

## REPORT

**School Board  
Minnetonka I.S.D. #276  
5621 County Road 101  
Minnetonka, Minnesota**

### **Study Session Agenda Item**

**Title: Update on Barriers to Success Work**

**Date: January 15, 2017**

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

During the 2012-13 school year, the Minnetonka School District authorized a District Task Force to (1) identify the barriers that prevent academic success of students, (2) catalogue and evaluate the prevalence of these barriers, (3) analyze the effectiveness of current strategies to address barriers, and (4) recommend potential changes to current efforts. The final report included a detailed analysis by building/school and relevant demographics, which students were participating in each existing strategy, length of time participating, and the achievement gained—academic or behavioral. The final report identified which barriers are controllable or reasonably addressed within the system. These will be barriers that are created by the system, those for which solutions are potentially District oriented, or those reasonably addressed by the District based upon the benefits they would provide our students.

In 2014, the School Board adopted the following goal:

*Design and implement school-specific strategies that address identified barriers to student academic achievement. Provide progress reporting against these strategies.*

The purpose of this report is to update the School Board on the progress school staff have made to address the needs of academically struggling students who have been identified with additional barriers to their learning.

### **IDENTIFY BARRIERS THAT PREVENT ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

After reviewing literature in this area, the following risk factors were originally identified as predictive for lower levels of academic achievement:

- Poverty
- Special Learning Needs (Qualify for Special Education Services)
- Identified Learning Gaps (Academic Interventions, but no SpEd Services)
- Truant or Transient Characteristics (Poor Attendance)

- Disruptive or Anti-Social Behavior
- Homelessness
- Mental Health
- Family Crisis
- Substance Use and Abuse
- Fear for Personal Safety (Bullying, etc.)
- Physical Health (Chronic Sickness)

Although these risk factors are predictive based on research and data analysis, it is important to note that many students who have risk factors in their lives never struggle academically. Although we do not consider it to be a barrier, race/ethnicity has historically been a factor worthy of study in order to address the needs of the whole child. The purpose of this initiative is to ensure that the necessary protocols for identifying at-risk students exist at a systems level. The goal is to demonstrate, as a District, that there is a safety net in place that works in a consistent, coherent manner at every school. The goal of this work is to ensure that the appropriate students are identified for support and the results of that support positively impacts student achievement. Table 1 includes the District-identified barriers and their descriptions.

**Table 1: Risk Factors and Descriptions**

<b>Risk Factor</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Academic Concerns</b>	Below individual performance trends, poor grades, struggling with concepts, lack of effort, work completion, etc.
<b>Attendance Concerns</b>	Excessive excused or unexcused absences or tardiness.
<b>Behavioral Concerns</b>	Anti-social behaviors effecting self and/or others, poor peer relationships, defiance, etc.
<b>Chemical Health Concerns</b>	Use, or suspected use, of illegal drugs, prescription drugs, alcohol, and/or tobacco.
<b>Family/Home Concerns</b>	Financial needs, homelessness, family change (divorce, separation, death, etc.), family illness, etc.
<b>Homework Support Needs</b>	Lack of technology, adult support, or resources outside of school.
<b>Mental Health Concerns</b>	Anxiety, depression, ADHD, mood swings, and/or other dramatic changes in personality.
<b>Physical Health Concerns</b>	Chronic health related issues (diabetes, allergies, etc.) and/or temporary concerns (broken bones, surgeries, etc.).
<b>Transportation Concerns</b>	Inability to access before/after school events, clubs/athletics or academic assistance.

## DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

Each building provides many supports to students, and it is unlikely to understand the impact each of those supports has on each child who participates. However, during the 2014-15 school year, staff began creating action plans to address certain populations of students at risk of not achieving to their potential and have studied the impact of specific research-based interventions. The action plans ranged from addressing parent engagement concerns in order to improve reading performance or following a systematic approach to identifying both Reading and Math needs and provide checkpoints throughout the year to measure student progress. For this report, school leaders have either continued to focus on a specific cohort of students or expanded their review of student performance along with the strategies that had the greatest impact. The following section contains individual school site updates on student successes and strategies that have been most helpful to students who have had barriers to their learning during the 2016-17 school year.

### CLEAR SPRINGS ELEMENTARY

The “Barriers to Success” work at Clear Springs in the primary grades over the last three years has begun to yield great results in the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs), according to Principal Curt Carpenter.

For example, this year, Grade 3 students were **92.3 percent** proficient in Math, compared to the District average of **86.7 percent**. In Grade 4, students were **88.6 percent** proficient compared to the District average of **86.1 percent**.

In Reading, Grade 3 students were **80.3 percent** proficient compared to the District average of **76.9 percent**. Grade 4 students were **80.2 percent** proficient compared to the District average of **75.1 percent**.

The same successful interventions used during the 2015-16 school year have been implemented on a greater scale this year at Clear Springs. In order to better explain the barriers to success work at Clear Springs, Principal Carpenter asked teacher interventionists to report their strategies, challenges, and successes in their barriers work. The following is a brief report by area of work:

Kimberly Ewen, Math Specialist:

- All Math Club students in Grades 2-5 are using a new Fact Fluency program called Math Reflex. The program, which normally costs \$35 per student, was obtained through a grant provided by Explore Learning. Active engagement in the program and first semester gains have shown incredible results. For example, one student who started the year at **3 percent** proficient with addition and subtraction facts reached **100 percent** fluency by winter break.

June 6, 2017 Update: Math Reflex proved to be a very successful tool. A total of **11** out of **35** students reached **100 percent** fluency in their assigned area. Overall

fluency grew from an average of **9 percent** fluent in the Fall to **79 percent** fluent in the Spring.

- Math Club students use *Interactive Notebooks* to complete Math assignments on a variety of concepts. The activities use bright colors, and movable pieces to keep students actively engaged. The notebooks become a great resource for review as students can easily look back to previously taught concepts. The students take pride in their notebooks and love to show them off to others.

June 6, 2017 Update: “Interactive Notebooks are a cherished tool. The students were very excited to take them home this spring. Electronic copies of the books were created using the iPad app called Book Creator.”

Amy Horning, School Social Worker:

- “Last year our PLC dedicated our efforts toward improving student punctuality and attendance. The PLC, comprised of our Licensed School Nurse, School Social Worker, and Health Para created new standards for punctuality and attendance and has communicated these expectations to the school community. The Health Office sends letters to parents of students that are habitually tardy or absent and informs the principal when a student needs to be transported to school and the principal then picks the student up. This PLC is making a real difference with getting our students to school on time and attending school every day.”
- “This year, Licensed School Nurse Stacy Sand and I are focusing our PLC work on student anxiety. We are targeting Third Grade and will be doing class lessons on stress management and coping skills. Students indicating a need for more direct support with anxiety will be served in small group counseling sessions.”

June 6, 2017 Update: Following class lessons on anxiety and reduction strategies, and targeted small group lessons on coping skills, students increased their ability to identify stress reduction strategies from 50 percent on the pre-survey to 95 percent on post-survey.

Jennifer Pearce, Special Education Teacher:

- “I’m working on the Wilson Reading Program with one student. I will be transitioning to working with more groups of students in the second semester and next school year. Students who will be utilizing this program are students who have not been successful with our traditional intervention methods.”

June 6, 2017 Update: Student progress has been noted by parents by talking about how they are noticing their child’s interest level in reading has gone sky high and classroom teachers have notice a different in confidence with these students wanting to participate in classroom reading.

- “I’m using Orton-Gillingham methods with four students who are not ready for the Wilson Program. Students who are learning using Orton-Gillingham methods are students who have not been successful with our traditional intervention methods.”

June 6, 2017 Update: Students have made progress based upon their testing scores and classroom performance. Challenges are still generalizing the skills in the general education classroom, however when a student is prompted to slow down, the progress

is seen by classroom teachers in the student's ability to blend/decode words and parents have commented on how they see more progress with a multi-sensory approach.

- "As a department, we are beginning to cross-over our caseloads and group students based on needs, rather than who we case-manage."

June 6, 2017 Update: As a team we have started the discussion about how to better service groups and make better use of all of our time. Meetings are being held to look over data to start the process for next year.

- "In the Fifth Grade, I will be co-teaching with the grade-level writing teacher two or three times per week. I will also assist students who are at-risk, on a 504 plan, or who are on an IEP. This work is still in development and will begin at the end of second quarter."

Lacy Hladky, Bilingual Reading Specialist and Brenda Van Dixhorn, English Reading Specialist:

- "We have both targeted students who would benefit from the Wilson Reading Program. Lacy is using Wilson with three students and Brenda is using it with nine students."

June 6, 2017 Update: Lacy used Wilson strategies with nine students in First and Second grade English. Brenda completed her level 1 Wilson practicum training with one student who showed growth on his posttest scores. She also used Wilson strategies with eight other students in Third through Fifth Grades.

- "We both have full case-loads of students who receive Tier 2 and Tier 3 Reading support. Their progress is monitored regularly so we can provide the best instruction."

June 6, 2017 Update: After January testing, staff reviewed new NWEA data, fluency scores, and reading levels to determine the best tier of reading support for students. Staff adjusted groups, released some students, and added some new students to our reading groups.

- "We have reviewed MCA data and identified students who did not meet or partially met standards." Staff are using Lexia (a supplemental online reading program purchased by the District this year) as an intervention and being supervised by Fourth Grade Immersion Teacher Kathy Klumb during her English Language time.
- At-risk students who did not qualify for Tier 2 or Tier 3 support are being provided extra help in their areas of need from a support teacher, such as a Spanish Immersion Teacher during that teacher's ELT time.

June 6, 2017 Update: Students who were identified after January testing as needing Tier 1 support were assigned to work with a teacher using Lexia, and other reading intervention strategies. We also identified and started to work with at risk Kindergarten students in both Spanish and English.

Brenda is working with a small team to screen all third, fourth, and fifth grade students who may need the Just Words or Wilson intervention programs next year. Data is being

compiled and decisions will be made about the best way to support students who show a need in this area.

## **Conclusions**

Clear Springs' 2016-17 barriers work has been a success due to increased collaboration, communication, and teacher training, specifically in the Wilson Reading Program:

- The Clear Springs "Learning Team" met in the Summer of 2016 to plan the work for the 2016-17 school year. This collaboration led to the entire Learning Team attending the Minnetonka Institute in order to plan their work for the year. This plan included early release and late start days as well as providing the content for staff meetings throughout the year.
- The Learning Team and principal have communicated expectations for interventions clearly to all staff. They also offer support to any teacher who needs help in knowing how to implement interventions for his/her students.
- Teacher training has been vital. The District's support of teacher training in the Wilson Reading Program has made a clear difference in Reading growth and achievement.
- Greater student achievement on the MCAs in the last three years reinforces the belief that the intervention strategies are working well.

## **DEEPHAVEN ELEMENTARY**

### **Data Summary**

21 students in Grades 4 and 5 were identified and participated in the Best Learning Academy for Students and Teachers (BLAST) program at Deephaven Elementary throughout the 2016-2017 school year. There were three six-week sessions available to students. All students have shown improvement in either organization, homework completion, and/or NWEA performance. Fall to Spring NWEA results showed increases for the students with NWEA scores increasing in Math with an average of **12 RIT points** and increasing in Reading with an average of **10 RIT points**.

### **Student Successes**

- Students were able to organize backpacks, planners, desks & homework assignments which allowed for increased homework completion and motivation.
  - Staff/Parent Recommendations or Observations for success:
    - There was a suggestion to start earlier in the school year. So, this year, students started on September 28, instead of in October.
    - Students benefitted from having a reliable structure in which to do his/her homework.
    - Students who struggle with appropriate and respectful interactions with adults were able to increase the number of adults who genuinely care for them.
    - Students seemed more engaged in learning and homework.

- Students met with teachers one-on-one to go over specific homework expectations for each classroom/student.
- Student enjoyed the opportunity to work one-on-one with a caring adult to help finish or start homework. High school volunteers were vital to the success of this program.
- The BLAST program allowed students to use different organizational strategies that will help support them in their future.
- After each session, incentives were offered for continued growth. After the fall session, a free book was offered for meeting a specific reading goal and after the winter session, a pizza party was offered for fulfilling an IXL Math goal.
- In a student survey on how well BLAST helped them to get organized, the results were as follows: 5 = 30 4 = 15 3 = 10 2 = 3 and 1 = 3 (5 was excellent and 1 was poor). So most students felt that BLAST was excellent or very good for them. Most of the poor raters were due to help with lockers, and the students didn't have a locker.

### **Successful Building Strategies**

The BLAST program is one of many programs that help to break the barriers for students at Deephaven Elementary. This program increases motivation, helps with organizational skills, allows for individual support and creates the time for students to succeed by completing classroom assignments. Deephaven also has other programs at address barriers to student success including:

- a. M&M Mentoring Program
  - i. Students have a mentor to help support a positive adult relationship.
- b. Confident Kids
  - i. Students are taught tools to help them be successful in the classroom and gives them confidence to succeed with one-on-one adult support.
- c. Reading and Math Support
  - i. We also have a great team helping with our reading and math interventions at Deephaven Elementary which provides that extra boost of support.
- d. Grandfriends Program
  - i. Volunteers came to read with and develop meaningful relationships with key students selected by teachers.

### **Conclusion**

The BLAST program was focused on improved organizational skills, homework completion and instilling positive supportive relationships for both peers and adults. Deephaven's staff continued to learn that the barriers outside of school were a challenge for many of the students to complete and create quality work. The staff was able to provide support to these students on a weekly basis.

The attendance and participation of the program was more consistent. The students were able to set weekly goals to complete the current week's assignments. Staff saw that without the support of Blast that many of these student would be unsuccessful with homework completion. Parent comments were that their student loved having help with homework and that the student is taking homework more seriously.

In the future, we have developed two six-week programs of smartboard documents and newsletters for parents and teachers which could be replicated by another school. We are hoping another Minnetonka school would be willing to try this model for their school, too. The fall themes: Backpacks, Planners, Home Study, Self-Love, Goals, and a review. The winter themes: Homework Expectations, Intrinsic Motivation, Study Skills/Prioritizing, Test-taking tips, Team Work and a review.

Overall, the BLAST program has proven to be a success to breaking the barriers that Deephaven students encounter on a daily basis, as staff saw many positive outcomes.

## **EXCELSIOR ELEMENTARY**

### **Data Summary**

Excelsior Elementary School has identified two different groups of students ranging from Grade 2 through Grade 5 to receive two targeted types of Reading intervention.

Staff chose one group of students to participate in the Reading computer program, Lexia Core 5. These students showed higher scores, but still had areas of concern with Reading. Another group was chosen to participate in Wilson Reading instruction either 1:1 or in a small group.

The intervention chosen was based on the students' demonstration of need based on looking broadly across several different assessment indicators including: NWEA history, MCA history (for Fourth and Fifth Graders), Reading Fluency Benchmarks, the new WIST assessment from Wilson (measures specific decoding and encoding skills) and teacher/Reading Specialist conversations to plan to match the individual's intervention needs.

Interventions began after the completion of Fall 2016 assessments.

**WILSON:** For the students who participated in Wilson 1:1 or small group Tier 3 intervention or Tier 2 Just Words, the average growth was **21.3 RIT points** on NWEA and an average growth of **54 words per minute** on their TIES Fluency Benchmark.

**LEXIA:** Of the 62 students who participated in Lexia this year, the average RIT growth was **15 RIT points** on the spring NWEA test. Of those 62, 15 students grew **20 RIT points** or more. Staff also saw a translation in terms of their Reading Fluency growth, which we had previously not been very impacted by the Read Naturally program used in prior years. In addition, staff saw a positive impact on this Spring's MCA scores as well



for Third, Fourth, and Fifth Graders. Of the 45 students who took the MCA, 42 students Met, Partially Met, or Exceeded their MCA benchmark.

### **Successful Building Strategies**

- Excelsior staff initiated the conversation last year about a need for additional and better-quality research-tested intervention resources and encouraged, with the advocacy of parents in the District, the beginning of Wilson training for some of Minnetonka's teaching staff. This began with a three-day introductory course hosted at Excelsior last summer.
  - Some classroom teachers took that learning and coupled that as a strategy to teach the already-existing phonics scope and sequence in the Reading curriculum in Kindergarten and First Grade within their classrooms.
  - Three teachers (one Reading Specialist and two Special Education teachers) participated in the District's first Wilson Level 1 Certification Practicum cohort. This includes 60+ hours of instruction 1:1 with a practicum student and a 30+ hour college-level online course.
- From that training, the Level 1 practicum teachers implemented small groups for Wilson instruction to begin offering students instruction targeted at decoding/encoding words with comprehension, fluency and vocabulary.
- The Reading Specialist also initiated reflection on the school's long-standing use of the Read Naturally program, which had been in place to support growth in Reading fluency. Staff were not seeing the efforts transfer into the students' Reading skills or assessment scores, so they tested a new highly-recommended program called Lexia Core 5. Structured time set up for students to participate in the Lexia computer program with the AOM para overseeing these students (and also implementing the program's already-written lesson plans for those students on topics as the program progressed where students were struggling).
- K-2 Staff worked on sharing strategies through a dyslexia-focused PLC with English and immersion classroom teachers in Grades K-2 to embed in their classroom reading instruction.
  - One project for the PLC was adapting Wilson materials (sound cards and spelling letter tiles) for Chinese teachers. This allowed them to better-target the skills of blending and segmenting for Immersion students learning to read in Chinese. This applied to First and Second Grade teachers, and will give a better foundation for instruction in Third Grade and beyond. The work will also benefit those Immersion students as they enter English Reading instruction in Third Grade next year.
  - Excelsior staff worked to learn more about early signs to look for in struggling readers who may show signs of dyslexia in order to implement intervention in the classroom and focus on targeting those students in earlier grades. Below is data NWEA and Fluency data associated with the students who participated in the Wilson Reading Program.

## Student Successes- WILSON

Student	Grade	Intervention	Other Factors/ Possible Barriers	Fall NWEA	Spring NWEA	Fall Fluency Benchmark	Spring Fluency Benchmark
A	2	Wilson Small Group	Asthma, Started 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester	171 (41%ile)	189 (51%ile)	56 wpm	86 wpm
B	2	Wilson Small Group	ELL (1/2 recommended Wilson amount)	152 (7%ile)	182 (33%ile)	15 wpm	62 wpm
C	2	Wilson Small Group	Speech IEP	161 (19%ile)	187 (46%ile)	29 wpm	66 wpm
D	2	Wilson Small Group		165 (27%ile)	172 (14%ile)	32 wpm	57 wpm
E	2	Wilson Foundations	Dyslexia Diagnosis	162 (21%ile)	190 (53%ile)	30 wpm	126 wpm
F	3	Wilson 1:1	Special Education LD	180 (30%ile)	200 (54%ile)	30 wpm	79 wpm
G	3	Wilson 1:1		178 (26%ile)	207 (71%ile)	77 wpm	109 wpm
H	3	Wilson Small Group	Immersion Student, Dyslexia & Dysgraphia diagnosis	192 (59%ile)	217 (89%ile)	72 wpm	120 wpm
I	3	Wilson Small Group	(1/2 recommended Wilson amount), Immersion Student	172 (15%ile)	202 (59%ile)	26 wpm	103 wpm
J	3	Wilson Small Group	(1/2 recommended Wilson amount), Immersion Student, Started 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester	171 (41%)	189 (51%)	59 wpm	121 wpm
K	3	Wilson Small Group	(1/2 recommended Wilson amount), Immersion Student	176 (22%ile)	203 (61%ile)	32 wpm	120 wpm
L	3	Wilson Small Group	(1/2 recommended Wilson amount)	189 (52%ile)	204 (64%ile)	39 wpm	109 wpm
M	3	Wilson Small Group	(1/2 recommended Wilson amount), Immersion Student	184 (39%ile)	192 (33%ile)	44 wpm	104 wpm
N	3	Wilson Small Group	(1/2 recommended Wilson amount), Immersion Student	179 (28%ile)	197 (46%ile)	38 wpm	75 wpm
O	4	Wilson 1:1	Special Education	160 (1%ile)	208 (56%ile)	27 wpm	64 wpm
P	4	Wilson Small Group	Immersion Student, ADHD	172 (5%ile)	197 (28%ile)	32 wpm	69 wpm
Q	4	Wilson Small Group	Immersion Student	179 (11%ile)	211 (63%ile)	73 wpm	101 wpm
R	4	Wilson Small Group	Immersion Student	183 (17%ile)	198 (30%ile)	57 wpm	129 wpm
S	4	Wilson Small Group	Immersion Student	195 (42%ile)	208 (56%ile)	48 wpm	108 wpm
T	4	Wilson Just Words	3x per week	204 (65%ile)	211 (63%ile)	77 wpm	143 wpm
U	4	Wilson Just Words	3x per week	188 (26%ile)	210 (61%ile)	49 wpm	108 wpm
V	4	Wilson Just Words	3x per week, Immersion Student	191 (32%ile)	210 (61%ile)	68 wpm	131 wpm
W	4	Wilson Small Group		192 (35%ile)	202 (40%ile)	56 wpm	117 wpm

### **Student Success- LEXIA**

Of the 62 students who participated in Lexia this year, the average RIT growth was **15 RIT points** on the Spring NWEA test. Of those 62, 15 students grew **20 RIT points** or more. Staff also saw an increase in terms of the students' Reading Fluency growth, which they had previously not seen an impact by the Read Naturally program. In addition, staff saw a positive impact on this Spring's MCA scores as well for Third, Fourth, and Fifth Graders. Of the 45 who took the MCA, 42 students Met, Partially Met, or Exceeded their MCA benchmark.

Excelsior staff concluded that Lexia was not the right fit for every student and did not replace the quality of teacher-student direct teaching many readers need. However, it was an effective program to have available to support those students who only needed more concrete structure to learning Reading and more practice with concepts than they would typically get in the classroom to master those skills. Staff found the success hinged on having the support para and a structured schedule to have students able to consistently meet their target minutes set by the program for each individual, and to deliver lessons provided by the program from the para on a concept where students were struggling.

### **Staff Feedback**

Excelsior staff is incredibly excited about Wilson and Lexia. They communicate weekly, and in some cases daily, with teachers asking for the next training available and who will be able to attend. Teachers are requesting more training and resources to use in the classroom to complement the already great curriculum.

Beyond training excitement, there have been many anecdotal stories shared with Reading Specialists from teachers about how their students who are thriving in the classroom. They have talked about their blooming confidence, better class participation, increased self-esteem and better classroom behavior. Teachers, students and parents alike are seeing the positive, notable growth.

### **Conclusions**

Reading is a core skill necessary for academic success in all subject areas. Excelsior staff have been energized by the new programs they have been able to implement and have seen a dramatic impact on the students who received these supports. It is recommended that staffing support be addressed due to the number of students who will need access to these programs. Excelsior staff are also excited about reviewing the early intervention piece to target the younger learners and explore ways that they can give better training/resources to classroom teachers in order to help improve explicit instruction in the classroom. This will help to support readers at younger grades, preventing the need for as much intervention service. Staff are looking forward to continuing to refine these programs and rolling them out to more students in the coming school year.

## GROVELAND ELEMENTARY

This update focuses on a subgroup of 14 Fourth Graders who did not meet Reading proficiency in the Spring of 2016 as Third Graders. Groveland's support for students with academic Reading barriers extends beyond daily differentiated balanced literacy Tier 1 core classroom Language Arts lessons to a series of interventions which include Tier 2/Tier 3 small group Reading instruction with a Reading Specialist/Special Education Teacher, Wilson Reading System instructional methods as well as Groveland's Summer Academic Camp.

After a series of Reading interventions and supports including Rtl Tier 2/3 small group Reading instruction, Wilson Reading System methods and, in some cases, Groveland's Summer Academic Camp these learners scale score improvements on the MCA-III in Reading improvements ranged from **95 to 135 points** from the Spring 2016 to the Spring 2017. This reflects on average a year's growth and for **9** out of **14** students more than on year's reading growth.

### MCA-III Reading

Grade 4 Student subgroup Spring 2016 to Spring 2017

Scale Score Improvement (100 points is approximately one year's growth, and the numbers in bold highlights students who have met this marker).

Student 1: 348 to 443 (+95)  
Student 2: 347 to 443 (+96)  
Student 3: 347 to 449 (**+102**)  
Student 4: 347 to 441 (+94)  
Student 5: 345 to 442 (+97)  
Student 6: 342 to 434 (+92)  
Student 7: 340 to 443 (**+103**)  
Student 8: 340 to 449 (**+109**)  
Student 9: 340 to 453 (**+113**)  
Student 10: 338 to 446 (**+108**)  
Student 11: 337 to 449 (**+112**)  
Student 12: 324 to 434 (**+110**)  
Student 13: 320 to 429 (**+109**)  
Student 14: 316 to 451 (**+135**)

As evidence of the effectiveness of Groveland first year implementation of the intensive Wilson Reading System methods this year, Fourth Grade learner #14 improved in scale score from 316 to 451(does not meet to meets expectations). Additional evidence of this student's Reading gains are Fall WIST(*Word Identification and Spelling Test*) Fundamental Literacy scaled score **50 (1%)** and Spring WIST Fundamental Literacy scaled score **92 (30%)** as well as NWEA Fall Reading RIT **185 (20%)** and NWEA Spring Reading RIT **212 (66%)**.

Groveland's Academic Summer Camps offer students entering Grades 1-5 additional instructional support in Reading, Math, Writing and Grammar. Instruction is in small groups with a focus on differentiated learning to meet individual student needs. This academic camp is taught by Groveland classroom teachers which is a value-added element of extended year learning for students. Groveland's Academic Summer Camp is an affordable, high quality learning opportunity for students in both English and Spanish with scholarship options funded by the Groveland PTA to ensure resources are not a barrier to participation.

These students moved into the Partially Meet Proficiency range this year on the MCA-III's and continue to make positive and substantial progress toward the goal of meeting proficiency next year in Grade 5 Reading as they complete elementary school. These learners include both Special Education as well as Tier 2/3 Reading support.

## **MINNEWASHTA ELEMENTARY**

### **Data Summary**

During the 2016-17 school year, Minnewashta Elementary School identified two groups of students who were demonstrating below grade level achievement in the areas of Math and Reading. In Reading, 102 students were identified and received Orton-Gillingham services and 15 students in particular were studied as part of teachers' professional learning. Three of these students received the Wilson Intensive Intervention. Three specialist teachers earned certification this school year in Wilson as they worked one-on-one with students to close gaps in foundational reading skills. In addition, a Professional Learning Community closely studied 12 second and third graders receiving Orton Gillingham instruction through the Sonday System. In Grades Four and Five, 40 students were identified as needing support in Math and participated in Math classes that provide additional academic supports.

Percentile rankings for students participating in the Reading interventions grew from an average of 21 to an average of 37 on the NWEA Reading Test in the Spring of 2017. For students receiving Math support, percentile rankings increased from an average of 38 to an average of 57 on the NWEA Math Test.

### **Successful Building Strategies and Students Successes**

Minnewashta Elementary interventionists have completed four years of integrating a research-based Orton Gillingham intervention for students demonstrating difficulties in Reading related to phonics and decoding. This year, in addition to the continued implementation of the Sonday System, three teachers, two Rtl and one Special Education, completed an intensive course in which they implemented and studied the success of using the Wilson materials with three students. Each teacher met with an assigned student for an hour daily throughout the school year.

The WIST (Word Identification and Spelling Test) was administered in the Fall and Spring of this year to these three students. This assessment is a standardized measure of students foundational reading skills and allows teachers to identify Reading and Spelling weaknesses. On the WIST Fundamental Literacy Ability Index, targeted students demonstrated great growth, with average percentile rankings growing from the **22<sup>nd</sup> in the Fall to the 54<sup>th</sup> in the Spring**. Two of the students that participated in this intervention are Fifth Grade students. Evidence of their growth is seen when looking at their grade equivalency growth on the same assessment. In the Fall, these scores were **4.0** and **4.6** and by Spring moved to **6.9** and **6.0** respectively. These scores are evidence of between **1.5** and **2.9** years of growth in seven months. All three students exceeded growth projections on the NWEA Reading test from Fall to Spring this year with **average scores increasing from the 29<sup>th</sup> to the 43<sup>rd</sup> percentile**.

When Minnewashta first began the Orton Gillingham intervention four years ago, fifteen students were receiving this targeted intervention. Ongoing success, marked by significant growth in students' reading abilities each year, has led them to expand their implementation. In the 2016-17 school year, **86** students were provided with the Sonday System intervention while **16** students were provided with instruction from the Wilson materials including the Wilson Reading System, Wilson Just Words, and Wilson Foundations through the Response to Intervention model.

One of the Professional Learning Communities at Minnewashta this year consisted of both interventionists and classroom teachers who studied a targeted group of twelve Second and Third Graders receiving the Orton Gillingham Sonday System intervention at Tier III. In addition to daily intervention in a pull-out setting, the classroom teacher created a Spelling group that incorporated the same multi-sensory strategies to provide students with additional intervention time. On the NWEA Reading Test, this targeted group of students had an average expected growth of **15 points**. They exceeded this prediction with an average growth of **20 RIT points**. Five of these students scored **beyond the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile**.

As Minnewashta looks to the 2017-18 school year, this intervention will continue to grow as they prepare to efficiently and effectively meet the needs of all students. All **288** Third and Fourth grade students were screened with the TOSWRF (Test of Silent Word Reading Fluency). Based on these data, **164** students were given the WIST Spelling Test and **64** students were given the WIST Reading Test. The end result helped staff determine that **45** students, both general and Special Education, would qualify for support with Wilson programming in the Fourth and Fifth Grades for the 2017-18 school year. It is Minnewashta's goal that interventionists will be able to work collaboratively to design targeted learning experiences for these students using both the Wilson Intensive model and Just Words materials.

In the academic area of Math, Minnewashta continued to implement an intervention model with **19** Fifth Grade students who either partially met or did not meet on the Fourth Grade Math MCA and/or who demonstrated performance on the Math NWEA under the

40<sup>th</sup> percentile. These students, many who struggle with engagement in the traditional classroom, were provided with daily instruction in small groups with both a classroom teacher and Rtl teacher. The team of teachers continued to closely study the Fifth Grade Math standards and provide students with ongoing exposure to these standards at increasing levels of complexity.

By Spring, **95 percent** of students in this class had met or exceeded their targeted growth on the Math NWEA (compared to **81 percent** of Fifth Graders in the 2015-16 school year in this intervention class). These students increased their average percentile on the Math NWEA **from the 32<sup>nd</sup> percentile to the 71<sup>st</sup> percentile** from Fall to Spring. Average RIT growth was **28 points** for these **19 students** with **10 points** of growth being the target for the year for each child. **84 percent** of students demonstrated on grade level or above Math performance on the Spring NWEA. Students are closing their gap in achievement by significantly exceeding the target for a year's growth. This same group of students averaged **13 points** of growth during the 2015-16 school year.

This model continues to be increasingly successful at the Fifth Grade level where an interventionist/Math Specialist has provided daily direct support. The Minnewashta Fourth Grade intervention class is taught by two classroom teachers. Here, **52 percent** of students met their targeted growth with **62 percent** demonstrating on grade level or above math performance. Minnewashta will continue to evaluate the intervention class at this level prior to the 2017-18 school year and integrate the Math Specialist into planning and instruction to strengthen the student experience.

## SCENIC HEIGHTS ELEMENTARY

Scenic Heights' staff identified **14** students who scored less than the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile on the Fall NWEA in Math and Reading in Third through Fifth Grades. In addition, these students have other risk factors (i.e. family issues, mental health issues, and/or behavioral issues). A sampling of the 14 students is provided below.

Student	Teacher	NWEA – Reading Fall Spring		NWEA – Math Fall Spring		Identified Barriers
Student A	Grade 5	35	48	38	30	Academic, Mental Health, Behavioral
Interventions: <b>IEP</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The classroom teacher, in consultation with the IEP Manager, will break down class assignments into discrete, sequential units of instruction. Classroom instructors will check with student</li> <li>A frequently to ensure comprehension of classroom instruction. Student will be provided visual supports (daily schedule, visual reminders of rules, visual prompts, etc.) to promote an understanding of school expectations, increase the ability to self monitor behaviors and assist in anticipating upcoming activities.</li> </ul>						

- A special education paraprofessional is available to assist teachers in carrying out the accommodations

Student A has benefitted from direct instruction focused on IEP goals, academic support, and social/emotional skills. Student A has not had a discipline referral during the 2016-2017 school year and has established friendships within his grade level.

Student B	Grade 5	33	6	18	2	Academic, Mental Health, Behavioral
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**Interventions: IEP**

- A copy of Student B IEP-At-A-Glance, which includes goals, objectives and accommodations will be given to each of her teachers.
- The IEP manager will be available to answer any questions regarding her needs, goals or service.
- Student B will have increased check-ins for understanding of auditory information and directions in the classroom.
- Student B will have access to nursing services to assess and manage ADHD and Asthma.
- Student B will be given preferential seating towards the front in the classroom. Large classroom projects will be chunked into smaller steps and dates of completion.
- Extended time will be given to Student B on larger classroom projects that involve multiple steps and parts to complete. Londyn benefits from goal setting and incentive programs to increase her on task behavior during math.

Student B has benefitted from direct instruction focused on IEP goals, academic support, and social/emotional skills. Student B has not had a discipline referral during the 2016-2017 school year and has established friendships within his grade level. 39 absences (full and/or partial days) has contributed to demonstrated academic progress.

Student C	Grade 5	18	18/40	6	16/2	Academic, Mental Health, Family
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**Interventions:**

- Student Support Team
- Child Study Team
- RtI Reading
- Title I Math- Refused Service
- Special Education Evaluation- Did not qualify
- AOM
- On-site RELATE Therapy- Refused Service



<p>Student C has made substantial growth in the areas of peer/adult relationships, self-regulation, and task completion. Continued communication from the classroom teacher to Student C's mother has resulted in an increase in homework completion/understanding. Student C has not had a discipline referral during the 2016-2017 school year and has established friendships within his grade level.</p>						
Student D	Grade 5	20	40	18	28	Academic, Mental Health, Family
<p>Interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Support Team</li> <li>• RtI Reading</li> <li>• Title I Math</li> <li>• AOM</li> </ul> <p>Student D has made considerable growth in informal, curriculum-based standards and assessment. The classroom teacher has focused on moving Student D from an extrinsically motivated student to more of an intrinsically motivated learner. Student D has not had a discipline referral during the 2016-2017 school year and has established friendships within his grade level.</p>						
Student E	Grade 4	6	18	19	23/10	Academic, Mental Health, Family
<p>Interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Support Team</li> <li>• Child Study Team</li> <li>• Special Education Assessment</li> </ul> <p>Student E qualified for special services during the 2016-2017 school year. Student E has benefitted from direct instruction focused on IEP goals, academic support, and social/emotional skills. Student E has not had a discipline referral during the 2016-2017 school year and has established friendships within his grade level.</p>						
Student F	Grade 3	6	27	19	64	Academic, Mental Health, Family
<p>Interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RtI Reading</li> <li>• Title I Math</li> <li>• 1 on 1 review of directions with teacher</li> <li>• 1 on 1 classroom work with teacher</li> <li>• Increased parent communication regarding homework</li> </ul> <p>Student F has made substantial strides in information, curriculum-based standards and assessments. The classroom teacher has been in contact with Student F's mother multiple times a week to bridge academic instruction between school and</p>						

home. Task completion has increased throughout the school year. Student F has not had a discipline referral during the 2016-2017 school year and has established friendships within his grade level.						
Student G	Grade 4	6	9	19	43	Academic, Mental Health, Family
<p>Interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Support Team</li> <li>• Child Study Team</li> <li>• RtI Reading</li> <li>• Title I Math</li> <li>• AOM</li> <li>• Friendship Group</li> <li>• Special Education Assessment</li> </ul> <p>Student G qualified for special services during the 2016-2017 school year. Student G has benefitted from direct instruction focused on IEP goals, academic support, and social/emotional skills. Student G has not had a discipline referral during the 2016-2017 school year and has established friendships within his grade level.</p>						
Student H	Grade 4	20	63	23	64	Language Barrier (Primary language is French)
<p>Interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ESL</li> <li>• RtI Reading</li> <li>• Title I Math</li> </ul> <p>Student H has made substantial strides in information, curriculum-based standards and assessments. The classroom teacher has been in contact with Student H's mother multiple times a week to bridge academic instruction between school and home. Task completion has increased throughout the school year. Student H has not had a discipline referral during the 2016-2017 school year and has established friendships within his grade level.</p>						
Student K	Grade 3 Imm	1	14	15	49	Academic, Mental Health, Family
<p>Interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Support Team</li> <li>• Chinese RtI Reading</li> <li>• English RtI Reading</li> <li>• Title I Math</li> </ul> <p>Student K has made substantial strides in information, curriculum-based standards and assessments. The classroom teacher has been in contact with Student K's mother multiple times a week to bridge academic instruction between school and</p>						

home. Task completion has increased throughout the school year. Student K has not had a discipline referral during the 2016-2017 school year and has established friendships within his grade level.						
Student L	Grade 3	4	31	17	49	Academic, Mental Health, Family
<p>Interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Support Team</li> <li>• Child Study Team</li> <li>• Special Education Assessment</li> </ul> <p>Student L qualified for special services during the 2016-2017 school year. Student L has benefitted from direct instruction focused on IEP goals, academic support, and social/emotional skills. Student L has reduced his discipline referrals during the 2016-2017 school year to two and has established friendships within his grade level.</p>						
Student M	Grade 3 Imm	2	48	34	73	
<p>Interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chinese RtI Reading- Graduated</li> <li>• RtI Reading</li> </ul> <p>Student M has made substantial strides in information, curriculum-based standards and assessments. The classroom teacher has been in contact with Student M's mother multiple times a week to bridge academic instruction between school and home. Task completion has increased throughout the school year. Student M has not had a discipline referral during the 2016-2017 school year and has established friendships within his grade level.</p>						
Student N	Grade 4	22	31/18	37	60	Academic, Mental Health, Family
<p>Interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 on 1 check in with Student Support Specialist</li> <li>• Behavior Chart</li> <li>• Behavior Reward System</li> <li>• Calming Kit</li> <li>• OT Kit</li> </ul> <p>Student N has made substantial strides in information, curriculum-based standards and assessments. Student N has also increased his abilities to self-regulate within various school settings. The classroom teacher has been in contact with Student N's parents multiple times a week to via the use of behavioral point charts. Task completion has increased throughout the school year. Student N has decreased his discipline referrals from five during the first semester, to one during the second</p>						

semester of the 2016-2017 school year. Student N continues to establish friendships within his grade level.



This color denotes a student who made the growth in winter however was lower in spring, probably due to test fatigue.

## **Conclusions**

### **Valued Target Programs:**

- RtI Reading
- Title I Math
- Student Support Team
- Child Study Team
- AOM (Assurance of Mastery)
- ADHD Coaching

It has been concluded that the monitoring of student progress coupled with RtI and/or differentiated interventions on a weekly basis effectively help to ensure that students improve academic and behavioral performance. Additionally, it was observed that when students established a consistent and meaningful relationship with an adult at school (check in's and one on one instruction) academic performance increased while behavioral referrals decreased.

## **MINNETONKA MIDDLE SCHOOL EAST**

### **Identified Students**

For their “Voyager” pilot program, MME identified **36** incoming Sixth Graders with profiles and characteristics of students who traditionally struggle with the transition to Sixth Grade due to social, emotional, or maturity concerns, despite often having average to above average academic capabilities. These students were identified last May through collaborative conversations with the Fifth Grade teachers in each of the elementary buildings. The parents of these identified students were then invited to attend an informational meeting to learn about this new approach to supporting the transition to Sixth Grade and decide if it would be a good fit for their child.

### **Intervention Strategy**

For these **36** Voyager students, MME created a “blocked” schedule for the first half of their school day. During this “blocked” portion of their day (periods 1-3) the students are all scheduled into their Science, Language Arts, and PE classes with a common group of teachers. These common teachers, along with a special education teacher, committed to training and curriculum development to create highly differentiated instructional approaches, classroom and extra-curricular activities, and academic projects to address the unique needs of these students.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

Jacob Westman, Else Goll, Josh Bakke and Amy Bieber, the four teachers who led this initiative shared the following reflections and conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the initiative:

#### **Soft Skills**

As many of the Voyageur students struggle with communicating with teachers and peers, managing workloads and expectations, self-advocating, and keeping organized, staff would recommend incorporating lessons into the curriculum more formally with a resource teacher. Not only would it directly benefit the students who have these goals identified in an IEP, but all of the students in the class would get the skills to be more successful throughout their MME years.

#### **Parents**

Parents are very supportive of the program and staff provide continued communication. During conferences parents felt this program was a supportive program that helped their child to find success. Many requested to continue in a program like Voyageur in future years.

### **Project-Based Learning (PBL)**

Initially staff were very interested in building a cross-curricular (PBL) format between the Science, Language Arts and Physical Education (PE) content. With the second period split, staff found that it was difficult to combine hours 1-3 into a block except for a few occasions. Content knowledge had an impact in planning creatively, as did the spread of students' abilities. Some students were only enrolled in one course or the other, which also made it difficult to plan as a whole group. Those students eventually moved out of the program.

### **Location**

Having rooms side by side was very valuable both for ease of movement between Language Arts and Science classes. The location also improved communication and collaboration between those teachers.

### **Freedom for pacing/assessment**

In Science, the pacing was slowed to focus more on comprehension and success before moving forward. Some assessments were common, but others were unique to Voyager. Language arts was paced very similarly to the standard Language Arts schedule, but certain elements were delayed, and removed when it was academically relevant. Often, more "in class" work time was provided, so students had greater opportunity to ask direct questions and provide immediate feedback.

### **Block Schedule**

The block was designed to keep the students with their Voyager peers 1st and 3rd hour and 2nd hour during PE. They also attended Music 2nd hour. 1st and 3rd hour were scheduled so that half of the group would have Science and the other half Language Arts for one of the periods, then exchange for the opposite period. This gave flexibility to Science and Language Arts when needed. The hope was to have Physical Education be a part of this as well, but because of the schedule and having the group split, half on "A" day and the other half on "B" day, along with pullout occurring during 2nd hour for skill building (resource, skills courses, ELL, etc.), it ended up being a combination pullout/push-in. They stayed within the Voyager peer group, but did what other PE classes did for the most part adapting as needed for the group. Ideally there would be the ability to block all three content areas (LA, Sci, PE) to be more flexible in its daily/weekly schedule.

### **Physical Education**

Having the group divided in half to take Physical Education, one on "A" day and one on "B" day, was beneficial for those students that had some high anxiety for the class. Having the entire Voyager program in one Physical Education class would have been extremely difficult for this group due to the high number of students that would have been in there. Dividing them into the two small groups created an environment that allowed for more individual student focus, and adaptations when needed.

## **Team**

As the middle school model of “teaming” has gone away in lieu of individualized scheduling, staff have found that the model simply brings that element of team back to this group of teachers and students. Staff can focus discussion on a small number of students and provide immediate responses and interventions.

## **Student reflections**

*What are the best things about being a voyager student at MME?*

- People aren't as judging
- Working with the other class.
- More organized
- We're all in the same class so that helps me get to know the people in the Voyager class more
- Everything is group-based
- I really like that it is a judgement-free zone, and that everyone is kind and supportive.
- You don't get as much pressure on you with homework and you also can have more time to catch up in science or LA because we combined classes normally and also we have a slower pace of learning so we can understand things better if we don't get something (I mean slower pace of learning in we take more time to review things)
- Having the same class as the people in my first hour class, doing fun projects, having fun teachers.
- There are smaller class sizes and less homework
- That we get more time to do assignments
- It helps you with your study habits.
- The teacher actually cares about you and wants you to have good grades
- I find it easier to get through the day.
- Being a Voyager student really helped me come out of my shell.
- Having more projects
- It really helps me because I can go between the rooms if I need to.
- That both language arts class and science class can be flexible and since it's a smaller class it's easier to ask questions.

## **MINNETONKA MIDDLE SCHOOL WEST**

MMW has identified students in Grades 6-8 who struggle in core areas of Reading and/or Math. The identified group of students does not include students who are receiving services from either Special Education or ESL.

MMW has also targeted students who have been identified by their grade level counselor as needing additional support from a caring adult for school success.

### **Building Intervention Strategies**

#### **Comprehensive (Comp) L.A./Comprehensive Math Classes**

These classes replaced the skills classes. These students were scheduled into a "Comp LA" or a "Comp Math" class. The Comp LA classes are structured so the student has the same teacher for their mainstream Language Arts class as well as their Comp LA class. The Comp Math classes are structured so the student has a grade level Math teacher; not necessarily their same Math teacher.

The students were collaboratively identified by the grade level counselor and Math/Language Arts teachers utilizing NWEA data, MCA data, and classroom performance. The data were used to identify students who were below grade level in academic areas over several years and also described by their teachers as having the capacity to do well with extra, targeted support.

#### **Mentors**

These students are assigned an adult mentor to help provide ongoing support throughout the school year. The mentors go through training with the counseling staff that includes learning around the power of the adult relationship and the impact on school success that originated with The Search Institute.

Mentors meet with their mentee at least once per week to help with school work, organization, goal setting, and overall relationship building. The variety of interactions and activities varies from relationship to relationship.

Following are data points from students who were identified for support and how they performed on this Spring's MCA Reading or Math Test.

#### **MMW Data Summary and Student Successes**

##### Sixth Grade:

- 10 students identified
- 2 students are now proficient on MCA reading
- 1 student is now proficient on MCA math
- 7 students have increased performance on MCA reading



- 6 students have increased performance on MCA math

#### Seventh Grade:

- 10 students identified
- 5 students are now proficient on MCA reading
- 2 students are now proficient on MCA math
- 8 students have increased performance on MCA reading
- 8 students have increased performance on MCA math

#### Eighth Grade:

- 10 students identified
- 2 students are now proficient on MCA math
- 8 students have increased performance on MCA reading
- 7 students have increased performance on MCA math

### **Successful Building Strategies**

#### Anecdotal comments from mentors:

- Her attendance has dramatically improved
- Her number of missing assignments has dropped
- She is no longer falling asleep in class
- We made a checklist together and laminated it so he would be prepared for class. It has worked!
- She has mostly As and Bs!
- She did well on her vocabulary test and was beaming with pride!
- She is advocating for herself and messaging teachers about her assignments.
- She has learned strategies to minimize stress and anxiety during tests.
- The number of missing assignments has decreased with the extra support.

#### Anecdotal comments from mentees:

- I am not as stressed at school anymore!
- My grades are much better.
- I am excited because I am doing much better!
- This is not a student who typically says thank you. He thanked me for helping him through the year! This is a big deal.
- Student reports that our conversations have helped him deal with friendship issues and feel less stressed.
- Student self-reports that he is in the best place he has been in years.
- Student is seeking help and advocating for self with teachers. This is a big step!
- Student reports that having a mentor helped make 8<sup>th</sup> grade more manageable.

### **Comprehensive Math and Language Arts Classes**

- Grade 6 Reading
  - Improved NWEA - 8
  - Met Grade Level NWEA - 2
  - Improved MCA - 9
  - Met Standard MCA - 12
- Grade 7 Reading
  - Improved NWEA - 22
  - Met Grade Level NWEA - 14
  - Improved MCA - 19
  - Met Standard MCA – 9
- Grade 8 Reading
  - Improved NWEA - 5
  - Met Grade Level NWEA - 0
  - Improved MCA - 6
  - Met Standard MCA - 2
- Grade 6 Math
  - Improved NWEA - 24
  - Met Grade Level NWEA - 8
  - Improved MCA - 24
  - Met Standard MCA - 12
- Grade 7 Math
  - Improved NWEA - 22
  - Met Grade Level NWEA - 15
  - Improved MCA - 15
  - Met Standard MCA - 4
- Grade 8 Math
  - Improved NWEA - 19
  - Met Grade Level NWEA - 15
  - Improved MCA - 15
  - Met Standard MCA - 4

Anecdotal comments from comp classes:

- I now like to read!
- I now know how to think about my reading.
- Student used time in comp better and gain confidence.
- I learned to love read aloud!
- I am glad I am in comp la instead of the wheel. I actually am learning.
- Testing skills have improved but can still get better.
- Comp LA gives me a chance to talk out loud and be confident and comfortable.
- My teacher knows more about what I can do and what I need help with.

- Student participation in regular language arts has improved because of extra support through comp la.
- I had time to get my questions answered so I was more confident in regular math.

## Conclusion

The teachers who have worked in these classes have worked hard with multiple resources to develop the program. The basis of the class is to pre-teach and re-teach to the grade level learning targets.

The results of the comprehensive classes in Math and Language Arts have far exceeded the results students had in previous years with the Reading and Math skills courses. As a result, MMW will be expanding the offering for students during the 2017-2018 school year.

## MINNETONKA SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

MHS worked to support interventions for students through the weekly Minnetonka Academic Support Time (MAST)

### MHS Data Summary and Student Successes

Student performance has been measured by course grades. Many of the students targeted for specific intervention through the MAST program have received multiple D's and F's.

Teachers identified an average of **485** students weekly for MAST during the 16-17 school year. Teachers worked to give focused, individual support to these students. From the list of students identified by teachers, school counselors and special education case managers worked individually with those students that had multiple failures (or multiple teacher invites) or who were not accessing the teacher support.

During the 16-17 school year, the student attendance rate for MAST was **81.9 percent**, which represents a significant increase from the second semester 15-16 student attendance average of **63 percent**. This is likely due to the development of a new application that includes parent and student notifications before and after sessions, and allows for refined data tracking by teachers and administrators. This consequently, leads to more accurate attendance information for parents and students.

Counselors met with an average of **10** students weekly (typically 5-20). In addition to meeting individually with students on the MAST intervention list, counselors have weekly check in meetings with **5-10** students.

Regular counselor and case manager check-in strategies include:

- goal setting and tracking
- assignment check-ins

- organizational support, helping students to break down assignments and classes into manageable chunks
- creating electronic and paper calendars for students to track assignments
- parent meetings
- communication and collaboration with outside agencies and supports
- teacher communication
- quiet or alternate testing environment

Counselor and case manager referrals include to:

- MHS writing center
- MHS math center
- Student tutors
- Study tables
- Student Intervention and Referral Team (SIRT)
- Student Attendance Review Board (SARB)
- School social worker
- Relate counseling

During 16-17, the Student Attendance Review Board (SARB) met regularly to discuss students with attendance concerns, and provide interventions. **230** total students were brought to SARB weekly with staff. **31** students were brought to full SARB meetings with parents, staff, and outside resources. Interventions included: In school consequences, such as detention, Saturday school, staff escorts to class, and loss of privileges, weekly meetings with school staff, attendance contracts, and loss of credit. Truancy was filed in Hennepin county on **25** students. Truancy was filed in Carver county on **2** students.

Mental Health and Chemical Health referrals and services within MHS: There were **24** new student referrals to Relate for mental health therapy, exclusive of those who were self-referred.

Over the course of the school year there were **103** students seen by the chemical health specialist. The School Social Worker (general education) met with, and referred or connected **145** students to one or more supports in the school or community.

**Successful Building Strategies include:**

- MAST, including weekly meetings with school counselor. Barriers addressed: academic and attendance struggles, lack of transportation.
- SIRT (Student Intervention Referral Team): Special Education referral, 504 Referral, ELL services. Barriers addressed: academic, social, emotional, mental health struggles.
- SARB (Student Attendance Review Board) referral. Barriers addressed: attendance, social, emotional, and mental health struggles
- Intervention Team created to develop tiered interventions for students struggling socially, emotionally, and academically. Site visits to local high schools to observe other intervention teams.

- Equity leadership team led professional development conversations on equity issues in regards to race, religion, sexual orientation, etc. Team members also met with student groups to help identify academic and social barriers.
- Referral to Relate Counseling within MHS
- Referral to Chemical Health Coordinator as appropriate (Chemical suspension, parent request, counselor concern)

### **MHS Success stories:**

“The technology of the MAST app has enabled us to have more in-depth conversations with the students who need the most in terms of interventions. One student in particular was on the fence about continuing in Spanish II this year because they really struggled in Spanish I. I met with him weekly to game plan different approaches to studying, specific items to discuss with teachers, and often just planning out the way to approach academics at home. Working this closely with this student throughout the year has made the decision on selecting which MAST session for him to attend very easy- I usually don’t even have to look at the grade book, but rather know based on our conversations which teacher he needs to spend time with doing remediation the most. As we enter finals, he is passing all of this classes, and MAST has played a major role in this- I do think this student would not be passing his classes if not for MAST- it has given him the additional time necessary to process information, work through complicated material and also deepen his relationships with teachers.”

#### **-School Counselor**

“I have one freshmen student that I did worked with quite frequently with at the beginning of the year as did many other staff members. He is a 9<sup>th</sup> grader and while we are still working on various issues (appropriate boundaries, behavior and language) we did work tirelessly as a team to get him the support he needed to be successful here at MHS. Using MAST time, support staff and all his teachers were extremely instrumental in helping him gain confidence in the classroom and feeling empowered to work hard in his classes and focus. He has made huge strides and it was evident that he made significant improvement in his overall academic achievement from semester 1 to semester 2.”

#### **-School Counselor**

“Student was struggling with attendance late in 3rd quarter. Student was presenting significant anxiety around attending school and also was also diagnosed with a sleep disorder. Large SARB team convened including social worker, nurse, psychologist, counselor, student management coordinator, and administration. Student came to the meeting with ideas around how school and his family could support him. This included prioritizing work, getting on a regular sleep schedule, and frequent meetings with his counselor. Student’s attendance improved quarter 4 and GPA improved from 1.433 in semester 1 to 2.42 in semester 2.”

#### **-SARB team member**

**Conclusions:**

Minnetonka High School staff pride themselves on being a school that feels like a small school community or family, despite being a large high school. The support team believes in early, individual intervention to best support our students. School counselors, administrators, social workers and others have met with students individually to find a plan that works for their specific needs. Throughout the year, staff have seen progress with students as a result of these concentrated, individual interventions. One of these interventions has been the Minnetonka Academic Support Time (MAST). This time addresses the barrier of lack of transportation to be able to get to school to work with teachers outside of the school day. It also addresses academic barriers by allowing students the time to work individually with teachers on academic material. MAST also addresses the barrier of connecting with adults. By connecting students with counselors and other support personnel in the building as well as outside resources.

MHS staff continued work to increase the effectiveness of this support time has increased student attendance, parent involvement and communication, and student success. They have also increased the ability to connect students and families with needed resources both in and outside of MHS.

**FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is clear that all school sites are working to meet the needs of all students. At times, the level of support that students need is extensive as several students show that they have multiple barriers to learning.

In addition, new supports such as the Wilson Reading Program and the TIES benchmarking and progress monitoring should help to serve struggling readers. It will be important to continue professional development in the area of progress monitoring for all interventionists to ensure students are receiving interventions based on data driven decisions.

**CONCLUSION**

The site plans in this report serve as examples of the focused efforts school staff are making this year to address barriers to success and the impact those barriers have on student achievement.

Schools will need to continue to analyze the profiles of students to determine if the programming they are receiving is having a positive effect on their school experience. For example, this can be evident through increases in student engagement, decreases in student misbehavior, and improvement in student academic performance.

In order to monitor programs on a long term basis, staff will need to continue to monitor the dates in which students begin to access certain academic or non-academic support programs. This will be useful for school staff to determine if certain interventions or

programs are having a positive effect on students or whether another course of action should be taken.

In addition to data, anecdotal records are important for monitoring this type of work. Staff should continue to provide descriptive responses as to why students are being referred and/or monitored for extra support. This will be a way to determine if there are additional programs or more effective programs that need to be made available to students.

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**RECOMMENDATION/FUTURE DIRECTION:**

This report is submitted for the School Board's information.

**Submitted by:**   
Matt Rega, Director of Assessment

**Concurrence:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Dennis Peterson, Superintendent