2016 Conference:
Improving Outcomes Cost-Effectively For Struggling Students Including Those with Special Needs and English Language Learners

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Rethinking Support for Struggling Students

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The Why

School Board Priorities

• Improving academic achievement and ensuring high levels of school performance;
• Using instructional strategies recognized as most-effective in the field;
• Creating a positive, safe and respectful environment for student learning;
• Continuing to build financial stability in Fridley schools by planning and executing financial plans; and
• Improving parent and school partnership
Who we are

- International Baccalaureate – PK-12 Continuum
- Demographics
  - Enrollment - 3115
  - Open Enrollment - 1270 (41%)
  - Students of Color – 55%
  - FRL Eligibility – 63%
  - English Learner – 16%
  - Special Services – 15%
Who we are

- Elementary (2)
- Middle School
- High School
- ALC
- Transition
- Early Childhood
What we thought we needed

- Special education staffing and service delivery
  - Licensed staff
  - Paraprofessionals
  - Related services
What we found we needed

- Effective service delivery
  - Special education
  - Related services
  - Literacy
- Model for staffing and service delivery
  - License staff
  - Non licensed staff
  - Related services
What we did

- Focus groups with staff providing services to struggling students (DMC)
  - Special education teachers
  - Related services staff
  - Paraprofessionals
  - Reading and Title I teachers
  - Principals and district administrators
What we did

• Analyzed staffing, services and achievement data (DMC)
  • Time study
  • Staff to student ratio
  • Staff expertise and licensure
  • Student achievement
What we found

• Achievement in reading and math is stagnant
• Inconsistencies
  • Direct instruction time
  • Group size
  • Related services
  • Core literacy instructional practices
• Staffing
  • Paraprofessional support
  • Related services
Recommendations

- Structure **strong content** support according to student **need**
- Provide **additional** time for struggling students
- Increase time of special ed **direct instruction**
- Establish **group size** for reading intervention
- Increase **direct instruction** time and **group size** for related services
What we did

Literacy

• Braiding funding sources (Title 1, sped, ADSIS, gen ed)
  • Reallocation of staff: sped, paraprofessionals, EL, gen ed
  • Increase licensed reading intervention staff
• Reconstruct master schedules
  • Dedicated intervention time
    • Literacy, special ed, related services
• Redefine and strengthen core instruction
What we did

- Special Ed
  - Identified teachers to increase literacy skills
  - Shifted roles
  - MTSS for behavior
  - ADSIS for behavior and academics

- Related Services
  - Group sizes
  - Hired our own staff
What we did

• Social-Emotional
  • School linked mental health
  • MTSS district wide
  • Whole child approach
  • Considered ACE and impact on trauma
  • Added Board Certified Behavior Analysts
  • Added Social Workers
What we learned

- Articulate the WHY to all staff stakeholders
- Create common understanding of need and strategies
- Strengthen and support principals involvement
- Visible and consistent leadership
- Have clear evaluation plan
What we have next to do

- Fidelity of interventions
- Program evaluation and analysis for effectiveness in literacy
- Special education
  - Shift mindset of all staff to be more inclusive
  - Create more child specific IEPs
  - Focus on Problem Solving
Questions?

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