High Performing Schools *Update*

March 9, 2010

The “Message”

- We are committed to implementing the best practices of high performing schools now and into the future.

- Such communication has been pervasive.

Boyertown Area School District

911 Montgomery Avenue, Boyertown Penns

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Welcome to Boyertown Area School District

Failure is Not an Option with the "B.E.A.R.S."

Gene Kranz, flight director for the troubled Apollo 13 moon mission, used this phrase to explain to his staff the imperative of bringing the astronauts safely back to earth. His staff was asked to use any tools, materials, and methods available (which were limited) to help make this happen; they of course did.

Alan Blankstein's book about high performing schools is entitled, "Failure is Not an Option". Education leaders have begun to use this phrase to illustrate the critical nature of ensuring that all students succeed: every single one with no exceptions. Blankstein describes methods that high performing schools use to significantly increase achievement for all students.

It happens to be Boyertown Area School District's mission to **"enable ALL students to succeed in a changing world."** The school district has made outstanding gains over recent years because there is a focus on the five essential factors that high performing schools use. Here again are the "B.E.A.R.S.":

Base decisions on Monitoring: Compilation, Analysis and Use of the Data

Effective Instructional Programs, Practices and Arrangements

Academic and Curricular Goals

Recognition, Intervention and Adjustment

Staff Selection, Leadership and Professional Development

Students talking about High Performing Schools

I hope that you find the District website to be helpful to you. If there be of assistance to you, please feel free to contact my office at 610

Dion E. Betts, Ed.D.

Home - Google Chrome

The Messenger

A Newsletter from the Office of the Superintendent of the Boyertown Area School District

Volume 5, Issue 7 **March 2010**

Failure is Not an Option with the "B.E.A.R.S."
Dr. Dion Betts, Superintendent

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The Boyertown Area Times • March 4, 2010

B.E.A.R.S. gives student success

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It happens to be Boyertown Area School District's mission to "enable ALL students to succeed in a changing world." It also so happens that the school district has made outstanding gains over recent years there is a focus on the five essential factors that high performing school use. The "B.E.A.R.S." might help the reader remember these five factors:

Base decisions on Monitoring: Compilation, Analysis, and Use of the Data

Effective Instructional Programs, Practices and Arrangements

Academic and Curricular Goals

Recognition, Intervention, and Adjustment

Staff Selection, Leadership, and Professional Development

What does it mean for all students to be successful?

It is important that each student becomes proficient in reading, mathematics, and writing, as well as in the many subjects taken in his or her school career. All students need to come to school on time and only miss a minimal number of school days. Every student needs to graduate and be ready for employment, training, college, the armed services, etc. Students also need to experience positive, safe, and enriching schools.

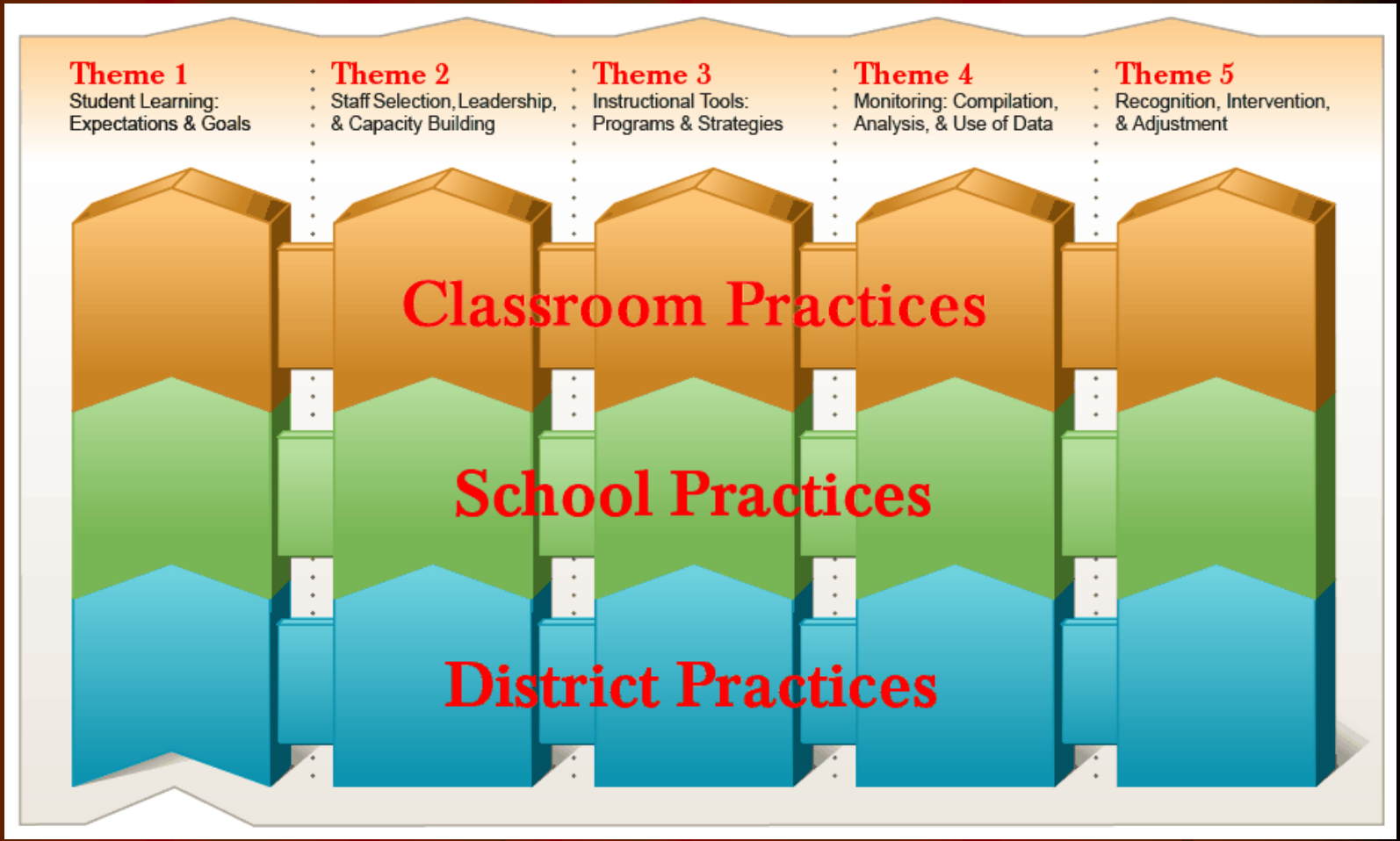
It is a big job to make sure that every child is successful and becomes a contributing member of the community. Indeed, the parents, schools, the community, and the students themselves need to work together to make this happen. Boyertown Area schools are your schools.

I am providing avenues for you to have input in the continuous improvement of our schools. As an example, I am attending a parent/school association for each school in the district this school year as well as attending other civic, government, and business events. Please contact me at dbetts@boyertownasd.org if you would like me to appear at any additional groups or associations meetings or events.

Every child deserves a fair shot at achieving success in his or her life and for the "pursuit of happiness". Thank you for your willingness to help make this happen

Dion Betts, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Boyertown Area School District

An Organizing Guide to Sustained School Improvement



National Center for Educational Achievement

High Performing Goals at BASD

Staff Selection, Leadership, and Capacity Building

2006-2007

- Revised teacher interview process to include three interviews
- Developed interview questions for first and second round interviews for all levels and subject areas
- TeacherInsight - trained administrators on this research based on-line tool that will help identify candidates who have the talent to be successful as a teacher.
- Met with all special education teachers and work with each of them to become highly qualified
- Trained administrative staff in the use of PAREAP and PA-Educator

2007-2008

- Refined professional interview questions and incorporated PIT (related to TeacherInsight) interview questions into interview process
- Used TeacherInsight as part of the overall selection process
- Collected data regarding TeacherInsight scores and teacher performance
- Developed standard questions for classified interviews – split out by positions
- Trained Supervisory Supportive Employees to be effective interviewers
- Worked with colleges/universities with student teaching and begin to build relationships for future staffing needs
- Trained new administrators in the use of PAREAP and PA-Educator

2008-2009

- Continued to refine the interview process for professional and classified staff
- Revised the health and welfare plan for classified staff
- Discontinued the use of TeacherInsight because no direct correlation to hiring high quality teachers was found
- Continued to build positive working relationships with colleges/universities for teacher recruitment
- Continued to search for new recruiting techniques and for increasing our candidate pool, especially for secondary education
- Ensured all new professional hires are highly qualified
- Provided training for new administrators and supervisors on interviewing procedures
- Determined that building substitutes were not needed at this time due to the large substitute pool
- Trained new administrators in the use of PAREAP and PA-Educator
- Examined methods to attract and retain paraprofessional staff
- Provided HR-related staff development for Supportive Supervisory Employees
- Provided staff development/training for Classified Staff
- Worked with paraprofessional staff to meet new regulations in Chapter 14

2009-2010

- Continue to refine the interview process for professional and classified staff
- Continue to build positive working relationships with colleges/universities for teacher recruitment
- Continue to search for new recruiting techniques and increasing our candidate pool, especially for secondary education
- Ensure all new professional hires are highly qualified
- Train new administrators in the use of PAREAP and PA-Educator
- Provide training for new administrators and supervisors on interviewing procedures
- Continue to ensure that paraprofessionals are in compliance with Chapter 14 regulations

2010-2011 (Proposed)

- Establish criteria for implanting Professional Improvement Plans. Include criteria (e.g., suggested timelines) for when an employee improves or fails to improve on a PIP.

(Revised February 2010)

Please note that this timeline is for planning and direction setting. There will be changes as we consid
meet the needs of the students in the Boyertown Area School District and as we are required to meet

Recognition, Intervention and Adjustment

2006-2007

- Created a Response to Intervention Task Force
- Revised and improved the remediation process for elementary schools
- Coordinated Camp Kangaroo summer program
- Coordinated the PAWS for Success summer program
- Created data teams
- Trained data teams in Performance Tracker
- Created a training schedule for all teachers in the use of Performance Tracker
- Work-study program started at BASH for students with IEPs
- K-12 guidance evaluation completed
- ESL program revamped to increase services for students

2007-2008

- Developed a Response to Intervention plan for elementary schools
- Implemented the revised remediation process at the elementary level
- Developed a mentoring program for high school students
- Implemented double periods of math at the junior and senior high levels
- Trained all teachers in Performance Tracker
- Continued to find funding sources and coordinate the PAWS for Success program (3H summer remediation)
- Investigated a research-based reading program for "struggling readers" at the senior high level
- Opened an Autistic Support Class at elementary level
- Opened an Emotional Support Class at BASH
- Established K-12 Counseling Coordinator Position
- Added additional research-based programs and resources to secondary special education classes
- Improved K-12 guidance services based on evaluation
- Reviewed need for additional special education classes
- Established guidance committee to shape department activity
- Added Career Cruising as a resource for grades 7-12
- Developed career portfolios for grade 8 students
- Revised attendance procedures to decrease student absences

2008-2009

- Educated staff at Pine Forge and Earl in preparation for Response to Intervention implementation
- Trained teachers at both the elementary and secondary levels in co-teaching
- Trained Data Teams and administrators in data analysis
- Assessed and improved upon the remediation process at the elementary level
- Assessed and revised as necessary the double period math intervention
- Developed and implemented a plan to train all teachers new to the district in use of Performance Tracker and data analysis
- Developed a data team at the high school to help lead in the building of a data-informed culture
- Coordinated the PAWS for Success summer transition program at both junior highs
- Reconfigured guidance services at BASH
- Developed career portfolios for all students in grades 8 and 9
- Implemented revised identification procedures for gifted program
- Implemented work-study option for BASH alternative education
- Presented a proposal to Board for expansion of autistic support program
- Expanded co-teaching at all levels
- Developed and will submit 3-year Special Education and Chapter 12 Student Services strategic plan

2009-2010

- Assess and revise as necessary the Response to Intervention process at the elementary level
- Develop a plan for Response to Intervention for all elementary schools
- Implement Response to Intervention in Pine Forge and Earl
- Integrate the remediation process into the RTI process
- Coordinate the PAWS for Success (3H summer transition program)
- Autistic Support program expanded
- Implement changes to Gifted Program at secondary level
- Career portfolios developed for all students in grades 8 – 10
- Implement refinements to Gifted Program at elementary level
- Expand co-teaching at elementary level
- Improve co-teaching practices at all levels through continued training and strategic scheduling

2010-2011 (Proposed)

- SWEBS at CES and BES to Pilot
- District and Building Action Plan development and monitoring
  - Climate
  - Instruction
    - Walk through expectations
    - Lesson expectations
  - PLCs

Please note that this timeline is for planning and direction setting. There will be changes as we consider ways to best meet the needs of the students in the Boyertown Area School District and as we are required to meet new mandates.

Staff Selection, Leadership, and Capacity Building

2006-2007

- Trained administrators in the concept and implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
- Increased the number of professional learning opportunities for all staff members
- Developed a needs assessment for district secretaries
- Increased the number of workshops presented by district teachers and/or administrators
- Provided professional learning opportunities for para-professionals
- Improved the quality of the Induction Program
- Enhanced the role of PEC in leading and supporting the district's RTI
- Created and Filled 7 elementary advocate positions for Curriculum Council
- Created and Filled 3 lead teacher positions: K-12 Math, K-12 Science, K-12 Fine Arts

2007-2008

- Implemented Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in all schools
- Trained all teachers in the concept and implementation of PLC's
- Increased the amount of collaboration time for all teachers in each school
- Increased the number of professional learning opportunities for all staff
- Improved the quality of the induction program
- Developed an induction program for new administrators
- Assessed and improved the quality of instructional coaching in our schools
- Created a technology steering committee to help with shared decision-making
- Created and filled lead teacher positions: K-12 Social Studies, K-12 H & PE
- Appointed a K-12 Counseling Coordinator

2008-2009

- Updated the induction programs for staff and administrators
- Increased the number of instructional coaches in the district
- Improved the Professional Learning Communities (PLC) process and provided consistent amounts of time for teachers in all schools to collaborate
- Investigated providing a Teacher Leadership Certificate program in the district through Lehigh University
- Increased the amount of professional learning opportunities for all staff
- Assessed and improved the quality of instructional coaching in our schools
- Developed academies for paraprofessionals to earn highly qualified status
- Increased staff development opportunities for paraprofessionals
- Developed a parent/guardian council
- Developed a partnership with Drexel University that allows our teachers to take online courses and save 30% on tuition costs
- Created a core team of teachers at Pine Forge and Earl to help lead with RtI implementation
- Developed a data team at the high school to help lead in creating a data-informed culture and training teachers in data analysis
- Developed an institute for building common assessments

2009-2010

- Continue to update the induction programs for staff and administrators
- Coordinate a second cohort of teachers to participate in the Teacher Leadership Certificate program
- Increase and improve the quality of instructional coaching in our schools
- Increase the amount of professional learning opportunities for all staff
- Assess and improve the quality of instructional coaching in our schools
- Provide professional development to teachers on the development of valid and effective assessment tools
- Continue parent/guardian council

2010-2011 (Proposed)

- Leadership building: teachers

(Revised February 2010)

Please note that this timeline is for planning and direction setting. There will be changes as we consider ways to best meet the needs of the students in the Boyertown Area School District and as we are required to meet new mandates.

Curriculum and Academic Goals

2006-2007

- Utilized the curriculum development model to revise and strengthen all curriculum areas
- Investigated and planned for necessary textbook adoptions
- Began to incorporate nonfiction into the RELA curriculum
- Examined research-based interventions for at-risk students
- Communicated with parents by providing at-home activities to strengthen reading strategies (newsletters)
- Created K-4 curriculum booklets for parents to communicate the essential learning for each elementary grade level and subject
- Applied for the Project 720 grant to support senior high school initiatives

2007-2008

- Utilized the curriculum development model to revise and strengthen all curriculum areas
- Investigated and planned for necessary textbook adoptions
- Discussed the inclusion of 4 years of college preparatory English at the 9-12 level for all students
- Discussed the inclusion of 4 years of math at the 9-12 level for all students including Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II and a higher level math
- Developed a rollout plan to effectively utilize effectively the Scott Foresman/Addison Wesley math materials and the Investigations materials
- Incorporated nonfiction texts into content area curriculums
- Embed
writing
- Examin
curricu
anchor
- Develo
benchm
type q
- Expan
- Utilized
to hire
and to
- Examin
curricu
- Explor
world l
- Implem

2008-2009

- Utilized the curriculum development model to revise and strengthen all curriculum areas
- Investigated and planned for necessary textbook adoptions
- Implemented changes to the elementary science curriculum
- Developed grade 5 and 6 curriculum booklets for parents to communicate the essential learning for each elementary grade level and subject
- Created a standardized glossary of literary terms for each grade level to embed in grade and course specific curriculums and to share with parents (included in parent curriculum booklets)
- Created a writing brochure for parents to explain the district's writing curriculum
- Developed pacing guides for the writing

2009-2010

- Utilize the curriculum development model to revise and strengthen all curriculum areas
- Investigate and plan for necessary textbook adoptions
- Plan for the possible inclusion of 4 years of college preparatory English at the 9-12 level for all students
- Plan for the possible inclusion of 4 years of math at the 9-12 level for all students including Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II and a higher level math
- Examine the implications of 4 years of science for senior high students
- Implement changes to the elementary science curriculum
- Involve all grade 12 students in a dual enrollment experience
- Examine college expectations and align

2010-2011 (Proposed)

- District and Building Action Plan development and monitoring
  - Climate
  - Instruction
    - Walk through expectations
    - Lesson expectations
    - **SMART Goals**
  - PLCs
- Develop a business, community, and school district consortium for the purpose of increasing the number of students involved in internships, volunteer, and service activities.

(Revised February 2010)

Please note that
meet the needs

Monitoring: Compilation, Analysis, and Use of Data

2006-2007

- Sent teams to investigate data management systems
- Decided to purchase Performance Tracker for data management and IEPs
- Updated district assessment summary booklet
- Board presentation on district data
- Trained administrators on use of Performance Tracker
- Each building formed a data team
- Continued work on local assessments
- Piloted 4Sight testing for reading in grades 3-8.
- Trained all K-2 teachers on DIBELS

2007-2008

- Trained data teams on use of Performance Tracker (PT)
- Data teams trained all staff in using PT
- Trained special education teachers on using PT for IEPs
- Trained all staff on utilizing collaboration time to examine data
- Used data to determine student interventions
- Administered and analyzed results for locally designed assessments
- Developed benchmark assessments in all areas
- Developed an assessment calendar for elementary teachers
- Provided specific collaboration time and training to discuss data
- Updated district assessment booklet
- Presented district data at Oct. Bd. Mtg.
- Administered the EXPLORE and PLAN assessments to provide college-readiness and PSSA prediction data
- Implemented 4Sight reading tests in grades 3-8
- Administered 4Sight testing for reading in grade 10
- Gathered
- Implemen
- Investiga
of a K-8
reading l
- Trained t
- Encourag
monitor s
- Changed
  - Grades
- Changed
  - Grades

2008-2009

- Notified of PSSA results in math and reading – BASD ranked number one in Berks County in both math and reading
- Updated district assessment booklet
- Board presentation on district data
- Developed further benchmark assessments
- Trained new employees on use of Performance Tracker (PT), Running Records and DIBELS
- Purchased PT Assessment Builder
- Developed sample assessments with Assessment Builder and analyzed items
- Examined the role of 4Sight and determine its continued use
- Implemented K-6 reading level assessment system
- Trained counselors on the analysis of Explore and Plan data
- Trained a core team of teachers on hands-on, common formative

2009-2010

- Update district assessment booklet
- Board presentation on district data
- Develop further benchmark assessments
- Train new employees on use of PT, Running Records and DIBELS
- Train administrators and curriculum council on use of Assessment Builder
- Train data teams on using Assessment Builder on benchmark assessments
- Begin to use Assessment Builder as curriculum areas are revised
- Use data from benchmark assessments to determine intervention strategies for students
- Increase PSSA reading by 5% at all levels
- Increase PSSA math by 4% at elementary and junior high levels and 8% at BASH

2010-2011 (Proposed)

- District and Building Action Plan development and monitoring
  - Climate
  - Instruction
    - Walk through expectations
    - Lesson expectations
  - PLCs

(Revised February 2010)

Please n
meet the

Instructional Programs, Practices, and Arrangements

2006-2007

- Demographic study committee established
- Nine gray areas developed to accommodate student enrollment
- Developed district-wide core beliefs in instruction
- Identified best practices in instruction by department
- Began to implement balanced reading instruction at all levels
- Implemented the Reading Apprenticeship model in pockets at the secondary level
- JHE addition completed
- Increased use of Smart Boards and EduClicks for instruction
- Began the overhaul of the district website
- All schools and the district designated No Place for Hate

2007-2008

- Nine gray areas implemented to accommodate student enrollment
- Developed a redistricting plan for elementary
- Kindergarten orientation programs revised
- Developed an administrative co-observation process to improve instructional practices
- Examined a walk-through process that is aligned to district core beliefs
- Began to examine how time is allocated and utilized at the elementary and secondary level
- Trained cohorts of teachers on Reading Apprenticeship
- Began to explore new student data management system
- Updated the district website
- Continued to have all buildings and the district designated as No Place for Hate
- Explored the development of teacher created web pages and electronic collaboration tools

2008-2009

- Elementary redistricting plan developed, presented and approved for 2009-2010
- Revised gray attendance areas developed, presented and approved for 2009-2010
- Planned for revised time allocations at the elementary and secondary levels
- Continued to train secondary teachers on Reading Apprenticeship
- Implemented an online writing assessment system in grade 10
- Investigated a walk through process that is aligned to core beliefs
- Examined and selected a computerized report card program at the elementary level
- Explored centralized registration process
- Continued to have all buildings and the district designated as No Place for Hate
- Determined a new student data management system and began the implementation
- Continued installation of Smart Boards
- Continued the development of teacher created web pages and electronic collaboration tools

2009-2010

- Implement the Board adopted redistricting and gray area plans
- Review enrollment trends and options to accommodate students
- Continue implementation of a new student data management system
- Continue the implementation of an online writing assessment system to other grade levels
- Continue to have all buildings and the district designated as No Place for Hate
- Continue installation of Smart Boards
- Phase in centralized registration process
- Implement a walk through process that is aligned to core beliefs
- Implement a computerized report card program at the elementary level

2010-2011 (Proposed)

- Develop the district website to include at least two additional parent and/or teacher resources for each department.
- Use results driven organizational efficiency methodologies to improve, remove, or replace at least one function in every major department.
- District and Building Action Plan development and monitoring
  - Climate
  - Instruction
    - Walk through expectations
    - Lesson expectations
  - PLCs

(Revised February 2010)

Please note that this timeline is for planning and direction setting. There will be changes as we consider ways to best meet the needs of the students in the Boyertown Area School District and as we are required to meet new mandates.

What have these goals yielded this year?

- **Boyertown Elementary School** has seen an increase from last year in the number of students scoring proficient on the 5th grade January 4Sight Reading Assessment. This is especially exciting due to the fact that historically the 5th grade has scored low on PSSA. Boyertown Elementary also had a 24% increase in the number of students scoring proficient and advanced.

- **Colebrookdale Elementary School** has worked very hard at their PLC time. They have found effective and efficient ways to use data to help guide our instruction. They have worked in whole group as well as grade level specific groups to dig deep in our data review. The reading specialist, instructional coach, intervention specialist, curriculum council representative, and the building principal have all served as instructional leaders and facilitators in this process. During this process they have identified at least five instructional areas that are grade level as well as student specific concerns. After these discrepant areas were identified, the teams brainstormed multiple strategies to help remediate these areas.

- **Earl Elementary School** data shows that as of the latest 4Sight testing in February, Earl Elementary School has experienced a 25% increase in proficient scores in Grade 3, 15% increase in proficient scores in Grade 4, 8% increase in proficient scores in Grades 5 and 6.

- **Gilbertsville Elementary** reports that a minimum of 88% of students in K – 2 will reach the district's guided reading level by the end of the school year as measured by Fountas and Pinnell.
  - Kindergarten – 80%
  - First Grade – 83%
  - Second Grade – 85%

- **New Hanover Upper Frederick Elementary** announced that in April the Kindergarten target guided reading level is level B. They tested their students in late February and 76% of the students were already at level B or above. This means that 76% of our Kindergarten students are working above expected instructional reading level.

- **Pine Forge Elementary** data reflects a gain of 7.08% of students in grades 1-6 scoring on or above level in the Fountas and Pinnell guided reading assessments.

- **Washington Elementary** reports that -
  - **94%** of second grade students at WES have scored proficient or above on the February Fountas and Pinnell guided reading assessments.
  - **94%** of fourth grade students at WES have scored proficient or above on the February Fountas and Pinnell guided reading assessments.
  - **97%** of fifth grade students at WES have scored proficient or above on the February Fountas and Pinnell guided reading assessments.
  - **88%** of sixth grade students at WES have scored proficient or above on the February Fountas and Pinnell guided reading assessments.
  - **87%** of fourth grade students at WES have scored proficient or above on the third 4Sight assessment. 4Sight is used as an indicator for PSSA's.
  - **83%** of sixth grade students at WES have scored proficient or above on the third 4Sight assessment. 4Sight is used as an indicator for PSSA's.

- **Junior High East** professional learning community groups have worked together to implement Reading Apprenticeship strategies in their classrooms. It is working. Based on our 4-Sight test results, we have seen a 4% increase in our scores in Grade 7 and a 7% increase in Grade 8.

- **Junior High School West** has set a building goal to show there will be a net gain of 4% for 7th and 8th grade students reaching the level of proficient in reading in 2009 as compared to the results in 2008.

- **Boyertown Area Senior High School** has a National Merit Scholarship finalist for the first time since the 2005-2006 school year. Also, to date, 8 out of 13 sports (fall & winter) earned PAC 10 titles.

Where are we headed?

"The [high performing schools] practices are interdependent and should not be viewed in isolation."

National Center for Education Achievement

– Authors of the High Performing Schools Model

NCEA encourages the use of school-wide action plans

NCEA recommends certain practices when developing such plans

ON TARGET
Student achievement data drive development of school improvement plan.
Academic improvement goals state explicit, measurable improvement by subject and by student group.
Improvement plan is sharply focused on a limited number of academic goals.
Stakeholders are deeply aware of current student performance and highly supportive of aggressive academic goals.
School activities clearly reflect academic goals of improvement plan.
School budget and additional monies are tightly aligned to the school improvement plan. Activities do not shift as result of new funding.
Principal guards the instructional priorities and does not let goals shift, multiply, or change during the year.
Improvement plan addresses potential barriers or contributors to academic success as a means of reaching end-improved student performance.

District and Building Action Planning

- **Climate**
  - Guidance/Resiliency
  - Exercise
  - Nutrition
  - Safety
  - Communication
  - Behavior Plans (building, classroom)
  - PD/Coaching

- **Instruction: SMART GOALS**
  - Eligible Content
  - Pacing Guides
  - Observations
  - Walk-throughs
  - Effective Lesson Implementation
  - PD/Coaching

- **PLCs**
  - Scheduling
  - Norms
  - Data Analysis
  - Interventions/Instructional
  - Adjustments
  - PD/Coaching

Common Language/Model of Instruction

"Schools and districts often struggle with defining effective teaching within the context of multiple and competing approaches to teaching and learning..."

(Schooling, Toth, and Marzano, 2010)

We are working towards common lesson delivery expectations in all classrooms:

- Learning objectives and/or essential questions are appropriate and clearly communicated.
- Specific feedback is provided to individuals and/or small groups.
- Questioning strategies are utilized to elicit higher order thinking skills.
- Strategies are modeled and prompted.
- Students are meaningfully engaged in learning activities.
- Teachers utilize summarization and closure strategies.