification of instruction to meet the needs of all students. There was limited evidence to establish a connection between the evaluation and observation process and the development of PIPS. For example, it could not be determined that PIPS were used to identify areas where an instructor has consistently performed “unsatisfactory” or “basic” on evaluations, thus making follow-up to professional development inconsistent and unintentional.

STANDARD 6

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The school should develop a comprehensive school wide professional growth plan that supports collaboration among staff and decreases isolation and fragmentation. Such a plan should build on the district’s professional development plan and be tailored to the specific needs of Morton (Literacy and Technology Theme). Opportunities for horizontal and vertical articulation, with particular attention to staff needs for inter-disciplinary links (e.g., language arts and social studies, math and science) should be planned. The plan should also take a school-wide approach to addressing the needs of special education students and English Language Learners.
2. The development of PIPS should reflect school-wide teaching and learning priorities and directly align to areas where students have under-performed. Data from multiple forms of assessment, including PDAs, the SPA and other district-level measures, should be factored into the design of staff development efforts.
3. The school needs to fully utilize the language arts literacy coach and RTC in ways to provide ongoing staff development. Both should be integrally-involved in all teacher prep. and common planning periods. Common planning periods should be more teacher-driven and reflect more of a classroom perspective.
4. The school should develop a systematic way to link the development of PIPS to the teacher observation/evaluation process and student needs. A database linking each of these components with assessment data is recommended.

Summary Findings in: EFFICIENCY (QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP, IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WHOLE SCHOOL REFORM MODEL, EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL)

7.1a There is a shared vision that is understood and ingrained in the school’s culture.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Displays of the mission statements
- Review of SLC meeting agenda and minutes

- Review of the Three-year operational plan
- Teacher, SLC, administrator, student interviews
- Classroom observations
- Websites

Findings:

The vision of the school is not explicitly ingrained in the school's culture. Throughout the building's hallways and classrooms there were displays of the school's literacy motto and mission statement. Few interviewees were able to state their understanding of what these statements meant and the purpose for each. Interviews reveal the statements were developed in accordance with the bylaws of the SLC. The document review revealed some information as to how all stakeholders were included in the development of these statements, how decisions were guided by these statements, or how all stakeholders were provided progress updates. The school merged with Harold Wilson Middle School in the fall of SY04, thereby receiving 125 students and nine teachers. The principal conducted numerous meetings with the Wilson school community to facilitate the transition process and ensure the development of one community with a unified focus.

7.1b All instructional staff has access to curriculum-related materials and the training necessary to use curricular and data resources that enable students to master the CCCS.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of SLC agendas and minutes
- Teacher, administrative, coach, tutor, student interviews
- Classroom and hallways observations

Findings:

There is partial implementation of the district developed process to use curricular and data resources that enable students to master the NJCCCS. The school receives various forms of state assessment data from the district. There is limited evidence that this data is used by leadership to longitudinally analyze and develop a focus for classroom instruction and school level professional development. Therefore, SLC planning cannot systematically address instructional weaknesses to improve student academic performance. In the beginning of the year, teachers review students SPA results and administer various LAL screenings. Throughout the year, teachers complete monthly Progressive Data Analysis forms (Math and LAL). While the PDA process requires that building leadership review the data to determine if benchmarks are achieved and to revise instruction in some programs, interviews and documentation provide little evidence that this process explicitly guides classroom level academic decisions. Observed instruction and interviews did not reflect the diagnostic and prescriptive instructional strategies needed to address the significant educational deficits of the students. The district provides data regarding midterm and final exams in math as well as fall and spring novel assessments in LAL. Teachers sometimes use grade level meetings to review scored responses from GEPA as exemplars but do not collaboratively assess actual students' work.

7.1d The leadership team analyzes disaggregated data that are used to assist teachers to adjust their instruction and to develop PIPs.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of SLC meeting agendas and minutes
- Staff meeting agendas
- Teacher, Administrative, SLC interviews
- Review of three-year operational plan

Findings:

There is limited development of a process used by the leadership team to analyze disaggregated data to assist teachers in adjusting their instruction and developing their PIPs. During interviews it was repeatedly mentioned that data is used by staff and administrators to guide decisions. Document reviews indicated the district provides the school with disaggregated data. There was no documentation to indicate when and how the administration and staff reviewed and further analyzed data (e.g., sub cluster analysis or disaggregating by classroom) to make decisions that address the needs of all teachers. Student performance measures were generically used to drive some programmatic and academic decisions. Programs for parents are implemented in an attempt to enable parents to provide support at all levels. While some after school programs are determined by the district in order to ensure compliance with NCLB, the school has various community-agency funded or school-developed programs to improve student performance. Although there is a formal process in place for monitoring the effectiveness of GEPA and SES programs, there is no formal system in place for school leadership to analyze the effectiveness of other school programs.

7.1f Leadership ensures that time is protected to focus on curricular and instructional issues.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of staff and master schedules
- Review of staff meeting agendas and teacher handbook
- Teacher interviews
- Literacy coach interviews
- Administrator interviews
- Classroom observations and entry of students

Findings:

A review of the written documentation, and observations indicate that there is a student code of conduct. CMCD is operational in some classrooms. Interviews, documentation, and observations revealed classroom time is interrupted by the breakfast program, public address announcements, and lateness of students. The current scheduling policy does not provide time for a homeroom period in the morning or student travel between classes. Due to this, the scheduled 90-minute LAL block did not begin promptly at 8:35 a.m., as per the schedule. Instead, there were opening exercises and the distribution of breakfast at this time. Other observed classes throughout the day began an average of ten minutes after the scheduled start of the period due to the lack of a scheduled time for student movement to occur. There is little evidence of routine administrative walkthroughs to monitor the use of instructional time. The two documents labeled Master Schedule do not reflect evenly distributed blocks of time for instruction within grade levels.

7.1g Leadership plans and allocates resources, monitors progress, provides organizational support and removes barriers to continuous school improvement.

Evidence:

- Review of Three-year operational plan
- Faculty meeting agendas
- Student, teacher, administrator, SLC interviews
- Classroom observations
- NCLB Suspension Reports

Findings:

A review of the documents, observations, and interviews demonstrate the school has sufficient resources. The 2003-2004 School Report Card indicates all locations within the school have access to the Internet; however, use was not evident in observations. In several classrooms, computers were not on. Walk-throughs of the building during arrival and dismissal demonstrated effective procedures resulting in orderly student behaviors. School leadership has allocated resources for and hired personnel to promote professional development opportunities.. There are three reading tutors and a literacy coach on staff, however, these resources are not maximized for continuous school improvement.

7.1k The principal gives highest priority to academic performance.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Administrator, student, SLC, parent, teacher interviews
- Faculty meeting agendas and minutes
- Review of professional development documentation
- Review of Three-year operational plan

Findings:

The principal verbalizes priority to academic performance in an attempt to develop a learning environment that promotes development of teacher leaders and efficiency of operations. Through several interviews, it was revealed that meeting agendas and programmatic changes made often occur without notice or input from staff. A review of the individual PIPs indicated that teachers of the same content have the same objectives with very few demonstrations of individuality. Records of progress toward the required 100 hours of professional development are kept and document when staff attended workshops and the topic covered during the workshop. Classroom observations found most teachers engaged in the management of students' educational activities in classrooms that were devoid of disciplinary or student conflict disruptions.

STANDARD 7

NEXT STEPS

1. Horizontal articulation meeting agendas need to be developed in conjunction with staff.
2. Vertical articulation meetings need to be scheduled to guarantee staff has the opportunity to collaborate on strategies to address the learning needs of students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Schedule visits to other urban/suburban middle schools that have been recognized for best practices related to scheduling, instructional assignments, and intervention and remediation.
2. The SLT should provide administrative training regarding the maximization of human resources for continuous school improvement.
3. Teacher empowerment strategies that include the use of some horizontal or vertical articulation meetings as teacher-facilitated trainings and discussions on best practices.
4. Introduce electronic/paperless lesson plans that can be accessed by fellow teachers, parents, students, and administration.
5. Work with the Office of Testing & Evaluation to develop training for school leaders and faculty members to enable them to use data to drive instruction and program planning.

STANDARD 8: The school maximizes use of all available resources to support high student and staff performance.

8.1c The instructional and non-instructional staff members are assigned to serve the learning needs of all students.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of master schedule
- Review of teacher certification documentation
- Review of instructional assignments
- Review of lesson plans
- School staff member interviews
- SLC interviews/agendas/minutes
- Classroom observations
- Administrator interviews

Findings:

Instructional and non-instructional staff members are assigned in an attempt to serve the learning needs of all students. There is limited development of a method to ensure that staff assignments are made to address specific student needs, based on analysis of student performance data and teacher certification. The majority of teachers are required to teach two content areas. There is insufficient documentation of their certification in either area. There is a lack of understanding of the documentation required to determine whether or not a teacher meets the NCLB definition for Highly Qualified Teacher. Instructional assistants are provided in required areas.

8.1d There is evidence that the staff makes efficient use of time to maximize learning and that the school schedule reflects instructional priorities (e.g., uninterrupted 90 minute block of literacy instruction in primary grades, classes begin on time, and classes continue until the end of the time period).

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of schedules
- Review of lesson plans
- Teacher interviews, student interviews

- SLC interviews, agendas, and minutes
- Classroom observations of student work

Findings:

The lack of a school schedule that reflects instructional priorities, prohibit staff ability to make efficient use of time to maximize learning. The lack of scheduled transition time between classes reflects a lack of policy to protect instructional time. Several observations revealed that instruction, in addition to beginning significantly beyond the scheduled start, sometimes ended prior to the scheduled end. The classroom management and organizational practices of some teachers are not structured to maximize instructional time. There were no programs that occurred during instructional time that were not related to the learning goals of students.

8.1e Staff promotes team planning vertically and horizontally across content areas and grades that is focused on the goals, objectives and strategies in the report on instructional priorities (e.g., common planning time for content area teachers; emphasis on time on task, and integrated units).

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of master schedules
- Review of faculty/grade level meeting agendas and minutes
- Staff member interviews
- Review of lesson plans
- Review of Three-year operational plan
- Review of professional library/resources

Findings:

Monthly staff meetings are held as per the negotiated contract and sometimes a portion of the time is used to address instructional issues. The district calendar affords four days (and four half-days)for school wide staff development. During many of the all-day sessions, teachers attend district wide content workshops. Agendas of school-based professional development did not demonstrate a clear scope and sequence to address needs.

RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND INTEGRATION

8.2d State and federal program resources are integrated (Safe Schools, NCLB, IDEA) to address student needs.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of school-based budget
- Review of three-year operational plan
- Administrator interviews
- Staff interviews
- SLC meeting agendas and minutes

Findings:

NCLB funds are used to support the classroom program through supplemental services provided after school. There is a computer technology lab, which is used by some teachers on a regular basis. During interviews with students and staff, some commented on the frequent use of computers; evidence of the utilization of technology within the classroom was found in posted student work samples. However, actual student use of computers was not observed during most classroom visits. Revenue from various sources appears to be integrated to support the core curriculum. The proposed budget for the 2005-2006 school year contains funding for identified needs, and requests for additional funding.

STANDARD 8

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Review and revise the three-year plan with your SLC to ensure achievement of school goals to address specific data-identified needs.
2. Develop and implement a staff development plan which addresses areas and strategies specific to data-identified needs. Design activities which are school-based.
3. Strive for the inclusion of staff-identified professional development needs in formal opportunities for vertical and/or horizontal articulation.
4. The administration needs to put into place all necessary measures to ensure instructional time is maximized (e.g., develop a sound instructional schedule, frequently visit classrooms to ensure timely beginnings and/or the continuation of instruction until the end, etc.).
5. Review the process used to develop PIPs and ensure that the products are aligned to teachers' evaluation-identified needs for instructional improvement.

STANDARD 9 – COMPREHENSIVE AND EFFECTIVE PLANNING:

The School Leadership Council/NCLB Planning Committee develops, implements, evaluates and adjusts its Report on Instructional Priorities/School Improvement Plan to communicate a clear purpose, direction, and limited goals focused on improving teaching and learning.

DEFINING THE SCHOOL'S VISION, MISSION, BELIEFS

9.1a There is evidence that a collaborative process that engaged the school community was used to develop the vision, beliefs, mission, and goals.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of three-year operational plan
- Teacher, parent, student, SLC interviews

Findings:

The district has clearly articulated Mission, Vision and Belief statements, which resulted from a district-wide strategic planning process. The school has adopted the same district-level mission and vision

statements for the building, and has created a mission statement of its own as well; and these statements are posted in classrooms and outside the office. Many teachers, parents, and students were not able to articulate the school's mission and even fewer were able to describe the process of development, adoption and presentation.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROFILE

9.2a There is evidence that the School Leadership Council (SLC) or NCLB Planning Committee planning process involves collecting, managing and analyzing data to annually update the comprehensive needs assessment and to develop the Three-Year Operational Plan or School Improvement Plan.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Administrator interviews
- Teacher interviews
- SLC interviews
- Review of SLC documents

Findings:

The district provides disaggregated student achievement data, which were shared with teachers to enable them to construct class profiles of strengths and weaknesses. These analyses do not appear to have been utilized to differentiate instruction. Classes, although physically arranged in groups, were largely teacher-directed. The SLC has not been involved in data analysis to the level of sub clusters in order to identify specific school needs for all state-tested components. During grade level meetings, data analysis sometimes occurs (as per agendas), but there is no evidence of application in instruction, nor is there evidence of a systematic data management process. The School Leadership Council complies with code requirements. The composition of the SLC includes representation from all stakeholder groups; however, there is no documentation to show that parents from the Harold Wilson community have clear representation.

ANALYZING INSTRUCTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

9.4b Data from multiple assessments are used to identify student and school goals and document strengths and limitations of instructional and organizational effectiveness.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of three-year operational plan
- SLC interviews
- SLC minutes and agendas
- Teacher interviews

Findings:

There is no evidence that a needs assessment using data from multiple sources was conducted to identify student and school goals and document strengths and limitations of instructional and organizational

effectiveness. The TYOP does not state goals in clear, concise measurable terms. Documentation does not demonstrate a focus on building the school's capacity for instructional effectiveness.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE THREE-YEAR OPERATIONAL/IMPROVEMENT PLAN

9.5a Strategies in the Report on Instructional Priorities or School Improvement Plan are aligned with student and school goals; identifies resources, timelines and persons responsible; and contains an evaluation plan that evaluates the degree to which it achieves the goals and objectives for student learning.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of three-year operational plan
- Teacher interviews
- Administrator interviews
- SLC minutes and agendas

Findings:

Most of the strategies in the three-year operational plan include a focus on closing the achievement gap; however, most of the strategies are not in place in the school. While the goals and objectives are loosely guided by NCLB Adequate Yearly Progress, the actual planning lacks an approach that includes specific goals and objectives for each strategy. Most of the staff in the building are not aware of the strategies, timelines or responsibilities included in the three-year operational plan. It is not evident that the responsibilities for carrying out the plan are shared among staff members. There is no evidence to support a formal and integrated plan to build instructional capacity and maximize leadership effectiveness. A systematic process for implementation and accountability seems to be absent.

9.6b The principal and SLC regularly evaluate the degree to which it achieves the goals and benchmarks for student learning set by the plan.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of three-year operational plan
- Review of documentation of evidence of achievement of goals and benchmarks
- SLC or NCLB school improvement team minutes and agenda
- Teacher interviews
- Administrator interviews

Findings:

School leadership review assessment summaries provided by the district. However, there is no evidence that the school evaluates the specific strategies in the plan as it relates to classroom practice. Other than the district evaluation system, there is no summary of data related to the school's progress in building and strengthening the classroom practice and student performance. There is no data to evaluate the impact of each strategy.

STANDARD 9

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The principal, SLC, parents, community members and other stakeholders should convene to revise the school vision, beliefs, mission and goals. The revised items should be shared with the entire school community at a public meeting.
2. Provide all teachers and staff with copies of the Three-Year Operational Plan and discuss components of the plan at grade level meetings. Make all school staff aware of the contents of the Three-Year Operational Plan through in-service trainings to allow the staff and faculty to take authentic action steps towards desired results.
3. The Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Testing should provide professional development in the area of data analysis for use with each strategy in the three-year operational plan as it relates to student achievement, building instructional and organizational capacity and improving classroom practices. The school leadership should further analyze student performance data provided by the district, as well as data related to each strategy in the plan, to identify the impact and implementation levels and to make modifications to the three-year operational plan. The school leadership should review plan goals, objectives and benchmarks for each strategy to ensure that they are clear and concise and are focused on building the school's capacity to improve instructional and organizational effectiveness, improve student learning and change classroom practice.

MATHEMATICS GRADES (6 – 8)

STANDARD 1-CURRICULUM: The district P-12 curriculum is rigorous and aligned to state standards.

1.1b The district initiates discussions among schools regarding curriculum standards and frameworks to ensure that are clearly articulated across all levels (P-12).

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Local curriculum documents, units of study and lesson plans grades 6,7, & 8
Connected and Everyday Math Programs
- Teacher and district interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

The school uses the curriculum that was developed by district Department of Teaching and Learning for grades 6-8. The curriculum is rigorous and aligned to state and national standards. Grades 6-8 Mathematics Curriculum is a standards based curriculum aligned to NJCCCS and NCTM standards. All Teachers in grades 6-8 are aware of the standards as evidenced through interviews and informal classroom observations. Informal classroom observations indicate that teachers address and implement

standards. Teachers in grades 6-8 stated that they meet once a month to articulate vertically and meet with the Principal.

1.1e The curriculum requires all students to take courses with sufficient academic rigor to prepare for college preparatory courses and pass the HSPA and provides specific links to life and career options.

Evidence for this indicator based on:

- Everyday and Connected Math Program
- Student interviews
- Teacher interviews
- Lesson Plans
- Classroom Observations

Findings:

The curriculum possesses sufficient academic rigor to prepare students for the district mandated tests (SPA) and GEPA as well as high school college preparatory course work. Everyday and Connected Math Programs consistently emphasizes connections and provides experiences for career planning and sufficient academic rigor to prepare students for high school and ultimately college and real life.

1.1f The district works with supervisors and faculty to systematically monitor, evaluate, and adjust the curriculum based on the evidence of student achievement.

Evidence for this indicator based on:

- Review of the Three-Year Operational Plan
- Review of the SLC agenda and minutes
- Review SPA and GEPA Assessment Results
- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- Review MRTC – documentation of school visitation forms
- Everyday and Connected Math Programs

Findings:

The district (Office of Mathematics) initiates and facilitates discussions between SLT, MRTC, SLC, administrators and faculty in order to eliminate unnecessary overlaps and close gaps. Interview and documentations support the findings that the school implements discussion at regular intervals through weekly grade level meetings, monthly faculty meetings and SLC review of SPA and GEPA data. There is insufficient documentation for regular opportunities for vertical articulation. In addition classroom observations indicate that the developmental program for grades 6-8 is used by special education students at those grade levels with modifications.

1.1g The curriculum provides access to a common academic core for all students including but not limited to special education and ELL students.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Connected Math and Everyday Math Programs
- Student interviews
- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- Personal and School Aids
- SLC Agenda Minutes (Curriculum Committee)

Findings:

All general education and special education students are using the common academic core Everyday and Connected Math. Based on interviews and informal classroom observations of teachers, students, teacher aids, and SLC, there is a curriculum committee in place, which periodically monitors and evaluates the curriculum and assessment data. In addition the district math department monitors, evaluates, and assesses data such as Mid Term and Final Exams, teacher made tests, SPA and GEPA results. This data is shared with the Special education faculty.

STANDARD 1 - MATHEMATICS

RECOMMENDATIONS

- There should be vertical grade level meetings between grades 6-8 math and special education math teachers.
- All Teachers should allow their students to solve and score open-ended questions on a daily basis using the state mandated rubric (0-3).
- Math grade level meetings should include appropriate grade level Special Education and ESL Teachers.
- Special Education Math instruction should mirror the developmental math program with modifications suitable to student needs.

STANDARD 2 -CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION: The school uses multiple evaluation and assessment strategies and materials to continuously monitor and modify instruction to meet student needs and support proficient student work.

2.1a Assessments created by teachers, school and district are frequent, rigorous, aligned with NJ CCCS, used to gauge student learning, and adjust teaching to individual needs.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Connected Math and Everyday Math programs
- Teacher interviews

- Classroom observations
- District interviews
- Student work folders/portfolios/notebooks

Findings:

Materials available for grades 6-8 mathematics teachers regularly incorporate multiple choice, constructed response/open-ended, and minor amount of recall/ drill questions on a regular basis. Lesson plans indicate performance based assessment are schedule frequently. Review of assessments indicate a high percentage of higher level thinking skills are addressed.

2.1b Teachers collaborate in the design of authentic assessment tasks aligned with CCCS subject matter.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Student work folders/portfolios/notebooks
- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations

Findings:

Teachers collaborate monthly to design open-ended response items that are aligned to NJCCCS in mathematics. The majority of assessment materials are designed by district Office of Mathematics and Connected Math and Everyday Math Programs.

2.1c Students can articulate the academic expectations in each class and know what is required to be proficient. Academic expectations are clearly communicated, evident in classrooms and observable in student work.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Student interviews
- Classroom observations
- Student work folders/portfolios/notebooks

Findings:

Math teachers are providing students with high academic expectations for success in the mathematics program. However, some teachers have deviated from the implementation of the open ended response items and the use of the state mandated rubric on a daily basis, due to the length of time it consumes from the instructional period. Some students can articulate what they need to know and be able to do in order to be proficient in each content area.

2.1d Test scores are used by the district and school to identify curriculum gaps.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- SLC agenda and minutes
- MRTC visitation forms
- Classroom observations

Findings:

Office of Mathematics and MRTC regularly insure that test scores are reviewed to meet this objective and to adjust instruction. Teachers meet at grade level meetings to assist with the analysis of the data but it is not used to identify curricular gaps or instructional implications.

2.1e Multiple assessments are designed and used to gauge student learning and to adjust teaching to meet individual student needs.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- SLC agenda and minutes
- Classroom observations
- MRTC visitation forms

Findings:

In grades 6-8 math classrooms, multiple assessment are specifically designed by the Connected Math and Everyday Math programs. Students do not always receive meaningful feedback that enables them to improve future performance. Assessments are not always used to modify instruction.

2.1h Samples of student assessments are shared among teachers and analyzed to inform instruction and to revise curriculum and pedagogy.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher interviews
- Student interviews
- Classroom observations
- Student work folders/portfolios/notebooks

Findings:

Some teachers have received training in protocols for analyzing student work and other teachers received training focusing on content area and methodology. The protocols are not always implemented. Student work is occasionally analyzed, but results of the analysis do not consistently impact teaching and learning.

STANDARD 2 - MATHEMATICS

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Teachers should receive additional professional development regarding how to create, solve, and score open-ended response questions using the state math rubric (0-3).
2. Teachers should receive additional professional development regarding how to analyze data as well as how to close curriculum gaps.
3. Provide teachers with professional development that demonstrates how to design and implement authentic assessments that are aligned to NJCCCS in mathematics.
4. Curriculum and assessment modifications need to be tailored to better address the individual needs of students through modification, adaptations and strategies.
5. Teachers should use the results of data analysis to modify curricular, instructional, and assessment practices.

STANDARD 3 -INSTRUCTION: The school's instructional program actively engages all students by using effective, varied instruction and research based practices to improve student academic performance.

3.1a There is evidence that effective and varied instructional strategies are used in most of the classrooms.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Connected math and everyday math programs
- Teacher Interviews
- Student Interviews
- Classroom Observations

Findings:

Effective and varied instructional strategies are implemented in most grades 6-8 math classrooms. The math programs adopted by the district ensure that instructional strategies should be utilized. However, consistent utilization in all classrooms is inconsistent.

3.1b Instructional strategies and learning activities are aligned with the district, school and state goals and assessment expectations for student learning.

Evidence for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Teacher Interviews
- Curriculum and Pacing Guides (6-8)
- Classroom Observations

Findings:

Everyday math program is used in Special Education classes (6-8) and connected math program is used in the developmental math classes grades 6-8. Learning activities are aligned with the district, school and

state goals and assessment expectations for student learning. Teachers state that the learning activities are aligned and support district goals and objectives.

3.1c Instructional strategies and activities are consistently monitored and aligned with the changing needs of a diverse student population to ensure various learning approaches and learning styles are addressed.

Evidence for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Teacher Interviews
- Classroom Observations
- Student work folder/portfolios/notebooks

Findings:

School leadership does not consistently monitor classroom instruction or provide feedback to teachers that would assist them to modify instruction to meet the needs of all students. Hands-on discovery based activities are primarily student-centered, with a consistent theme of moving the students through concrete-iconic-symbolic stage. Such activities provide learning through the multiple intelligences.

3.1d Teachers demonstrate the content knowledge necessary to challenge and motivate students to high levels of learning.

Evidence for this indicator based on:

- Teacher Interviews
- Create level meetings
- Classroom Observations
- School Principal Informational Presentation
- Documentation

Findings:

86% of the teachers met the NCLB highly qualified teacher standard, as evidence by the documentation obtained from the school principal. Classroom observations indicated there is further need for professional development in math content area.

3.1e There is evidence that teachers incorporate technology in their classrooms.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review lesson plans
- Teacher Interviews
- Student Interviews
- Classroom Observations

Findings:

Teachers regularly involve the use of calculators and overhead projectors in their classroom. Calculators are readily available in sufficient numbers for all students. The curriculum supports the use of calculators and

computers at all grade levels. Computers, though generally available, are not used in instruction as evidenced by classroom observations and lesson plans.

3.1f Instructional resources are sufficient to effectively deliver the curriculum.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Teacher Interviews
- Student Interviews
- Classroom Observations

Findings:

There are ample supplies and utilization of instructional materials, textbook and calculators in developmental grades 6-8 and Special Education (6-8). Classroom observations indicate the use of computers takes place according to a planned schedule on a weekly basis.

3.1g Teachers examine and discuss student work collaboratively and use this information to inform their practice.

Evidence for this indicator based on:

- Teacher Interviews
- Technology Coordinator
- SLC
- MRTC – School Visitation Forms
- Student Folders/Portfolios/Notebooks
- Classroom Observations

Findings:

There are across-grade level meetings where teachers can informally share information about student work. The district uses the MRTC to assist teachers to analyze data in order to improve instruction. However, there is presently a school-wide data process in place to collaboratively examine and discuss individual student progress.

3.1h There is evidence that homework is frequent, monitored and tied to instructional practice.

Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of lesson plans
- Teacher interviews
- Student interviews
- Parent interviews
- Classroom Observations
- Review of student homework/portfolios/notebooks

Findings:

Teachers indicated that homework assignments are given to students almost every night, and lesson plans support this claim. However, student folders and notebooks indicate that homework and most of class work and assignments were not checked/graded by some of the teachers.

STANDARD 3

COMMENDATIONS

Mathematics classrooms are well supplied with resources to support the school's standards-based program which are aligned with NJCCCS and NCTM.

NEXT STEPS

1. Provide additional staff development opportunities to those staff members who are weak in content and in the delivery of math instruction.
2. MRTC personnel assigned to school should conduct more team teaching, modeling of lessons, and instructional activities focusing on open-ended response items and holistic scoring.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Continue to provide meaningful math content staff development, in-class support and coaching for those identified teachers in need.
2. Utilize the Title II funds to allow teachers to attend math content area courses at local colleges and universities. This will ultimately lead them to be certified in middle school math.
3. Continue the progress toward a fully inclusive building and continue to develop the process of transition to the general education setting with the provision of the appropriate supports.
4. Hiring of a math coach to enhance the content knowledge of teachers and to improve their delivery of math instruction to students.

SPECIAL EDUCATION REVIEW

Summary Findings in: ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE (QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION)

STANDARD 1-CURRICULUM: The school develops and implements a curriculum that is rigorous, intentional, and aligned to state and local standards.

1.1b The district initiates and facilitates discussions among schools regarding curriculum standards and frameworks to ensure they are clearly articulated across all levels (P-12).

Findings:

There is on-going training and discussions with all teachers in the building regarding the implementation of the McDougal-Littel Literacy curriculum, through the literacy coach and the Everyday Math & Connected Math curricula through the MRT/C, including special education staff, at grade level meetings. Special education staff is included in those meetings. It should also be stated that the current IEPs that are being developed are not aligned with the curriculum being offered in special education classes.

1.1e The curriculum requires all students to take courses with sufficient academic rigor to prepare for college preparatory courses and pass the HSPA and provides specific links to life and career options.

Findings:

The general education curriculum is offered to all students, at grade level, including special education students. This is the McDougal-Littel Literacy program in Language Arts, in which:

- Books are leveled and include selections with readability 1-3 years below level.
- Students learn comprehension, reading strategies, and vocabulary development
- Students read classic tales, contemporary stories, poetry, drama, and rich nonfiction. The selections are organized by genre, theme, or both and are supported by instruction in on-level literature concepts and skills.

The teacher supplements this program with the use of selected supplemental materials. The math program for all students consists of the Everyday Math. The Literacy program, with adaptations, does meet the needs of some of the students in the special education program. The building's three year plan makes reference to the implementation of the Wilson Reading Program and the Academy for Reading, both of which are not being implemented at this time. The self contained teachers using the Everyday Math Program feel that it is a suitable mathematics program, except for the reading dependent components of the program (for some students).

1.1f The district works with supervisors and faculty to systematically monitor, evaluate and adjust the curriculum based on the evidence of student achievement.

Findings:

There is no evidence that this occurs for the special education program. These classes are required to offer the general education curriculum at appropriate grade levels.

1.1g The curriculum provides access to a common academic core for all students.

Findings:

There are 7 self-contained classes, which serves approximately 80 of the 92 special education students at the Morton Street School. The remaining 12 are served in resource replacement classes, primarily LAL. These students spend the rest of their day primarily in self-contained classes with a very few attending general education classes. Most students are educated in an exclusionary environment for all subjects and specials, with little or no opportunity to interact with non-disabled peers, although they are essentially receiving the same curriculum. These classes typically serve 12 to 16 students on two to three grade levels with a teacher and personal assistants. The Three Year Operational Plan states that the school will provide professional development for In-Class Support Programs, but these programs do not exist in the building.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The general education literacy program needs to be supplemented with a specialized reading program that systematically offers phonemic segmentation, sound symbol relationships, decoding, encoding, advanced word analysis, fluency, etc. All special education staff should participate in this training and implement it in all special education and classes, in which the child is removed from the general education class for Language Arts.
2. CST, special education staff and general education staff should be trained together in inclusionary practices so that a full range of program options can be offered to special education students. A greater effort should be made to providing a greater level of integration of special education students into the general education program with supplemental aids and services.
3. IEP goals and objectives should be aligned with curricular objectives and NJ CCCS.

STANDARD 2 -CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION: The school uses multiple evaluation and assessment strategies to continuously monitor and modify instruction to meet student needs and support proficient student work.

2.1a Classroom assessments are frequent, rigorous, aligned with NJ CCCS.

Findings:

Special education classroom assessments are tied to the general education program and follow that model.

2.1b Teachers collaborate in the design of authentic assessment tasks aligned with NJCCCS subject matter.

Findings:

Although the district does offer training experiences in alternative assessment structures, few special education staff members have taken advantage of those opportunities. Some teachers are doing some assessment that could be termed performance. In terms of collaboration, special education teachers are not given the opportunity to formally collaborate with one another, but do collaborate with appropriate grade levels at grade level meetings and content teachers at content meetings. Teachers expressed the

desire to receive training in alternative assessment so that they could employ their use on a more systematic and thoughtful level.

2.1d Test scores are used to identify curriculum gaps.

Findings:

There is no evidence that any of the special education teachers have been engaged in this practice.

2.1e Multiple assessments are specifically designed to provide meaningful feedback on student learning for instructional purposes.

Findings:

Most of the assessments used to measure the learning of special education students are primarily paper and pencil. However some teachers are engaging the use, to some degree, of performance assessment, but have not been trained.

2.1h Samples of student work are analyzed to inform instruction, revise curriculum and pedagogy, and obtain information on student progress.

Findings:

There is no evidence to support that all special education teachers are using this information for this purpose.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Special education teachers need professional development in: Alternative Assessment: Performance and some structure should be provided through which the results of state test analysis can inform the IEP process

STANDARD 3 -INSTRUCTION: The school's instructional program actively engages all students by using effective, varied and research-based practices to improve student academic performance.

3.1a There is evidence that effective and varied instructional strategies are used in all classrooms.

Findings:

Some teachers are engaged in providing effective and varied instructional strategies. Some of the teachers are not practicing sound basic pedagogy in terms of student engagement, questioning techniques, classroom management, etc. There were some observations in which there was direct instruction taking place and students were actively engaged.

3.1c Instructional strategies and activities are consistently monitored and aligned with the changing needs of a diverse student population to ensure various learning approaches and learning styles are addressed.

Findings:

There is little evidence that this is occurring beyond the auspices of the required school wide curriculum. Most teachers are somewhat aware of how to accommodate learning styles and multiple intelligences, (integral knowledge for a special education teacher), although implementation was uneven.

3.1d Teachers demonstrate the content knowledge necessary to challenge and motivate students to high levels of learning.

Findings:

Most teachers lacked training and knowledge in specialized reading programs that are designed to educate special needs students with significant reading problems. However, some classrooms were alive with content information for students to access.

3.1e There is evidence that teachers incorporate technology in their classrooms.

Findings:

All of the teachers have at least two computers in their class . There is also a computer lab that teachers can access, when needed and on an assigned basis. Some teachers have used technology to produce writing models, some research through the Internet, and have used presentation software in which students could collect and integrate information in the development of a presentation on a particular topic.

3.1f The district and school ensure that instructional resources are available

Findings:

Teachers are given adequate materials to implement the required school wide curriculum, but struggle in their attempt to adapt those materials for the some of their students. The CST provides assistance to teachers and students, but often members have difficulty keeping their counseling schedule with students because of the demands of meeting IDEA/NJAC mandates. Literacy and math coaches sometimes provide guidelines in implementing the curriculum at grade level meetings, but are not knowledgeable about modifying this program to meet the needs of special education students. They also report that they have not received direct assistance from Resource Teacher Coordinators this school year.

3.1g Teachers examine and discuss student work collaboratively and use this information to inform their practice.

Findings:

Special education teachers are not provided with any structured time to formally meet within the department.

3.1h There is evidence that homework is frequent, monitored and tied to instructional practice.

Findings:

In each case, a homework assignment is listed on the board and some teachers indicate that this has not been a problem.

STANDARD 3

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Special education teachers need substantial professional development programs that would allow them to better meet the needs of special education students including:
2. Homework systems should be investigated and discussed among special education staff.

Summary Findings in: **LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (LEVEL OF PARENT PARTICIPATION, ADEQUACY OF SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAMS TO MEET DOCUMENTED INSTRUCTIONAL NEED)**

STANDARD 4 -SCHOOL CULTURE: The school functions as an effective learning community and supports a climate conducive to performance excellence.

4.1a There is leadership support for a safe, orderly, and equitable learning environment (see culture audits, school opinion surveys, etc.).

Findings:

General education students receive instruction in single grade units in classes of approximately 20+ students per class. These students are given single subject instruction. Special education students are educated in multiple grade, multiple subject classrooms in sizes of up to 14 students and four adults.

4.1b Leadership creates experiences that foster the belief that all children can learn at high levels in order to motivate staff to produce continuous improvement in student learning.

Findings:

The special education and CST staff does not believe that the needs of their children can be met through the implementation of this program alone. Classified students have minimal opportunities for inclusion in the general education program.

4.1f The school intentionally assigns staff to maximize opportunities for all students to have access to the staff's instructional strengths.

Findings:

The special education staff appears to be dedicated and caring.

4.1g Teachers communicate regularly with families about individual students' progress (e.g., engage through conversation).

Findings:

Currently there are no IEP progress reports sent to parents that would indicate the progress that students are making on their IEP goals and objectives. Parental attendance at IEP meetings and PRC meetings is inconsistent. General education teachers frequently do not attend IEP meetings.

4.1j Student achievement is highly valued and publicly celebrated

Findings:

Most teachers are displaying some work on a limited basis and without rubrics. These were mostly workbook pages and dittos. Projects and products were not observed in most classes. Most of the displayed work is math problems or completed ditto sheets. There are some behavioral charts on display that celebrate quality behavior.

4.1k This school provides support for the physical, cultural, socio-economic, and intellectual needs of all students, which reflects a commitment to equity and an appreciation of diversity.

Findings:

The special education program is an exclusionary program, with a majority of students receiving their instruction in self-contained classes, and little opportunity to interact with non-disabled peers. All special education teachers support in-class support. If assigned to a general education class with some of their students, they could make the necessary modifications to the academic program and could control student behavior to the point that the child could derive educational benefit from such a placement. Diversity is dealt with through segregation of the most diverse students. The district and Three Year Operation Plan support a more inclusive program.

STANDARD 4

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. CST, special education staff and general education staff should be further trained together in inclusionary practices so that a full range of program options can be offered to special education students.
2. Teachers should be trained in and expect to use rubrics in their instructional and assessment design. They should also be encouraged to develop systems by which students achievement is publicly noted and celebrated.

STANDARD 5: STUDENT, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT-The school works with families and community groups to remove barriers to learning in an effort to meet the intellectual, social, career, and developmental needs of students consistent with 6A: 10A-3.6 Supports for Parents and Families and NCLB §1118 Parental Involvement.

5.1b Structures are in place to ensure that ALL students have access to the entire curriculum (for example, school guidance, special education, bilingual).

Findings:

Special education students are isolated by program, even when the general education program is offered with modifications.

5.1d Students are provided with a variety of opportunities to receive additional assistance to support their learning beyond the initial classroom.

Findings:

The PRC is an active and well run committee. It is comprised of key school staff, including the building VP or principal. The major issue facing the PRC is a lack of resources to offer some of the Morton Street School Population. The summer school program, Century 21, is an integrated program that offers recreational and academic programs to children in need. The CST is providing some individual and group counseling to students and crisis intervention. They are even able to provide some time to assist teachers with individual students. However due to the demands of conducting initial referrals, reevaluations and annual reviews there is not enough time to support classroom teachers. The learning consultant is only in the building two days per week. They have managed to keep pace with required timelines and all children have been placed.

STANDARD 5

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. After school transportation should be provided to all students who are bused to the Morton Street school, so that they can take advantage of after school programs.
2. Building administration, in collaboration with the Office of Special Education, should work with the CST to establish clear priorities.

STANDARD 6 – PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: The school provides research based, results driven professional development opportunities for staff and implements performance evaluation procedures in order to improve teaching and learning.

6.1a There is evidence of a school wide professional growth plan that supports collaboration among staff and decreases isolation and fragmentation.

Findings:

Special education teachers attend one of the two or two grade levels meetings, which pertain to the grade levels they serve. Personal aides are per diem employees and are assigned to work with specific students according to the pupil's IEP under the direction of the classroom teacher. These employees are not trained to instruct pupils with grade level CCCS. Personal aides have not been invited to staff meetings and are not included in any district wide professional development days.

6.1e Professional development is high quality, job-embedded, frequent, tailored to teacher needs and school-based when possible

Findings:

School administration is not given the ability to define their needs in terms of staff training and to facilitate its implementation. CST staff has participated in professional development in the area of assessment only and not in program options and implementation.

STANDARD 6

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The PRC committee, once formed, should make recommendations to the SLC regarding themes that have presented themselves through the referral process.
2. Include per diem employees, who are directly involved in supporting the instructional process, in all appropriate trainings; district and school-based.

IN CONCLUSION

Members of the CAPA review team express their appreciation to the staff and community of Morton Street Middle School for their gracious welcome and for their open interaction with us during our visit. We encourage the school community to review this report in depth, asking themselves deep reflective questions about the findings of fact and recommendations for action.

We also encourage school leadership to lead long-term reflections on the following:

1. How can we get all individuals connected to the school (teachers, parents and guardians, non-instructional staff, administrators, community, church leaders, district and the state) to take personal responsibility for the academic, social and economic success of the students who attend Morton Street Middle School?
2. What will assist teachers in moving from teacher directed, whole-class instruction to other models of teaching more suitable for meeting the needs of all students?
3. What are the obstacles that must be overcome to create a culture of effective shared leadership in the school? How do we address each of them? How can leadership be redefined to be inclusive of all stakeholders?
4. How can the school analyze all student data including standardized and school developed assessments, student work and student demographics horizontally and vertically across grades so that student behavior is predictable? How can the school make good use of data to drive continuous improvement

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

District	Newark Public Schools		
School	Morton Street Middle School		
Principal Name – Years in Building	Carl L. Gregory		
Grade Levels	6 th – 8 th		
Number of Teachers meeting NCLB HQT	32		
Number of Teachers with Emergency Certification	0		
Total Number of Classrooms	24		
Percent Special Education			
Number – Self Contained Classrooms	7		
Percent Bilingual	0		
Number of Bilingual Classrooms	0		
Number of Students	2004 - 297	2005 – 339	
School Leadership Council (SLC) or Title I Planning Committee (PC) Meets Monthly	YES		
SLC or Title I PC has complete representation	YES		
Intensive Early Literacy Visit and Complete Plan	Visit Date:	NA	Completed Plan:
Percent Parent Involvement			
Whole School Reform (WSR) Model	Brass Ring		
Status of WSR Contract			
Corrective Action Plan – Persistently Dangerous “Warning”	None		
Most Current Number of Students reading at grade level in 3 rd and 4 th grades.	3 rd -	4 th	Test: