

George Rogers Clark Middle School



Master Plan for School Improvement 2008-2011 2009 Revisions

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SCHOOL PROFILE

Summary of 2008-2009 data:

- Clark Middle School has a very homogeneous population. The student body is 94% white.
- Free/reduced count is at 54%
- 67.3% of all tested grades passed the ISTEP
- 95.7% attendance rate

The following link is to the Clark Middle School snapshot at the Indiana Department of Education which provides more data regarding the demographics and performance of our school:

<http://mustang.doe.state.in.is/SEARCH/snapshot.cfm?schl=3557>

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Clark Middle School is to strive for all students to meet or exceed state and local academic standards and develop respect for self, peers, and adults. Students will demonstrate learning through diverse assessments. Guided support for academic preventions and interventions will be provided through a network of education and community resources.

ATTENDANCE INFORMATION:

Attendance for the 2007-08 school year was **95.7%** which was below the state average of 95.9% and the 95th percentile goal of 97.7%. To improve attendance, **IPASS** will work with students lacking self-motivation and/or who have classroom behavior problems, as well as with their parents to encourage school attendance and to develop strategies to reinforce their child's positive behaviors.

A staff member will be maintaining attendance records as well as collaborating with the assistant principals and local agencies to promote school attendance and the compulsory school attendance laws.

INTERVENTION PROGRAM ASSISTING STUDENT SUCCESS (IPASS)

IPASS is an early intervention program for students in need of academic and behavioral support. This program gives students the opportunity to build academic discipline and social skills. Students may participate in one-on-one sessions, small groups, and/or study tables. IPASS instructors may also be able to assist families in obtaining other community resources necessary to benefit their child's well being.

CULTURAL COMPETENCY:

Fifty-four percent of the students at Clark Middle School are on free/reduced lunch. In an effort to better understand these students, faculty and staff study groups will read Ruby Payne's *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*. The staff will receive training on Poverty in the Classroom the 2009-2010 school year.

CURRICULUM DESCRIPTION:

The curriculum of George Rogers Clark Middle School is currently being revised to align all courses horizontally and vertically. A copy of the curriculum will be located in the principal's office and will be available for viewing by the public during regular school hours.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

ISTEP+ data demonstrates a need to improve reading comprehension scores in the general population and overall scores for free/reduced lunch and special education students. Due to the need for these students to be taught by a qualified teacher for each subject area, an emphasis is being placed on **Differentiated Instruction (DI)** and **Reading Comprehension (RC)** in heterogeneous classroom settings.

Literacy Consultants will tour CMS and work with the staff in both of these areas. Teachers will receive strategies to incorporate research-based strategies into their classroom instruction. Staff development will take place during teaming time. Additional times may also be used if a calendar can be created to incorporate more PD time.

Another area of professional development will be in the area of curriculum development. A consultant with expertise in this area will provide staff with tools to continue their alignment of curriculum in a format that provides for a dynamic plan that is referenced and revised regularly.

The Professional development plan meets the criteria and core principles of professional development in the following manner:

- The plan is solely for the purpose of increasing student performance. After training of research-based strategies, teachers will implement them into instruction. This will ideally be followed by the development of greater reading comprehension and increased performance on assessments by our students.
- Our literacy consultants will incorporate research-based strategies
- An increase in RC should benefit students across the curriculum; especially in high reading content classes.
- Financial resources should be available through PL221 and Title 1 improvement monies.
- The plan was created collaboratively with the School Improvement Team and teacher interviews.
- After exposure to RC strategies, teachers will be able to select those best suiting their content area and classes.

PARENTAL PARTICIPATION:

Parental participation is encouraged at Clark Middle School. Parent volunteers are welcomed to assist at CMS. Some ways that parent volunteers currently help out at CMS are:

- Chaperones for field trips
- School Improvement Team members
- Designing bulletin boards
- Clark/Lincoln Band Boosters (participate in band activities)
- CMS/LHS Athletic Boosters (participate in athletic fund raising)
- Reality Store
- Clark Academic Boosters sponsor:
 - 9 Week Improved GPA/Honor Roll recognition
 - Miscellaneous after school activities for students
 - Teacher Appreciation Days
 - CAB Awards night in May
 - Seedling grant money for supplies or equipment

Parents are kept informed about their child through many other participation activities:

- Back to School night orientation for parents
- Open House in March
- Parent-Teacher Conferences (meetings with teams, phone calls, emails, one-on-one)
- Quarterly newsletters
- 6 week grade cards (new this year)
- IPASS instructors for students in need of increased interventions
- Informative email messages from the principal to any parent providing their email address

TECHNOLOGY:

1. **Every classroom teacher has a computer** with Windows XP wired for high speed Internet research, VCR/cable connections.
2. The Clark Middle School Media Center has a **cluster of computers** wired for high speed Internet research and Accelerated Reader/STAR testing. The Media Center also contains two portable carts with **LCD projectors, one smart-board, and several VCRs**, all for teacher use in their classrooms.
3. There are 7 computers containing **Promethean programs and 7 projectors** for viewing the programs in CMS. There are 2 sets of **Acti-vote** units to go with the program that are shared.
4. **Computer labs** are located throughout the building for student instruction with various programs installed to supplement curriculum:
 - Room 103—Reading Lab
 - Room 331—Math Lab
 - Room 330—Special Education
 - Room 202—6th grade Keyboarding
 - Room 329—Advanced Computers
 - Room 106—Open Lab of 26 computers (Internet Research, PowerPoint, Music programs)
5. Two MAC mobile labs (30 laptops) are available to check-out for classroom use; also utilized for Acuity assessments.
6. Room 104 houses the **Media and Technology club** which teaches students skills for broadcasting. Live announcements are presented daily as well as a PowerPoint presentation of school events that plays during lunch in the cafeteria.
7. **Synergistics modules** are in both Industrial Technology and Family and Consumer Science classrooms. These have computer based instruction, research, and hands-on projects that demonstrate acquisition of knowledge.
8. Sixth grade music classes learn music skills in the computer lab through the use of **Music Ace, Music Ace 2, and Rock, Rap, and Roll computer programs**.
9. English and Science departments have received **laptops, clickers, portable whiteboards, and projectors** as part of their book adoptions.

TECHNOLOGY cont.

10. *Math Discovery: Reinventing Mathematics Delivery in the 6-8 Continuum* grant was received by the math department. Each of 5 teachers on the school's project team will receive:
 - An HP **Compaq Notebook/**Tablet PC with Microsoft® Vista Business Tablet PC edition with OneNote
 - A **multimedia projector**
 - An HP **digital camera**
 - An HP **Officejet printer, scanner, copier**
 - Photo book** provided by Snapfish—HP's online photo service
 - A \$500 stipend
 - Customized online professional development opportunities

11. *CompassLearning Odyssey*® is used in the math and reading lab classes. It is a standards aligned math and language arts curricula that provides interactive, and self-paced activities. *Odyssey* applies current and confirmed research about how students think and learn.

SAFE AND DISCIPLINED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:

Clark Middle School will ensure a safe learning environment by:

1. **Locking** all outside doors except the main entrance by 8:00 a.m.
2. **Communicating** with city police and the school liaison officer about any immediate or ongoing potential problems.
3. Keeping the **Crisis Response Plan** updated and keeping individuals informed about their responsibilities and about policies.
4. **Randomly drug testing** students involved in athletic and extra-curricular activities as per the VCSC drug testing policy.
5. Having drug sniffing dogs **patrol** the hallways at least twice a year.
6. Having **visitors sign in** and wear a visitor's badge if remaining in the building.
7. Providing more **supervision** in school as needed and continue to monitor hallways during passing periods.
8. Implementing **IDOE "Indiana State Schools" checklist**.
9. Providing school-wide prevention strategies to **curb bullying and inappropriate behavior**.
10. Using school-wide **prevention strategies** responsive to all children in place through the network of HR/advisory teachers, interdisciplinary teams, parents, and counselors responding to early warning signs of troubled youth.
11. Working closely with **community-based support services** to address potential problems.
12. Inclusion of **Character Education** programs during FLEX class; organized by the school counselor
13. **Early intervention** through the IPASS program
14. Implementation of Positive Behavior and Intervention Supports (PBS) for the first time after a year of training by a team of teachers and the development of a plan that includes consistent expectations/rewards

Goal: All students will increase their reading comprehension scores on ISTEP across the curriculum.
Benchmark: ISTEP scores will average an increase of 2% per year over the three year period.

SUPPORTING DATA:

Fall 2007 ISTEP results below showed a weakness in the area of reading comprehension.

6th Grade:

65% of all students achieved mastery in reading comprehension. (state mastery level was 74%)
74% of the General Education subgroup achieved mastery in reading comprehension.
25% of the Special Education subgroup achieved mastery in reading comprehension.

7th Grade:

69% of all students achieved mastery in reading comprehension. (state mastery level was 72%)
73% of the General Education subgroup achieved mastery in reading comprehension.
21% of the Special Education subgroup achieved mastery in reading comprehension.

8th Grade:

70% of all students achieved mastery in reading comprehension. (state mastery level was 72%.)
79% of the General Education subgroup achieved mastery in reading comprehension.

AREA WHERE IMPROVEMENT IS NEEDED IMMEDIATELY:

ISTEP results showed an immediate need to identify ways to support the Special Education subgroup in order to raise their scores in reading comprehension (and other areas). Clark Middle School is collaborating with every school to develop a Title 1 Plan for the identified area of need; Special Education Language Arts. This plan includes provisions for professional development in the area of differentiated instruction as well as curriculum alignment.

ASSESSMENTS IN ADDITION TO ISTEP+ THAT WILL BE USED TO MEASURE PROGRESS TOWARD OUR READING COMPREHENSION IMPROVEMENT GOAL:

Accelerated Reader/STAR testing: *pre-tests in September and post-tests in April assess student growth in reading levels, points attained, and the number of books read. Special Education students are also given a winter test.*

Compass Learning: *Students in reading labs given pre/post diagnostic tests on lab computers.*

Quarterly Benchmark Assessments: *Utilization of the Acuity Diagnostic assessments to assist in the planning of instruction to increase the number of students learning at or above grade level according to the state standards outlined in the curriculum plans.*

Formative Assessments: Language Arts and Math “snapshot” assessments will be given bi-weekly during FLEX. These will provide data to drive classroom instruction as well as vital information to assist students assigned to Reading/Math labs or Basic Skills classes for some special education students.

ISTAR *is given to the moderately and profoundly handicapped students in the fall and spring to determine their advancement over the course of the school year.*

ASSESSMENTS IN ADDITION TO ISTEP+ THAT WILL BE USED TO MEASURE PROGRESS IN OTHER LANGUAGE ARTS AREAS AND MATHEMATICS:

School-wide Writing Prompts: *All students write to a prompt each semester. The Simple 6 rubric will be utilized and data provided to assist in writing instruction to increase ISTEP scores and student writing for future usage.*

Accelerated Math: *Weekly and quarterly progress data is collected on every student within the classroom that gives the student and teacher timely and accurate information about growth in selected math skills.*

Compass Learning: *Students in math labs given pre/post diagnostic tests on lab computers.*

Math Pre-/Post– tests: *All regular education math classes conduct pre/post-tests on select math standards in grades 6, 7, and 8.*

Core 40 Assessment: *All 8th grade Algebra students are required to take the Core 40 Assessment Tests in May.*

ISTAR *is given to the moderately and profoundly handicapped students in the fall and spring to determine their advancement over the course of the school year.*

Acuity: *When the Acuity diagnostic tests are used in the areas of Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies the teachers will use the data to assess each student’s mastery. Remediation and re-teaching will occur in the Language Arts and Mathematics classroom, Math and Reading labs.*

Formative Assessments: *Language Arts and Math “snapshot” assessments will be given bi-weekly during FLEX. These will provide data to drive classroom instruction as well as vital information to assist students assigned to Reading/Math labs or Basic Skills classes for some special education students.*

Goal: All students will increase their reading comprehension scores on ISTEP across the curriculum.

Benchmark: ISTEP scores will average an increase of 2% per year over the three year period.

2008-09	1. Teacher training on reading comprehension will be offered.	Principal
	2. Students will be given additional time and resources as related to reading.	Faculty
	3. "At risk*" students will be identified for additional support. *Students who did not pass math and/or language arts on ISTEP.	V.P/Lab Faculty
	4. During and at the end of the year, the effectiveness of the interventions will be evaluated using assessments. Following the evaluation, revisions to the interventions will be considered.	SIT Team/ Faculty
Fall 2008	1. a. Teachers will receive an in-service on the teaching of reading comprehension.	Principal
2008-09	b. Teachers will receive guidelines and activities to use to strengthen reading comprehension.	Literacy Consultant
2008-09	c. Development of a resource library for use by the faculty.	Faculty and Media Consultant
2008-09	d. Teachers will use available resources as learning tools.	
2008-09	e. Teachers will meet to review standards, objectives, requirements, and aspects of state reading comprehension standards.	Faculty
2008-09	f. Faculty and staff will meet in study groups to review professional articles.	Faculty
Sum 2008	2. a. Language Arts Department will create quarterly benchmark assessments.	LA Department
2008-09	b. 7th and 8th grade classes will be given a flex class to work on reading comprehension skills.	Faculty
2008-09	c. Teachers will instruct and/or model ways to understand materials read by the student or teacher.	Faculty
2008-09	d. Teachers will guide instruction to improve reading comprehension.	Faculty
2008-09	e. Teachers will support <i>Accelerated Reader</i> activities to reinforce reading comprehension and to promote outside reading.	Faculty
2008-09	3. a. Special Education students will be taught by highly qualified instructors in all subject areas.	Principal/SpEd dept. head
2008-09	b. Special education teachers and aides will support students within regular core classes.	SpEd Dept head
2008-09	c. "At risk" students will be placed in lab classes in addition to their regular class.	Lab Faculty
2008-09	d. Special Education students will have an additional study skills class with their S.E. teachers.	Sp.Ed. Faculty
Spring 09	4. a. Teachers will meet to discuss the need for follow-up training on reading comprehension.	Faculty
2008-09	b. Teachers will review research-based products and/or methods to learn improved ways to develop reading comprehension skills.	SIT/LA dept.

Goal: All students will increase their reading comprehension scores on ISTEP across the curriculum.

Benchmark: ISTEP scores will average an increase of 2% per year over the three year period.

2009-10	1. Teacher training on reading comprehension will be offered.	Principal
	2. Students will be given additional time and resources as related to reading.	Faculty
	3. "At risk*" students will be identified for additional support. *Students who did not pass math and/or language arts on ISTEP.	V.P/Lab Faculty
	4. During and at the end of the year, the effectiveness of the interventions will be evaluated using assessments. Following the evaluation, revisions to the interventions will be considered.	SIT Team/ Faculty
Fall 2009	1. a. Current reading comprehension methods will be evaluated for effectiveness	Principal/Faculty
2009-10	b. Teachers will review guidelines and activities to use to strengthen reading comprehension. and revise as necessary.	Literacy Consultant
2009-10	c. Teachers will use available resources as learning tools.	
2009-10	d. Teachers will meet to review standards, objectives, requirements, and aspects of state reading comprehension standards.	Faculty
2009-10	e. Faculty and staff will meet in study groups to review professional articles.	Faculty
Sum 2009	2. a. Language Arts Department will review quarterly benchmark assessments and revise as necessary.	LA Department
2009-10	b. Activities used in flex classes will be assessed and revised if necessary.	Faculty
2009-10	c. Teachers will instruct and/or model ways to understand materials read by the student or teacher.	Faculty
2009-10	d. Teachers will guide instruction to improve reading comprehension.	Faculty
2009-10	3. a. Special Education students will be taught by highly qualified instructors in all subject areas.	Principal/SpEd dept. head
2009-10	b. Special education teachers and aides will support students within regular core classes.	SpEd Dept head
2009-10	c. "At risk" students will be placed in lab classes in addition to their regular class.	Lab Faculty
Spring 2010	4. a. Teachers will meet to discuss the need for follow-up training on reading comprehension.	Faculty
	b. Teachers will review research-based products and/or methods to learn improved ways to develop reading comprehension skills.	SIT/LA dept.

Goal: All students will increase their reading comprehension scores on ISTEP across the curriculum.

Benchmark: ISTEP scores will average an increase of 2% per year over the three year period.

2010-11	1. Teacher training on reading comprehension will be offered.	Principal
	2. Students will be given additional time and resources as related to reading.	Faculty
	3. "At risk*" students will be identified for additional support. *Students who did not pass math and/or language arts on ISTEP.	V.P/Lab Faculty
	4. During and at the end of the year, the effectiveness of the interventions will be evaluated using assessments. Following the evaluation, revisions to the interventions will be considered.	SIT Team/ Faculty
Sum. 2010	1. a. Current reading comprehension methods will be evaluated for effectiveness.	Principal/Faculty
2010-11	b. Teachers will review guidelines and activities to use to strengthen reading comprehension and revise as necessary.	Literacy Consultant
2010-11	c. Teachers will use available resources as learning tools.	
2010-11	d. Teachers will meet to review standards, objectives, requirements, and aspects of state reading comprehension standards.	Faculty
2010-11	e. Faculty and staff will meet in study groups to review professional articles.	Faculty
Sum 2010	2. a. Language Arts Department will review quarterly benchmark assessments and revise as necessary.	LA Department
2010-11	b. Activities used in 7th and 8th grade flex classes will be assessed and revised if necessary.	Faculty
2010-11	c. Teachers will instruct and/or model ways to understand materials read by the student or teacher.	Faculty
2010-11	d. Teachers will guide instruction to improve reading comprehension.	Faculty
2010-11	3. a. Special Education students will be taught by highly qualified instructors in all subject areas.	Principal/SpEd dept. head
2010-11	b. Special education teachers and aides will support students within regular core classes.	SpEd Dept head
2010-11	c. "At risk" students will be placed in lab classes in addition to their regular class.	Lab Faculty
Spring 2011	4. a. Teachers will meet to discuss the need for follow-up training on reading comprehension.	Faculty
2010-11	b. Teachers will review research-based products and/or methods to learn improved ways to develop reading comprehension skills.	SIT/LA dept.

OTHER STRATEGIES IN PLACE NOT DIRECTLY CONNECTED TO READING COMPREHENSION:**1. Improving writing skills** across the curriculum:

- a. Students will write to a prompt in each class utilizing the writing across the curriculum strategy.
- b. Simple 6 rubric will be used to grade paragraphs or writing projects.
- c. The adopted writing guidelines will be used as a reference by all students and teachers.
- d. All math, language arts, and HR teachers go review/explain ISTEP scores with students.
- e. Writing Process poster charts are displayed in each classroom.
- f. A school wide write will be implemented with data collection.

2. Improving problem solving skills across the curriculum:

- a. Problem-Solving strategies emphasized in classroom instruction
- b. Higher thinking skills will be encouraged with the use of Bloom's Taxonomy questioning.
- c. Students will read and write story problems.

3. Improving vocabulary skills across the curriculum. (related to reading comprehension):

- a. Continuation 6 Step Vocabulary Instruction procedure and other strategies learned during professional development

4. Other items:

- a. Continuing to develop Professional Learning Communities.

RESEARCH/BEST PRACTICES/RESOURCES:

Reading Comprehension:

Reading Comprehension Strategies Resource Guide by Susan Parnell

Teaching Reading In The Content Areas, Rachel Billmeyer, Mary Burton, 1998

Reading Comprehension activities from Goodrich Middle School's website:

[http://goodrich.lps.org/stories/storyReader\\$16](http://goodrich.lps.org/stories/storyReader$16)

Teach Them All To Read, Elaine K. McEwan, Corwin Press, Inc., 2002

How The Brain Learns To Read, David A. Sousa, Corwin Press, Inc., 2005

Indiana's Academic Standards & Resources (to find materials for teaching reading comprehension):

<http://indianastandardsresources.org/standard.asp?Subject=end&Grade=6&Standard=2> (etc.)

Teaching Methods:

The Differentiated Classroom Carol Ann Tomlinson, ASCD, 1999

Teaching With The Brain In Mind, Eric Jensen

Best Practice, Steven Zemelman, Harvey Daniels, Arthur Hyde, Heinemann, 1998

Failure Is Not An Option by Alan M. Blankstein

Vocabulary:

Building Academic Vocabulary R.J. Marzano, Debra Pickering, ASCD 2005

"Six Step Process For Teaching Vocabulary" ASCD (2005)

Cultural Competency:

A Framework For Understanding Poverty by Ruby Payne

Macaroni At Midnight Dr. Don Bartlette

Hear Our Cry, Boys In Crisis Paul Slocomb, Ed.D. Aha! Process, Inc. 2004

High Ability:

Downloadable sessions from the National Association For Gifted and Talented:

http://www.prolibraries.com/nagc/?select=sessionlist&f_keyword=session

Best Practices in Gifted Education: An Evidence-Based Guide, Robinson, shore, and Enersen, 2007, Prufrock Press

A Nation Deceived: How Schools Hold Back America's Brightest Students, The Templeton National Report on Acceleration, Colangelo, Assouline, Gross, 2004, Volumes I and II