

Frank Nicholas Elementary

Schoolwide Title I Plan

OVERVIEW

Frank Nicholas Elementary is part of the West Carrollton School District and located in the city of Moraine which is just south of Dayton, Ohio. There are approximately 210 students in grades 1-5 who attend the school with 74% of them receiving free or reduced price lunches. There are 10 homeroom teachers (2 per grade level), 2 Title I teachers, 2 Intervention Specialists, and 1 Reading/Math/Vocabulary Specialist on staff at Nicholas. Additionally, the school employs Multiple Disabilities teachers who serve 14 students in the district's low incidence setting.

MISSION

To Engage Students' Minds, Muscles, and Imaginations

COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Frank Nicholas School Community reviews the Schoolwide Title I annually and make adjustments based on data and input from the following sources:

- School Report Card
- Student Performance on the Ohio's State Assessments
- Third Grade Guarantee Screening Results
- Percentage of Students Achieving Benchmark on the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)
- Parent Needs Assessment / Program Evaluation Data
- Student Attendance Data
- Student Discipline Data
- Attendance at Family Events

STUDENT LEARNING PRIORITIES

- Increase the percentage of students meeting benchmark on the Developmental Reading Assessment
- Increase math computation and math problem solving skills

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE PRIORITY

- Increase parent involvement

CURRICULUM

- Implement a consistent framework for all students that is aligned with the work of the West Carrollton CADIT teams and the Standards Based Report Card
- Implement the Common Core and Ohio State Standards

INSTRUCTION

- Determine and implement the structures necessary to differentiate instruction in order to match instruction to individual learners.
- Use strategies and processes to increase engagement, use of higher order thinking skills, and problem solving by all students.
- Provide Project Based Learning (PBL) experiences for every student and incorporating every subject area.

ASSESSMENT

- Use student work, formative assessments, and summative assessments to differentiate instruction to meet student needs.
- Provide students with models/samples and rubrics for student work to demonstrate desired results.
- Increase rigor and expectations of students through expanding the use of self-monitoring and self-evaluation tools such as rubrics, narrative assessments, and evaluation checklists.
- Analyze gaps in student assessment data and develop interventions to fill those gaps.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

- Professional learning should be job-embedded and should include enhance teacher knowledge and understanding.
- All teachers will participate in Professional Learning Communities and identify areas of further study based on the performance of their students.
- Professional development that highlights the instructional nuances of class structure and values will be provided to all staff.

SCIENTIFICALLY RESEARCH BASED SCHOOLWIDE REFORM STRATEGIES

Disaggregated classroom and State assessment data indicated the needed to implement scientifically based strategies to increase student achievement in Math and Reading in all populations including minorities and students with disabilities subgroups. In order to accomplish these tasks, the following is recommended:

- Provide opportunities for all children in the school to meet or exceed Ohio's proficient and advanced levels of performance.
- Use of scientifically researched based strategies effective in raising student achievement.
- Use of effective instructional methods that increase the quality and amount of learning time.
- Address the needs of all children, especially those in targeted populations and address how the school will determine if such needs have been met.

Following are examples of the scientifically based research supporting our effective methods and instructional practices or strategies currently employed:

- 1. Scheduling and curriculum changes will be used to facilitate increased academic performance for students.**
 - A minimum of 90 minutes per day spent in literacy instruction.
 - A minimum of 90 minutes per day spent in mathematics instruction.
 - Targeted instruction in the three tiers of vocabulary.
 - Flexible grouping in language arts and math.
 - Common planning time for grade level teams.
- 2. Provide a flexible schedule of before school, in-school, and after school tutoring to all learners,**

with an emphasis on targeted populations, so they will have an opportunity to increase their academic performance in core areas and on state mandated testing.

- Partnership with the City of Moraine to provide free after school tutoring to students.
- Employment of a Reading, Math, and Vocabulary Specialist to provide supplemental instruction to needy students during the specials block.

3. Provide postsecondary experiences, career, and work ready experiences for all students.

- All students will visit a local 4-year or community college and engage in discussion about the wide variety of post-secondary plans.

INSTRUCTION BY HIGHLY QUALIFIED PROFESSIONAL STAFF

100% of the Nicholas staff is Highly Qualified. When teaching openings arise, only those applicants who possess appropriate licensure are considered for participation in the interview process. Further, once new staff members are in place they are assigned a mentor and participate in the Resident Educator Program.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Great importance has been placed upon professional development at Nicholas has been evident since 1996 when the school began implementing a weekly early release for students. It is during this time that Professional Learning Communities meet and when further learning surrounding school and district initiatives occurs. It is critical to provide teachers with quality instruction that improves their ability to foster success in all students. Additionally, it is important to promote common understand of testing, federal programs, school budgets, and personal development. To this end, a variety of professional development activities are offered throughout the year to address myriad of factors impacting student achievement and school success. Some of the proposed areas of learning include:

- Parent involvement in the classroom
- Communicating with parents
- How to address discipline in the classroom
- Technology literacy skills for students
- Grant writing for technology
- Bar Modeling for math problem solving
- Methods for increasing reading comprehension and fluency

Professional development is aligned with the State's academic content and student academic achievement standards, and teachers are encouraged to attend professional conferences and workshops that expand their own knowledge through involvement in professional organizations related to their subject areas.

STRATEGIES TO INCREASE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Every effort is made to facilitate parents' involvement in their child's education. Examples of practices to increase parent involvement include:

- Parent-teacher conferences will be held twice annually to discuss student performance and needs.
- A yearly needs assessment is administered to determine what our parents consider the most pressing.
- An open-door policy is maintained and parents are encouraged to meet their children at lunch or to come in and join their child for presentations.
- During family fun nights different academic areas receive focus and parents learn ways that can support advancement in that area at home.
- Parents are asked to review and sign their child's agenda planner each night.

Through our needs assessment we learned from parents that they want more opportunities to be involved in their child's education. In addition, they would like opportunities to volunteer during non-traditional school hours. Our parents are very vocal in expressing their needs and we encourage parents to bring us their concerns at any time during the school year. While our parents have not expressed a strong desire to attend parenting assistance meetings (such as: anger management, motivating their child, etc.) there has been a strong response to providing parents with ways to assist their children academically.

PLANS FOR ASSISTING PRESCHOOL CHILDREN IN THE TRANSITION FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS TO LOCAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROGRAMS

We do not currently offer any preschool services and do not serve children at the kindergarten level. In order to prepare fifth grade students for the academic and social adjustments to middle school, we offer every student the opportunity to visit West Carrollton Middle School before the school year starts. During this visit, they are introduced to teachers, have the school rules explained, and they have the opportunity to look around and become familiar with the physical layout of the school. The Middle School principal and the sixth grade principal also make a visit to Nicholas to answer any question these students may have and to familiarize them with the courses that are offered.

MEASURES TO INCLUDE TEACHERS IN THE DECISIONS REGARDING THE USE OF ASSESSMENT TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON, AND TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS AND THE OVERALL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

The Nicholas staff is always included in the instructional decision making process. Because the staff is so small it is easy for everyone to contribute their thoughts and ideas regarding school improvement. Additionally, the highly positive and collegial nature of the staff significantly impacts this process. All teachers are informed of the results of all standardized tests and this information is used to coordinate programs and implement strategies to help student learning. Examples of ways teachers are included in decisions regarding the use of academic assessment are:

- Grade level meetings are held at least once weekly. Teacher teams meet to discuss standards, strategies, and concerns.
- The intervention staff solicits feedback from teachers on a continual basis in order to improve programs.
- In class and standardized assessment results guide discussions of the Professional Learning Communities.

ACTIVITIES TO ENSURE THAT ALL STUDENTS WHO EXPERIENCE DIFFICULTY MASTERING STANDARDS ARE PROVIDED EFFECTIVE, TIMELY ASSISTANCE

Nicholas staff recognizes the urgency in responding to students who are struggling learners. Student progress is monitored on an on-going basis so that student programs may be revised as needed. Recognizing and providing additional assistance quickly enables students to master content standards and meet student performance standards. Teacher facilitate activities to ensure that students who experience difficulty mastering proficient or advanced levels of academic achievement standards are provided with effective, timely additional assistance. Those activities include, but are not limited to:

- Grade level teams have a comprehensive system in place to identify student weaknesses. Through frequent monitoring teachers are able to discuss each student at least once every two weeks and more if needed. Priority is given to students scoring below benchmark on formative assessments.
- The DRA is administered quarterly, with running records conducted weekly or bi-weekly to assess student progress within the nine week period.
- Mastery of content standards is measured through assessments designed to reflect the Common Core and Ohio's State Standards. This mastery is reported quarterly on the district's standards based report card.
- Students who enroll during the school year are assessed in the areas of language arts and math in order to determine whether intervention in a given area may be warranted.

Periodic training for teachers in the identification of difficulties and appropriate assistance for identified difficulties. Staff development is on-going and focuses on methods and materials to ensure success of all learners. Topics will include:

- Differentiation
- Formative, Summative, and Diagnostic Assessment
- Bar Modeling
- 21 Thinking Routines
- Vocabulary Acquisition
- Technology in the Classroom

Teacher-parent-student communication will detail:

- What the school will do to help the student
- Suggestions for how parents can support their children at home
- Efforts to promote daily student attendance
- Academic and behavioral interventions

Additional assistance available to the student at the school or in the community includes:

- Supplemental reading tutoring during the school day.
- Referral to outside agencies that assist families in the education of their children.

DESCRIPTION OF HOW INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ASSESSMENT RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION WILL BE PROVIDED TO PARENTS

Nicholas Elementary provides ongoing assessment of student achievement and communication of assessment results to parents through quarterly progress reports and report cards. Teachers also make every effort to be available to parents when it is convenient for them (evenings and early mornings). Parent-teacher conferences are held twice annually and it is the goal to have 100% family participation at these meetings, as this is time staff dedicates to reviewing and explaining student performance on previous State and district assessments as well as ways the school plans to narrow any achievement gaps that may exist for a particular child. For students who continue to struggle despite repeated interventions, referral to the Intervention Assistance Team is sometimes necessary. In this setting, the parent receives even greater information regarding the performance of his or her child.

Nicholas staff communicates directly with parents through email, telephone calls, and newsletters. Information is sent home to parents regarding upcoming assessments as well as information about school and district activities.

Family Fun Nights, Open Houses, and the Student Handbook also provide information to parents in verbal and written form regarding how to access individual testing results. Staff makes every effort to help explain all test terminology and concepts to our parents in an easy to understand manner (and in an appropriate language as needed). Teachers are trained to understand the results and are available to explain the scores to any parent.

ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE SCHOOLWIDE PLAN

Nicholas staff, parents, and community members review student performance, parent input, and teacher needs annually to revise the Nicholas Schoolwide Plan and ensure its effectiveness.