Benton Jr. High School Improvement
2018-2019

Needs Assessment:
Analyze multiple sources of data to determine the areas of strength and the areas of growth.

Groups analyzed:
Rising 8th graders from Benton Middle School
Current 8th graders at Benton Jr. High

Data used:
ESEA reports for both schools
Discipline referrals from both schools
Total population vs. Subpopulation data including, but not limited to:
      Race based on ESEA
      Socio-Economic Status based on ESEA
      Socio-Economic Status based on Free/Reduced Lunch Data
      Preliminary team analysis for students that fall into more than one sub-population
          category (i.e race/economic status)
      Arkansas School Report Card
      2017 Survey of teacher volunteer instructional/tutorial time.
      Absence Reports

Strengths:
We have a faculty of teachers eager to build success in our students. A survey of teachers providing extra instructional/tutoring time to their students shows that the majority of our teachers are willing to work with students before and after school. Many also use their designated lunch time to provide students extra help. This will continue to be the norm for our school. For the most part, students at BMS and BJH want to succeed. They are actively engaged in learning and are proactive in seeking help when needed. Overall, our school is made up of students performing well academically. We received an A rating on the Arkansas School Report Card, reflecting the strength of our school as a whole.

Weaknesses:
According to the 2017 ESEA reports from the Department of Education, our Economically Disadvantaged sub-population are under-performing our total population in both ELA and Mathematics. Our Economically Disadvantaged population is our largest subpopulation and is growing each year. We anticipate that over 40% of our students will fall into this category during the 2018-2019 year.

An initial review of data shows that many of our students identified as Economically Disadvantaged also fall into a race sub-population of Black or Hispanic.
Discipline reports also reflect that these sub-populations have more problems during the school day. Our Asst. Principal is in the process of pulling formal data from Cognos to document initial observations.

After reviewing the data, the team looked at scholarly articles and research. We have identified two goals to help our sub-populations achieve growth. Because of the correlation we have observed between race and socio-economic status, this will target most, if not all, of the sub-populations in our school.

Goal 1:
Establish mentors for students that have been identified as being a member of a subpopulation.

What does it look like fully implemented? What is the timeline for full implementation?
When fully implemented our mentoring program will ensure that identified struggling students have a staff member who checks on them and provides guidance academically and socially. According to research (Jackson, Sweeten) we found that building individual relationships with students helps to reduce both the achievement gap and discipline issues. A second study corroborates the fact that students who are engaged in school tend to earn higher grades (Connell, Klem).

<div align="center">Implementation Plan and Evaluation</div>

Stage 1: August - October 2018
Because state mandates do not allow us to know the names of students identified as Economically Disadvantaged, our initial focus will be on students who fall into the underachieving category on standardized tests. We believe that this will address the majority of the Economically Disadvantaged sub-population.
- Analyze data to identify specific students who will benefit from mentoring.
- Create a list of these students.
- Allow teachers to select students from this list based on their observation of the student in class.
- Administration and counselors will ensure that each student listed is assigned a mentor.
- Teachers will begin monitoring student grades and discipline.
- Teachers will determine how students scored on last year's standardized tests.

* At this first stage, teachers will be asked to do this on a voluntary basis.

Stage 2: October-December 2018
- Teachers will continue monitoring their students for grades/discipline.
- Weekly contact (minimum) will be used to meet with student(s)
- Teachers will use TAC to check grades of students
- Teachers will encourage students to work on academics and will offer help when needed.
- Because of our belief in reaching the whole child, teachers will also monitor the students school life and discipline.

Stage 3: January - March 2019
- Teachers will continue monitoring students

- Teachers will begin discussing upcoming ACT Aspire test with students.
- Student will be offered extra assistance to get ready for testing.

Stage 4: March-May 2019
- Teachers will continue monitoring students.
- Teachers will meet with student prior to testing to see if any last-minute actions are needed (i.e. Does the student get to school on time? Eat breakfast? Etc.)
- Teachers will make recommendations for future mentoring of each student.

Stage 5: Evaluation: Summer 2019
- Principals and counselors will analyze initial data from standardized tests.
- Subpopulation performance for 2019 will be compared to 2018.
- If sub-populations show a 5% increase in scores, we will consider the program a success and will plan to continue the plan.

Stage 6 and forward:
- Begin the same cycle as above to ensure that our sub-populations continue to see increased academic growth.

Resources Available:
- TAC
- HAC
- Test data
- Discipline referrals
- Teachers, administrators, counselors and support staff

Resources needed:
- Meeting time with BMS teachers/administrators to get information on rising 8th grade students.
- Meeting time for mentor teachers to meet with the other teachers who teach the student.

Cost:
This plan should not involve monetary commitment.

Goal 2:
Reduce discipline referrals in all areas.
The more time that a student is positively engaged in the classroom , the more opportunities he/she has to learn, In reviewing a recent report in the Peabody Journal of Education, reducing suspension rates positively impacts student achievement.

Last year we had a total of 779 discipline referrals. If an incident involved more than one student, each student would count as one discipline referral. For example, if two students got into a fight, that would count as two discipline referrals.
The breakdown of reasons for referral are:

36 - Insubordination

31 - Disrespect

34 - Fighting

20 - Other (drugs, weapons, knives)

*Cell phone violations are excluded.

We recognize that reducing the number of disciplinary referrals will increase a student's time in the classroom. Our teachers work to plan and implement the most effective strategies for the course(s) they teach. Students will therefore be exposed to the skills and knowledge of each course in the best possible manner.

What does this goal look like when fully implemented?

Discipline referral numbers will be reduced by 10% overall for the 2018 - 2019 year. A reduction of referrals is expected to continue in future years as we implement the "Capturing Kids' Hearts" program.

Implementation Plan and Evaluation

Stage 1: Summer 2018
- Gather data on data referrals including disaggregation as described above.
- Determine if there are faculty issues that need to be addressed (i.e. are certain teachers sending significantly more referrals?)
- Determine the time of day that most referrals occur (i.e. before/after school, in the halls, etc.)
- Develop a "snapshot" of our school's discipline referrals.

Stage 2: August 2018
- All certified staff will attend the seminar, Capturing Kids' Hearts.
- Teachers will identify ways that they can implement 1 or 2 strategies of the CKH program.

Stage 3: Fall Semester 2018
- Teachers will meet with their PLCs to discuss implementation of CKH.
- Teachers will implement strategies with their classes and specifically with any of their mentees who are exhibiting behavioral issues.
- Teachers will be offered support if the data indicates that they have an excessive number or discipline problems. Support may include:
  - mentoring by another teacher or administrator,
  - professional development opportunities,
  - completion of courses from the Arkansas Dept. of Education IDEAS,
  - and/or suggested reading.

Stage 4: Spring Semester 2019
- At the beginning of the spring semester, discipline referral data from the fall semester will be examined.

- PLCs will receive input on referral categories.
- Staff will continue to implement CKH.

Stage 5: Summer 2019: Assessment
- Disciplinary referral data will be collated and compared to our totals for the 2017-2018 year.
- If discipline referrals have reduced in number we will consider the program a success. We will move onto the next steps.

Stage 6: August 2019
- School Leadership Team will quantify the number of students who exhibited discipline problems. Some of the questions to be addressed at that time are:
    - Do students who move into the district during the school year exhibit more behavior problems?
    - If they do, what can we do to make for a smoother transition?

Resources Available:
- TAC
- HAC
- Test data
- Discipline referrals

Resources needed:
- Training in Capturing Kids' Hearts
- Time for PLCs to meet to determine best practices for implementation

Cost:
The district will provide the professional development on the implementation of Capturing Kids' Hearts. Other expenses will have to be determined as the plan is fully implemented. We anticipate that the main cost will not be monetary. Teachers will need to invest in the process for it to work.