

Washington County School Improvement Audit Report of Findings

School: Abingdon Elementary School

Date: 04-18-2011

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Curriculum Alignment: Written			
Indicators	Significant Findings	AOS	AI
CA 1.1 Making curriculum resources and supplementary materials available for use by teachers			
CA 1.2 Establishing specific learning objectives that align with state learning standards and address essential understandings, knowledge, and skills			
CA 1.3 Listing instructional strategies and designing learning activities that align with state learning standards and address essential understandings, knowledge, and skills	The school is commended for the development of AES Best Practices, a listing of instructional strategies developed and researched by the AES faculty and staff.	✓	
CA 1.4 Developing daily lesson plans that fit logically within the unit and within the context of the overall curriculum	Teachers develop daily lesson plans that are developmentally appropriate and challenging for all students. Teachers meet collaboratively on a weekly basis to plan.	✓	
CA 1.5 Using student performance data to develop daily lesson plans that reflect consideration of the learning strengths and needs of students	Grade level teams meet weekly to discuss student performance. Students not meeting with success are referred to REACH.	✓	
CA 1.6 Evaluating the appropriateness of pacing and mapping regularly, and making appropriate adjustments			
CA 1.7 Analyzing the curriculum components across grade levels in like content areas to identify areas of strength and areas of weakness	Weekly grade group chair meetings are held and curriculum goals discussed. Information from the meetings are then carried back to grade level teams and shared.	✓	

Curriculum Alignment: Taught			
Indicators	Significant Findings	AOS	AI
CA 2.1 Focusing instruction on specific learning objectives that promote the attainment of state learning standards and address essential understandings, knowledge, and skills			
CA 2.2 Using available curriculum resources and supplementary materials appropriately to promote attainment of state learning standards			
CA 2.3 Presenting accurate knowledge through meaningful contexts and connected disciplines			
CA 2.4 Employing instructional strategies that are research-based and proven effective	Faculty and Staff have developed, researched, and are implementing proven instructional strategies in classroom. Direct modeling to whole groups was observed as well as small groups and individualized instruction.	✓	
CA 2.5 Assigning projects and tasks that require students to integrate and apply their learning in meaningful contexts and to reflect on what they have learned			
CA 2.6 Providing students with learning experiences that engage them in active learning	Learning centers, small group instruction, whole grade morning meetings and interactive notebooks were all observed activities which engaged students in active learning.	✓	
CA 2.7 Differentiating instruction to meet the identified strengths and needs of individual students and groups of students	Struggling students in the primary grades are assigned to intervention teachers for one on one or small group instruction. Small group instruction within the classroom is evidenced by observations and referrals to the REACH team. After school and daily enrichment activities are offered to students exceeding academic goals.	✓	
CA 2.8 Providing all students access to available materials, resources, and services to support learning			
CA 2.9 Providing teachers with feedback on the alignment of instruction to state learning standards and essential understandings, knowledge, and skills			
CA 2.10 Monitoring teacher implementation of the curriculum throughout the year	Administration provides periodic formal evaluations of teachers; however bi-weekly grade level meetings also provide opportunities for feedback. Teachers are also provided opportunities for peer observation and evaluation.	✓	

Curriculum Alignment: Assessed			
Indicators	Significant Findings	AOS	AI
CA 3.1 Assessing student progress on a regular basis			
CA 3.2 Ensuring that assessments are aligned with state learning standards and essential understandings, knowledge, and skills			
CA 3.3 Providing opportunities for students to take tests that are similar in content and format to state assessments			
CA 3.4 Using a variety of classroom-based assessment methods and tools (student self-evaluation, performance checklists, rubrics, scales, projects, products, tests, quizzes) before, during, and after units of study to monitor student progress			
CA 3.5 Providing assessments that require students to use knowledge, comprehension, application and reasoning skills			
CA 3.6 Periodically reporting student progress toward mastery of learning objectives to students and parents in a way that is clear and understandable	Communication with parents is provided in a variety of formats on a weekly or daily basis. Communications include both academic and behavioral goals.	✓	
CA 3.7 Monitoring the results of classroom-based assessments to ensure attainment of the knowledge and skills required for success on state assessments			

Professional Development: Organizational Development			
Indicators	Significant Findings	AOS	AI
PD 1.1 Designing an ongoing, school-based program of professional development that is based on the analyses of data and is aligned with the school's goals for improving student achievement			
PD 1.2 Basing professional development programs and activities on research-based principles and practices	Weekly grade level meetings provide faculty opportunities for discussion of research based principles and practices as well as discussion of current professional literature.	✓	
PD 1.3 Allocating resources to support the professional development program and ensure implementation of improvement initiatives			
PD 1.4 Focusing the core of staff learning on research-based content and instructional practices that have been proven effective in improving student achievement	Teachers present information on AES Best Practices to their grade level on a bi-monthly basis.	✓	
PD 1.5 Identifying essential learning outcomes from professional development activities that will be used to change practice			
PD 1.6 Including theory, demonstration, practice with feedback, and coaching in the school's professional development programs and activities			
PD 1.7 Monitoring the degree to which new practices are implemented as prescribed	Follow up discussions are provided by administration on a bi-monthly schedule go over implementation of best practices and the successes of those practices.	✓	
PD 1.8 Determining the effect of changes in practice on student learning			

Professional Development: Personal Professional Growth & Evaluation			
Indicators	Significant Findings	AOS	AI
PD 2.1 Embedding professional growth and development into job performance expectations and the performance evaluation process			
PD 2.2 Analyzing data/evidence from a variety of relevant sources to identify goals for individual growth and development			
PD 2.3 Aligning plans for individual professional development with local improvement initiatives and with areas identified for individual growth			
PD 2.4 Connecting teachers' learning outcomes from professional development activities directly to their work in classrooms	Teachers are provided opportunities to visit other county schools and observe while making note of instructional practices that could be implemented or adapted for their classrooms. Vertical observations and collaboration opportunities are also provided.	✓	
PD 2.5 Connecting teachers to external resources such as conferences, workshops, and support networks that align with the needs of individual teachers, departments/grade levels, or local improvement initiatives			
PD 2.6 Providing opportunities for teachers to experiment, practice, and obtain feedback as they integrate newly learned skills into their repertoire of instructional practices			
PD 2.7 Regularly monitoring the progress of staff in achieving individual professional development goals			

Use of Time and School Scheduling: Instructional Time			
Indicators	Significant Findings	AOS	AI
TS 1.1 Basing decisions related to the pacing of the curriculum on state test blueprints and on student performance data			
TS 1.2 Arranging classroom instructional time to allow for variety of instructional activities	Master schedule includes a reading, enrichment and intervention block. Lesson plans include individual and small group instructional strategies as well as learning centers in the primary grades.	✓	
TS 1.3 Organizing instruction and structuring lessons to maximize student time on task			
TS 1.4 Maintaining a high level of student engagement throughout the lesson			
TS 1.5 Using classroom instructional time to provide enrichment opportunities and support services to individuals and small groups based on students' identified strengths and needs	Opportunities for enrichment are provided in the daily schedule as well as after school and include activities such as History Bowl, keyboarding, leadership opportunities	✓	
TS 1.6 Establishing classroom routines that maximize the use of non-instructional time			
TS 1.7 Establishing school-wide organizational practices that minimize unnecessary interruptions to instructional time	Each teacher carries a walkie talkie that allows communication with the office so that school wide announcements are minimized.	✓	
TS 1.8 Regularly monitoring the use of instructional time in classrooms			

Use of Time and School Scheduling: School Scheduling Practices			
Indicators	Significant Findings	AOS	AI
TS 2.1 Meeting SOA requirements for length of school year, length of school day, or number of hours of instruction in core areas a. Length of school year (180 days OR 990 hours grades 1-12; 540 hours kindergarten) b. Length of school day (5 hours; 3 hours minimum for kindergarten only) c. Number of hours of instruction in core areas (ES: 75% in 4 core areas; MS/HS: 140 clock hours OR 560 total in 4 core areas for grade 6)			
TS 2.2 Building schedules that are based on identified learning and instructional needs and support the implementation of improvement initiatives	Time is allocated in the master schedule for reading, enrichment and intervention.	✓	
TS 2.3 Scheduling non-academic events to minimally impact instructional time			

Use of Data for Making Decisions: Instruction			
Indicators	Significant Findings	AOS	AI
D 1.1 Using data/evidence from multiple sources to plan instruction that promotes that attainment of state standards and essential understandings, knowledge, and skills	Data is collected from a variety of sources including preschool screenings, kindergarten screenings, Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS), Observation Surveys and benchmark testing.	✓	
D 1.2 Collecting, compiling, and analyzing data related to instructional practices to determine the degree of alignment with state learning standards and to identify professional development needs			
D 1.3 Sharing responsibility for collecting and compiling data related to instructional programs and services			
D 1.4 Sharing responsibility for analyzing data and making instructional decisions based on the results			
D 1.5 Collecting and compiling individual student performance data to identify students' strengths and needs, plans instruction, and monitor individual student progress over time	Data is collected from a variety of sources including preschool screenings, kindergarten screenings, Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS), Observation Surveys and benchmark testing.	✓	
D 1.6 Using results of data analyses to design, monitor, and evaluate instructional programs, support services, and professional development activities			
D 1.7 Training staff in the processes and procedures for collecting and analyzing classroom-based, local, and state assessment data to make instructional decisions			

Use of Data for Making Decisions: School Improvement Planning			
Indicators	Significant Findings	AOS	AI
D 2.1 Compiling and using data/evidence from several sources to develop a profile of the school related to student performance			
D 2.2 Analyzing data/evidence related to the perceived limitations of instructional practices and organizational conditions to identify goals and objectives for school improvement planning			
D 2.3 Analyzing data over time to look for trends in student performance and to identify strengths and limitations of instructional programs and services			
D 2.4 Disaggregating state and local student performance data by appropriate subgroups of students to identify needs and monitor student progress			
D 2.5 Collecting and analyzing data/evidence on a regular, periodic basis to monitor plan implementation and to evaluate improvements over time			
D 2.6 Making data relevant to the implementation of school improvement strategies and initiatives available and accessible to staff	Student performance data is used to develop and identify the school improvement plan. This data from student scores is available to teachers.	✓	
D 2.7 Training staff in collecting and analyzing data to identify relevant goals and objectives for school improvement planning and to monitor the plan's implementation and evaluate improvements over time			

Comments

The SACS review team visited Abingdon Elementary School on Tuesday, April 5th, 2011.

Several commendations were made:

1. AES has a safe, family type atmosphere that allows students to take risks in their academics understanding that it is okay to make mistakes.
2. Administration, faculty, staff, parents and students all work very cohesively together.
3. The Principal has an open door policy and students, faculty and parents all feel that they can approach him about concerns.
4. Classroom teachers make good use of instructional time with very limited interruptions and smooth transitions.
5. Collaborative groups were common across the classes.
6. Strong parental involvement and good communication with parents was noted several times.
7. The School Improvement Team is involved year round with the planning and implementation of the goals and strategies.
8. Real world applications were made in all classrooms that gave students a purpose for their work.
9. Students were engaged in classrooms.

10. There were positive relationships among staff, students parents and administration.

Reommendations made:

1. Increase the use of Technology in the classroom by students.
2. Continue to incorporate more opportunities for small groups and collaborative learning in classrooms.
3. Continue to create opportunities for active learning including movement, brain breaks, music, etc.
4. Increase the use of differentiation strategies for both high and low achieving students within the classroom or school day.

Other comments from parents and students included:

1. More recycling
2. Longer lunch periods
3. Cleaner/safer bathrooms

Other activities not noted in the report, but well recieved by parents, faculty and students are The Back Pack Program, AES Best Practices and Book Study and the Morning News Show.