School improvement plan

Community Leader Rath et al. (2008) states, " Effective leaders surround themselves with the right people and build on each person's strengths" (p. 21). The purpose of the School Improvement Committee is to serve in an advisory role to me as the principal. The committee advises on an as needed basis with the budget, school safety, standards and behavior, and school improvement surveys. The School improvement committee helps me establishcommunicationlinks within the school community and works closely with staff and other organizations to provide successful outreach.

The committee has a broad based representation of the school community and employee groups. This effective site- based school team, not only enhances the strengths of me, but it gives empowerment to all stakeholders in the school. Sorenson et al. (2011) proposes that effective site- based schools starts with a team-oriented approach that allows principals to give power to their employees and therefore encourages a collaborative decision-making and problem-solving process (p. 135). Part 2 – Data Gathering and Analysis County: Cook County Grade Span: (grades PK-8)Total Students: 548 PK | K | 1 | | Students | 250 | 298 | Students with disabilities: 17. 1%English language learners: 0. 4% Free lunch eligible: 518 Reduced-price lunch eligible: 8 Collecting the data is a planned, purposeful process. Valuable data guides the school improvement team in developing improvementgoalsfor the benefit of all students. The four types of data we collect and use as indicators of school or district success and progress are as follows: achievement data, demographic data, program data, and perception data. The data helps support the vision and mission of the school.

The school improvement team collects, evaluates, and analyzes data to strategically find strategies, resources, and research methods for effective instruction. Some of the data that is collected are the demographics, End of Grade testing, Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), ISAT, NWEA, REACH assessments, teacherobservations. The school improvement committee team collected data using the data guides provided by the Illinois Department ofEducation. Staff members, parents, and students were asked to complete surveys concerning their attitudes toward the Herzl School of Excellenceenvironmentandacademicprogress.

All staff members were also asked to list parent involvement, technologyusage, and professional development. Random samples of teachers were taken to chart parent communication and classroom interruptions. The planning team analyzed ISTEP+ and NWEA test scores. Teachers participated in district wide curriculum alignment meetings where they streamlined the district's curriculum and developed quarterly benchmark tests. After analyzing the student data, it was concluded that there is a high population of students on free/reduced lunch.

While reviewing STEP and ISAT data the school improvement team recognized a trend of low scores in the areas of reading comprehension, writing application and math problem solving. They also identified these areas of concern previously when compiling data for the existing School Improvement Plan. The team is currently using NWEA to assess student growth from fall to spring. The initial student scores have reinforced our findings in relation to STEP & ISAT, but this data is not conclusive due to the number of assessments taken and our understanding of the data.

Furthermore, students did not make AYP in reading and math. African American and economically disadvantaged students did not make AYP in math and reading. Environmental Scan of the School and Community Herzl School of Excellence is influenced by many policies and procedures that are determined through the Federal Government, the State of Illinois and the District of Cook County. The Illinois General Statues were created to help establish provisions for the school districts across Illinois.

Once the regulations are established, sent to the Department of Instruction and then the districts receive the regulations and are to implement the provisions. To showaccountability, a school improvement plan must be created. The regulations and the community are a major factor that helps drive the School Improvement Plan. Submission of a School Improvement Plan (SIP) is required by federal and state regulations for schools that are in academic status. The plan must cover two fiscal years (e. g. FY 2010 to FY 2012) and must be revised every two years while the school remains in status.

Illinois schools in status that do not submit a school improvement plan the previous year must submit an improvement plan as required by Public Law 107-110, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, section 1101 et seq. , and Section 2-3. 25d of the School Code, 105 ILCS 5/2-3. 25d. Revisions are then required at the expiration of the two-year plan while the school remains in academic status. Districts are required to submit restructuring plans on behalf of schools after the fifth calculation of not making Adequate Yearly Progress. A School Improvement Plan is optional for schools that are not in academic status.

The Illinois State Board of Education members that represent our school district have helped shape our school and community. Our district representative assessed our need for our school and encourages the community to get involved with the school and school system. The goal for our Board is for the student to have a sound education. This includes having policies to address the relationship between the school system and community. The policies address the following: a) Building a safe and inviting learning environment b) Increased extracurricular offerings c) Improving student attendance) Renovated facilities At Herzl Academic progress is monitored through the reading & math benchmarks, NWEA, REACH, ISAT, and classroom bi-weekly assessments. The results indicate that Herzl must continue to work on reading comprehension instruction/ guided practice and math extended response at all grade levels. After analyzing the data it was concluded that students would benefit from the instruction and individualized attention that could be provided in differentiated instruction in the classroom, effective intervention practice and team teaching of regular and special education teachers.

Herzl needs to increase math manipulatives and purchase additional resources forscienceand math classroom and provide professional development for teachers in math and science. AYP concluded that in the sub group all students did not make AYP on the ISAT. Herzl must achieve a 10% increase overall, in subgroup ALL, in ISAT scores on reading for the two consecutive years to meet AYP Safe Harbor targets by 2013. North Lawndale demographics overview •94. 3% African American •Population: 41, 768 •MedianFamilyIncome: $15, 549 •Median Age: 26. 1 •27. 0% high school

graduates 19. 1% have greater than 12th grade education North Lawndale suffers from a high unemployment rate (13%) and jobless rate among 20-24 year olds (59. 4%). 34. 6% of residents between 18 and 24 years of age lack a high school diploma or GED. Many unemployed residents lack the basic skills and qualifications to secure livable wage jobs, especially those who attended Chicago public schools. Many North Lawndale residents are employed in repetitive, low-wage jobs that have almost no room for learning or growth and extremely limited earning potential.

While North Lawndale is plagued by crime, vacant housing and unemployment, a strong web of social service organizations have affected positive changes in the area in recent years. After sponsoring a class of sixth graders in the neighborhood in 1986, the Steans Family created The Steans Family Foundation in North Lawndale that continues to contribute to the community today. The foundation's main focus areas are education, strengthening families and community development. Additionally, Homan Square has turned the former world headquarters of Sears, Roebuck and Co. nto a hub for the North Lawndale community. The former site of abandoned buildings, manufacturing plants and parking lots now features a vibrant community center offering education, medical services andhealthand wellness opportunities for all North Lawndale residents. This site is also home to new housing developments and two new schools. Goals and Objectives Part 1- Generating Goals and Objectives Herzl School of Excellence has based its needs off of the data that has been collected from the previous school year and the current school year.

The areas that the school improvement team determined to be of concern were literacy and the learning environment. Sorenson et al. (2011) state, " Effective planning buys time , prepares leaders and teams to meet adaptive challenges, allows everyone to collaborate and encourages trust" (p. 146). The School Improvement Team at Herzl School of Excellence has designed goals and objectives based off of the data that has been collected and analyzed. The School Improvement Team has designed goals and objectives to correlate with the District goals and Common Core Standards to help guide teachers in creating strategies for student improvement.

These goals and objectives are aligned with Common Core Standards. Sorenson et al (2011) suggests, " When the principal and team prioritize goals and objectives as an expectation of the curriculum review and assessment process, it becomes apparent that certain instructional enhancements are necessary to build a strong academic program" (p. 74). The priorities for Herzl School of Excellence are literacy and school environment. First, the goals and objectives for literacy are as follows: School Improvement Goal 1: Herzl will work to increase students' achievement in the area of literacy.

Our goal is to increase our staff's knowledge and skills in the area of literacy instruction (understand and implement best practices in the area of vocabulary development). It is our intent that this will ultimately increase the number of students meeting and exceeding grade level expectations in literacy development. Objective - Every student will excel in rigorous and relevant core curriculum that reflects what students need to know and

demonstrate in a global 21st century environment. We will use the NWEA, ISAT, and IA as a measure of attainment.

Our goal is to increase the number of students performing in the meets and exceeds level in literacy development. We will gather baseline data to determine the number of students currently not meeting grade level performance. Part 2 – Researching Strategies The administration will attend a conference on best practices in Spanish vocabulary instruction. The administration and staff will analyze data from CBMs, ISEL, the NWEA, ISAT, and IA to identify specific students needing extra support in literacy. The building administration and the LSC will provide professional development on best practice on vocabulary instruction. Each grade level team will develop a goal and action plan as a means to increased student achievement. The Learning Support Coaches will work with all grade level teams to identify resources, instructional support and feedback based on assessment data and their team goals. Target students will be given an opportunity to participate in an after school literacy program designed to meet their individual needs. Parents will be informed of their child's literacy progress. School Improvement Goal 2: Herzl will continue working toward " Building Community: Acceptance for All" to create a learning environment where all people (students and staff alike) feel respected, valued, and supported to accomplish the mission of Herzl School of Excellence. Our goal is to build community, acceptance for all. This is a direct alignment with our District's diversity goal. Our outcome is to increase students' elements of inner wealth (feelings of belonging, valued and having a level of competency to succeed). There is an observed need to develop a learning environment where all

students and staff feel respected, valued, and supported to accomplish the mission of the Herzl School of Excellence. • The administration and staff will develop a perception survey that will measure students' feeling of belonging, feeling being valued and having a level of competency to succeed. Once baseline data has been collected, we will determine the target population and desired increase in these attributes of their inner wealth. A post survey will be administered to determine growth over time. The administration and staff will collect and analyze behavioral data on our target students (identified by the perception survey). Data will be collected during the months of November, December, January and February. Behaviors include their interactions with peers and staff, their willingness to participate in class, and their ability to be self-directed. The desired outcome will be an increase in positive behaviors. Part 2 – Researching Strategies • The administration and staff will complete the culturally responsive questionnaire to determine next steps in professional development. Students will complete the perception survey (October and March). Staff and parents will be trained to apply the Nurtured Heart Approach as a means to increase our awareness and skills to help children increase their inner wealth. Administration and staff will create and conduct assemblies that promote character traits (Persistence, Respect, Ownership, Welcoming behaviors andLeadership). • Target students will participate in a mentor program (Check-in/Check-out system). A mentoring program will begin in October and continue throughout the school year. Our school counselor will work with administration to educate our Herzl community on the purpose of " Building Community; Acceptance for All" and the strategies used at school. Resources and

Community Involvement Step 1- Identifying School Resources Epstein developed the action team approach for school, family, and community partnerships to ensure that school, family, and community representatives sharedresponsibilityfor the development, implementation, and evaluation of partnership practices (Epstein & Hollifield, 1996). Herzl will use this approach when implementing the School Improvement Plan (SIP).

Epstein's framework of five types of family and community involvement — parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, and decision making will help us build partnerships and improve the school environment and support student learning. Action Teams for School-Family-Community Partnerships consist of six to twelve members including family members, teachers, administrators, other school staff (i. e. , counselors, nurses, parent liaisons), community representatives, and students in the upper grades, selected to serve two-year, renewable terms.

As an ILT member one of my jobs is to identify the school resources that will help manage Herzl's School Improvement Plan. The resources needed to help with the school improvement plan first start with the funds that are provided by the state of Illinois and the Chicago Public School District, IDEA funding for instructional equipment and staffing and community. Herzl Elementary School is committed to the integration of technology as a teaching tool and technology use to overcome limitations of time and distance imposed by the geographical isolation of the community.

A long-range technology plan has been developed and approved by the State of Illinois. In previous years, through grants and a successful bond issue, the district has replaced three to four computers in every elementary classroom,

has constructed one twenty-one station computer labs, one twenty-two station computer lab, one twenty-four station computer lab and networked the entire building. Technology is pertinent to the School Improvement Plan because it allows the school to be managed efficiently and effectively. The School Improvement Plan will focus on:

1. Providing staff development in the integration of instructional technology.
2. 2. Maintain funding tofinancehardware, software, and teacher training to upgrade school-to-work application classes at the middle school and high school levels.
3. 3. Make technology integration a component of every alignment process.
4. 4. Update the long-range technology plan.

Step 2 – Incorporating Community Involvement Wilmore (2002) accentuates the importance of community partnership. He implies that it should be a give and get partnership; one where interests and needs are being met by all stakeholders.

This kind of partnership in which community is valued and input is often sought and taken into consideration (Wilmore, 2002). As the Principal, my staff and I will reach out to the community and maintain collaborative partnerships. It is my role, as principal, to work towards gaining the support and trust of those partnerships by not taking advantage of their efforts and work with students and the school (Robbins & Alvy, 2009). Our staff will rally out to our civic groups, churches and local businesses to create a collaborative partnership with our school.

We will create technology nights, family fun days, parent curriculum night, and other community events to get our community involved with our school. As a result, local businesses will get additional clientele and the civic groups and churches will receiveadvertisementfor their groups. The School Improvement Team has discussed how to make sure parents are involved with the community and get important information out to our parents because it has been proven that increased parent and community involvement will impact student achievement.

Family Involvement Strategies:

- " Back to school night"

- Disseminate school information and news

- Families meet teachers and support staff

- Community partner open house – parents have an opportunity to meet all community and business partners and gather information

- Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

- Host of " Back to school night"

- Recruits new members

- Liaison between parents and the school

- Manages parent volunteer pool

- On-going school-parent communication

- Bi-Monthly progress reports to parents Monthly school contact: newsletters, emails, phone contacts, teacher notes and letters home

- Monthly Parent Events

- Celebrate parent involvement & recognition

Business Involvement Strategies:

- Administration will continue to build relationships with new businesses around the community and nurture and support existing business partnerships
- Quarterly meetings with business partners to discuss strengths and weaknesses as it relates to shared goals
- Continue the sharing of resources: human, fiscal and facilities
- Volunteers to tutor & Mentor

Political Involvement Strategies:

- Stay abreast of federals and state legislation and policies
- Build and sustain relationships with school board and central office
- On-going dissemination of school activities and events to the school board and central office

Our team has created a partnership with the newspapers to showcase our successes with the school. We have representatives to communicate with the local newspapers to not only showcase students but serve as an educational resource for the paper.

In having this collaboration with the local news, we are establishing positive communication to our community, as a result, our teachers are becoming more trustworthy, parents are more respectful to the teacher and the school is promoting a highly effective school-family-community relationship. Our school will work closely with agencies such as social services, and behavioral management agencies for the safety of our students. This will ensure that they receive their education on a daily basis.

Wilmore (2002) states, " We must reach out to multiple stakeholders, including families, social service agencies, and the media to create collaborative partnerships in which everyone gives and receives" (p. 78) These resources support student achievement by empowering students, and parents to become aware of their needs and educate them on what and how they can achieve success in their lives. With these resources, we plan on incorporating the community into our classrooms as a resource depending on their experiences and skills to help our students to be independent and to be global competitors in the 21st century.

ACTION PLAN I. Collaborate with families and the community a. School Calendar will be created to manage parent, community and business stakeholder meetings –monthly meetings and quarterly meetings for businesses i. Post on school's website for accessibility to all stakeholders b. Ongoing communication from administration, school, teachers and staff –see above c. School event calendar –parent and community invitations d. Strategic plan – strategies outlined in a systematic progression for the entire school year II. Responding to community interest and needs . Collaborate with the community stakeholders and facilitate a community needs assessment at the beginning of the school year to support the community and the goals of the school simultaneously b. Share facilities and resources with stakeholders i. Community forums, meetings, events etc. ii. Create a " Community Learning Center" –after school activities etc. iii. Support organizations with volunteers –reciprocity c. Build relationships with community organizations –diverse group of organizations that represent the student demographics i.

Provide opportunities to celebrate diversity and educate the school and community incultural diversityii. Encourage community and parent involvement in the schools III. Use of school and community resources a. Use the community needs assessment and SIP to collaboratively allocate community stakeholder resources to meet the needs of the community and the school b. Develop a collaborative action plan that aligns with the school's SIP to use as a framework for collectively allocation the school and community resources IV. Solicitation of support and new resources . The chair of each sub-committee and the administration team will be responsible for researching information regarding new resources and support. The chair will submit the information to administration on a quarterly basis. i. The administration team will be responsible for soliciting the new support and resources---build relationships. ii. The administration team will report back to the CIP quarterly. Monitoring and Assessing Herzl Elementary School is a data driven school that will be constantly monitoring students through formative and summative assessments.

Dufour and Marzano (2011), emphasizes that with more monitoring there will be more achievement and effective monitoring will focus on test scores and teacher practices that will led to the test scores (p. 119). Our school will continuously collect data through numerous amounts of assessments. Our school will be reviewing data that are aligned with the Common Core Standards. Our assessments include the NWEA testing which allows us to look at student's improvement over the course of the year, the ISAT test which tests grades third through eighth in reading, math, and science, and the RTI nd literacy instruction. RTI not only evaluate the needs of students

but it recommends different learning techniques on students to become more proficient in their content areas. Internal Review Visits will be conducted. Internal Review Visits are opportunities for self-reflection, self-monitoring, and a conversation with outside observers about school improvement at the school -- a " snapshot" of the school's school improvement process, products, results, and plans.

A consultation team examines the school profile data and the School Improvement Plan - to include the implementation of the plan - and provides feedback and recommendations to the staff to enhance their school improvement process and products. To improve Goal 1- To monitor and assess the implementation for effectiveness, teachers will also monitor the students on a daily, weekly, quarterly and annual basis. The data that will be used for the effectiveness of the reading proficiently will be reading logs, reading observations, teacher feedback, tutoring logs and feedback.

These assessments will be used on a daily and weekly basis. DAR, K-8 assessments, and report cards will be visited on a quarterly basis and EOG testing and summative assessments will be visited on an annual basis. Based on the results of the assessments, the school improvement team will determine in additional teacher training is required. There will also be increased teaching tools and collaboration between classroom teachers and media coordinator/technology facilitator.

We will also see what is needed to improve record keeping in book circulation, team planning minutes, and flexible grouping within the classroom and in team grade collaboration. There will also be more focused objectives for in-school tutoring programs and teachers will providing specific

goals and objectives for children involved in this program so that it can be better assessed. To Improve Goal 2 – To monitor and assess our " Building Community: Acceptance for All" the administration and staff will complete the culturally responsive questionnaire to determine next steps in professional development.

Students will complete the perception survey (October and March). Staff and parents will be trained to apply the Nurtured Heart Approach as a means to increase our awareness and skills to help children increase their inner wealth. Administration and staff will create and conduct assemblies that promote character traits (Persistence, Respect, Ownership, Welcoming behaviors and Leadership). Target students will participate in a mentor program (Check-in/Check-out system). A mentoring program will begin in October and continue throughout the school year.

Our SFCP will work with administration to educate our Herzl community on the purpose of " Building Community; Acceptance for All" and the strategies used at school. Effective classroom assessment and monitoring to enhance student achievement will be a collaborative effort and Herzl Elementary School. Teacher, Teacher Assistants, Literacy Coaches, Media Coordinator, Technology Facilitator, Tutor Coordinator, and the RTI team will be utilized for the success of the student. By working collaboratively with the staff, the school will continuously convey the " shared vision" of the school for the success of all students.

Through collaboration we will ensure high levels of quality student learning through our core beliefs, vision, and mission, goals, and data analysis. We will plan the way that enables the realization of excellence. (Robbins and

Alvy, 2009, p. 120) Our teachers', students and staff are continuing to grow and learn. The School Improvement Plan provides a foundation for the school and teachers' to have focal points of what they should be teaching. In the next three years we expect our students to have significant growth. With collaboration, professional development, tools and resources, and teacher leaders, our school will be successful.

Expected Outcomes In Grades 3-8, 29% of the students will achieve proficiency on the 2013 ISAT Math test. In Grades 3-8, 54% of the students will achieve above proficiency on the 2013 ISAT Math test. In Grades 3-8, 68% of students will achieve learning gains on the 2013 ISAT Math test. In Grades 3-8, at least 58% of the lowest 25% will achieve adequate progress on the 2013 ISAT Math test. Herzl School of Excellence schoolcultureeither will supports quality professional learning. Herzl will develop and sustain a positive, professional culture that nurtures staff learning for everyone in the school.

With a strong, positive culture that supports professional development and student learning, Herzl will become a place where every teacher makes a difference and every child learns.

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