Successful Leadership for Struggling Schools

Lessons From Extraordinary Leaders

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LEARNING-FOCUSED
* Professional Development *
Exemplary Lessons for Your School's Success

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Essential Questions

1. What are some common patterns of leadership in exemplary schools?

2. What are some research-based, high impact practices instructional practices that get rapid responses in learning and achievement?

3. How does this information impact on planning for your school(s)?

Common Patterns of Leadership in Former Struggling Schools

- Fifteen distinct patterns of leadership and school focus.
  (we will look at the top five today).

- How many of these patterns can you truthfully say are being implemented in your school on a consistent, pervasive basis with high quality?
What are the Lessons from Extraordinary Leaders?

1. 65-80% of classroom assessments and school/district benchmark assessments were high order questions, thus matching or exceeding state assessments.

The Changing Tide in State Tests

The USDOE National Testing Service has recommended and all the major testing companies have agreed to set a target that all state and national tests be at least 75% higher level items by the year 2011. Some state’s tests are already above 70%, but the majority of the states are still in the 50-60% range. Some states are even in the 40-50% range at this time! This means that most states will be increasing the number of higher-level items significantly in the next two years. However, as we already know, very few public school teachers regularly give tests with 75% of the items reasoning and higher level questions. Students must practice and be given feedback consistently in order to perform well on the new types of tests.

Levels of Learning

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Level I. Acquisition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Acquiring new knowledge and skills</td>
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<td>70% = Short Term Memory</td>
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<tr>
<th>Level II. Extending Thinking</th>
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<td>Cause/Effect</td>
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<td>Compare/Contrast</td>
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<td>Classify</td>
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<td>Construct Support</td>
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<td>Analyze Perspectives</td>
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<td>Example To Idea</td>
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<td>Idea To Example</td>
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<td>Writing Prompts</td>
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Adapted from Dimensions of Learning, Marzano, et al, ASCD, 1992
What are the Lessons from Extraordinary Leaders?

2. Scaffolding and previewing grade level curriculum and assignments were the critical factors in struggling learners meeting proficiency and growth targets.

Double Dose (Additional Time)

- Inclusion/Co-teaching setting for grade-level curriculum
- Double dose each day as a preview to inclusion class
- Double dose time scaffolds grade-level content and assignments
- Can be accomplished in K-5 classrooms by grouping and re-grouping within one classroom

Systemic Implementation of Acceleration for All Struggling Students

- Advance Organizers and Unit Maps
- Previewing Key Vocabulary
- Scaffolding Grade-Level Expectations
- Acceleration labs linked to key courses

1. Combined w/ remediation, "catches kids up"
2. Acts as "scaffolding" for new learning; gives learners advance organizer and structure
3. Best ratio seems to be 60-70% acceleration, and 30-40% remediation
4. Most effective for double-dosing in tested subjects with below grade level students, special education students and ESL students
5. Powerful when used in tutoring, after school programs and summer school
6. Summer school = first 3-6 weeks of next grade
What are the Lessons from Extraordinary Leaders?

3. Schools chose 2-3 high yield instructional practices to focus on each year, always carrying over the previous year’s focus practices.

The US Department of Education has identified several achievement practices that they are calling “high impact, rapid response practices” for balanced achievement. These practices have been shown to be effective for all students, and are especially critical for at-risk learners.

High Impact – Rapid Response Strategies:

1. Vocabulary
2. Summarizing
3. Reading Comprehension
4. Writing to raise achievement (especially Summary Point Writing)
5. Organizational and instructional focus with previewing for students with disabilities

(USDOE, 2006)

High Impact Strategy (1): Vocabulary

In K – 2: Vocabulary of the Curriculum, not just frequency-in-print words
Use organized word walls, not random

In all classrooms in schools with over 50% Economically Disadvantaged students:

• Preview key vocabulary at start of units and lessons using Research-Based Vocabulary Strategies
• Emphasize the key vocabulary during lesson
• Students summarize and use key vocabulary at end of lessons
High Impact Strategy (2): Summarizing

Student Summarizing:
- Summarizing distributed across lesson
- Classroom organized into numbered heads/pairs
- Students summarize at lesson closure (+ answering essential question)

**LEARNING-FOCUSED Acquisition Lesson:**

What is the Essential Question of the Lesson?

- Activating
- Previewing
- Key Vocabulary
- Active Teaching
- Graphic Organizers
- Summarizing
- Answering the Lesson Essential Question
- Distributed Summarizing
- Distributed Practice
- Assessment Prompts
High Impact Strategy (3): Reading Comprehension

Focus Reading Comprehension "Tested Seven" Strategies:

- Main Idea
- Sequencing
- Compare/Contrast
- Fact and Opinion
- Cause/Effect
- Inferences
- Literary Elements

Reading Comprehension Focus K-12 in All Subjects and Courses

- Content teachers do not need to teach reading ... They need to use reading comprehension strategies as they assign reading in their content areas

Reading Comprehension Guidelines for State Assessments

- Grades 3-8: Reading passages are grade level \times 100 \pm 200/300 words
- High School: Reading passages 1100 – 1500 words
- Questions: Range = One Above Grade level # to 6 more
- Examples:
  - 3rd Grade Test = Reading passages are approximately 500 words, with 4-9 questions
  - 7th Grade Test = Reading passages are approximately 900 words, with 8-13 questions

Extended Reading Passages Throughout School Year

- Monday: Fresh Read – Answer questions: 80% - Focus on Comprehension
- Tuesday: Re-Read passage, write summary - Focus on Fluency and summarization
- Wednesday: Repeat Monday with new passage
- Thursday: Repeat Tuesday with Wednesday’s passage
Texas School Improvement Conference

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High Impact Strategy (4): Writing To Raise Achievement

Summary Point Writing

- At some point in lesson, teacher asks students to summarize, clarify, explain, list, give example, etc IN WRITING

Writing To Inform

- Teachers use Writing Standards Map with Assignments Guide when making writing assignments

- Each discipline has a required number of writing assignments per month (1-3)

Writing Assignments in All Content Areas

On High Performing, Exemplary Schools...

“In virtually every typical school we have evaluated, student scores on creative writing are significantly higher than informative and narrative writing scores.

As a contrast, teachers in the most successful schools placed a very high emphasis on informative, expository writing.”

D. B. Reeves, Accountability in Action: A Blueprint for Learning Organizations.
4. The structure of assignments reflected the state’s assessment structure in that assignments were standards-based and aligned to state standards with backward planning by teachers.

Let’s Look Two Actual 7th Grade Assignments:

1st Assignment:

Name and describe functions of the five body systems.

Revised Assignment:

Explain the difference between the systems of the body affected by an allergy to pollen and those affected by an allergy to food as well as the process by which different medicines reduce the symptoms of each allergy.

So what are the science and ELA standards for 7th grade?

The Florida 7th Grade Science Standard — Processes of Life:
- Understands that the systems within living things respond to changes in the environment (for example, allergens and carcinogens).

Florida 7th Language Arts:
- Uses an effective organizational pattern and substantial support to achieve a sense of completeness or wholeness (for example, considering audience, sequencing events/ideas, choosing effective vocabulary, using specific details to clarify meaning).

First: Align all major assignments to state grade-level course standards.

Second: Make sure that the structure of assignments reflects the state’s assessment structure.

What is Backward Planning?

1. Develop the unit’s or chapter’s end assessment based on the standard(s)
2. Develop the standards-based assignment (including writing)
3. Develop the lesson plans tied to the assignments
5. All school-wide professional development activities were accountable through consistent implementation plans focused on learning expectations and quality.

The U.S. Department of Education’s What Works Clearinghouse (2008) identified patterns in professional development plans of schools that had significant increases in AYP for all subgroups. The research included 500 schools and examined how these exemplary schools implemented professional development that resulted in significant gains in achievement.

**Example Implementation Plan Timeline Components:**

1. Administrative team discussion and preliminary planning
2. Leadership team discussion and planning (30 – 40 minutes)
3. Training with support materials (1 hour to 2-3 days)
4. Review meeting with teachers and administrators. Set timeline dates and expectations.
   
   Discuss monitoring guidelines, with look fors and ask fors. (1-2 hours)
5. Teachers practice with monitoring (guided practice) (6 – 8 weeks)
6. Teachers full implementation working on quality with monitoring (3-4 weeks)
7. Final step: Full implementation as part of evaluation process
Ideas for Increasing Achievement at Your School

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