

NAFIS School District Best Practice Methods

The following is the beginning of the NAFIS Best Practice project. This is an on-going project that will help to benefit NAFIS members. The purpose is to collect best practice methods that have benefitted school districts with social, academic, health, etc. issues that concern students. Below you will find summaries of programs that have helped to increase test scores or bring other success to school districts. If you see a program that you would like to learn more about please feel free to contact the school district listed. If you have a best practice method your school uses and would like to share, please contact the NAFIS office at 202-624-5455.

Thank you to everyone who helped me with starting this and I hope that it is helpful!

--Ariel Fuchs NAFIS Spring 2009 Intern

Farm to School Program

Pine Point Public School

Objective:

- To add nutritional foods into schools
 - Specifically for the lunch program
 - Supports local economy and people
- Promotes physical health and nutrition education
- Inspires more community involvement, teacher involvement, and staff involvement
- About 40% of the school district's food now comes from local farms
- Had direct help from an outside agency: White Earth Land Project
- Inspired "Family Fun Days" once a month
 - gives family opportunities to try local foods
 - students come with their families; contributes to community and family involvement with school
- Farmers have been willing to donate to school for free once relationship was established

Funding:

- \$12-15,000 came out of budget and got \$ from white earth land project, helped them get grants
- specific grant: fresh fruit and vegetable grant for afternoon snacks

Suggestions for Starting:

- Schools interested should find someone else to collaborate with and designate a point person to talk to local farmers and markets to make the connection with the school

Contact: Jason Luksik

Pine Point Public School – MN

jluksik@pinepoint.k12.mn.us

218-573-4102

Collaboration for Kids – Dr. Heather Conway

Menominee Indian School District

Objective:

- Early intervention program for children and families
- This initiative forms connection between school and community partners and agencies to help families
- Puts students on the right learning path, empowers parents, and stabilizes families through a team effort
- Preventing drop-out rates
 - recognizing symptoms when they start in elementary school
 - getting necessary help for family from community and school
- Program targets individual families and works to help them
- It can take 5-7 years to see major results, but program has seen great success
 - both immediate and long term results seen
- Different trained CFK teams (all agencies and school staff) needed to help within school:
 - social worker, guidance counselor, assistant principal, principal, superintendent, or other student services personnel
 - school brought in Dr. Heather Conway to help foster school and community relationships and to help get the program started

Example of intervention:

- 2nd grader missing 50% of school
- Parents blame poor attendance on random excuses; for example, asthma problem
- CFK Team action: Nurse is called to work with student to get her proper medical help
- “Reward method” also used: For every 5 days of school attended, the student got to pick out a book to keep
- Up to 85% attendance was achieved by the end of the school year
- Shows how direct services are applied to family needs

Students who have been exposed to any of the following can benefit:

- patterns of poor attendance
- physical, psychological, or sexual abuse and/or neglect in the home
- substance abuse in home
- mental health problems
- chronic illness
- poverty/homelessness
- family death
- ...many others

Funding:

- School applied for and received through their state
- Not very expensive, requires more effort of staff and community entities
- Had a representative from company come in and train school and agency personnel together

- Expenses: \$1600 for Dr. Conway to come and train personnel; also brought her back for regular visits to maintain process

Results:

- At Menominee School District 12 students participating in the program progressed in one or more areas of concern during the first year of participation in project
- Siblings of targeted students also benefit from the process and receive help
- A total of 74 students in the district were positively impacted during the first year
- Successfully built relationship between school and community, also helps build relationships with families
 - Community partners provided:
 - Shelter housing, police domestic violence, mentoring, health and human services, wellness center, youth development and outreach, etc.
- Parents are able to directly decide what resources are needed
- Judge and court assistance used if necessary
 - Parents court ordered to work with schools and agencies
 - Action plans written: written with the help of parents to better utilize various services and help the child
 - Examples: to make doctor appointments, take care of their children, individual meetings set up with parents, etc.

Suggestions for starting:

- Look at data for programs and make sure there is research behind the model
- Collaboration for Kids has been successful for 10-12 years
- Look at strengths, weaknesses, and threats of program before implementing it and make sure the program stays monitored

Contacts:

Wendell Waukau
Menominee Indian School District, WI
715-799-3824 ext. 6010
wwaukau@misd.k12.wi.us

Dr. Heather Conway – Program Creator
540-270-6130
wconway@shentel.net

Book Purchasing Information:

Collaboration For Kids - Early - Intervention Tools for Schools and Communities (book)
Heather W. Conway, Ed. D. (author) aha! Process, Inc. (publisher) www.ahaprocess.com
ISBN- 13-978--929229-71-0
\$18.00 (price)

McREL: Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning

Poplar School District

- Brought to school to improve classroom instruction methods and strategies
- Workshops conducted for teachers and classrooms regulated frequently

Funding:

- Title 1 funding: \$100,000
- Received grant that paid for McREL staff to help with the following:
 - Classroom instruction and training for teachers
 - Monitoring of program (power-walk through program that involves principal checking classrooms regularly)

Results:

- Principals conduct 15 classroom checks a week >> give teachers feedback
- Teachers are supposed to have an objective >> now most teachers have them, students understand what they are learning better (interviewed students)
- Reading and math scores increased
- Saturday workshops for teachers to learn about Indian culture and how to integrate it into lessons

Suggestions:

- Program needs to be research based – collaboration/discussion between administration and teachers on what would fit best for that school
- Training teachers to feel comfortable

Contact:

Charles Cook

Poplar School District - MT

cookc@poplar.k12.mt.us

406-768-3409

Reading First Program – Under NCLB

Wagner School District and Fremont County School District

- Federally approved program
- Intent: To increase test scores and strengthen the reading program
- 90 minute general reading block, and 30 minute intervention groups for specific needs after
- Teachers are given detailed description of what to do
- Intensive coaching 115 days of coaching on site
- Mass Re-reading
- Originally K-3 and pushed it through 8th grade; school is given this flexibility

Funding:

- \$241,000 through Title 1, Title 2, and some 6(b)
- Program started exclusively through reading first grant; received 2 years ago
- Title 3 program federally funded- LEP students ELL
- Reading coach needs to be paid
 - provides 1 on 1 support for each teacher
 - Reading coach conducts training/professional development for teachers

Suggestions:

- Increasing students' native language skills can increase English language skills
- Bring in native speakers to work with children from K+
- Make sure the entire school is on the same page
- don't hire someone who is "too nice", highly trained; on-site coaching
- Strict coaching for teachers
- Have to keep program/language consistent for all grades
- Bring coaches back to regulate the program and methods
- Research methods to see what is best for your school district

Contacts:

Susan Smit

Wagner School District – South Dakota (6 years with program)

Susan.Smit@k12.sd.us

605-384-5469

Barney LaCock

Fremont County School District – Wyoming (2 years with program)

blacock@fremont38.k12.wy.us

307-856-9333

Pre-school program: 4 year old-Kindergarten program***Lac du Flambeau School District*****Est. since 2001 in district**

- Precursor to Kindergarten
- Includes: math, science, social studies, reading, English
- Electives/specials: art, physical education, developmental guidance, music, native American language and culture class
- 1 certified teacher and 1 teaching aid in every class room
- try to keep classrooms at 15 students
- Advertise in advance for program in community newspaper
- Hold an open house for interested parents to learn more

Costs:

- Regular salaries for teachers
- 4-K students count as .6 in terms of funding levels, therefore some money is given to them

Results:

- Increases reading levels, math levels
- Familiarizes students with school settings and operations
- Gets students excited to come to school and learn
- Reduces special education referrals/ Title 1 program referrals
- **Helps with eliminating the achievement gap: Helps students get ahead!**
- Horton Mifflin Pre-K curriculum allows both academic and social learning
- Culture incorporated into curriculum

Suggestions:

- Look at national early childhood learning standards in your state
- Hire certified teachers

Contact:

Larry Ouimette
Lac du Flambeau School District, Wisconsin
715-588-3838
louimett@ldf.k12.wi.us

School-Community Ideas:***Mary Fay Pendleton School***

Big Brothers/Sisters: one on one mentoring for kids

Operation Hero: provided by Camp Pendleton YMCA, one teacher to 8 kids for 8 weeks mentoring, tutoring, organizational skills, teacher provided by the Y so no cost involved

Family nights: dinners provided by different foundations, Friday nights, no cost to us, help provided by volunteers

Father-Daughter and Mother-Son Dances: held at Christmas time for dads and Valentine's Day for moms. Great activity to support families, free

Results:

- support not only for the children but also their families
- connection between parents and schools is formed
 - leads to student achievement
 - parents feel more open with school district

Contact: Lynne Gilstrap
Mary Fay Pendleton School
lgilstrap@fuesd.k12.ca.us

Multiple Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS)

MTSS in Kansas and RTI in the rest of the World

Geary County Unified Schools

Objective/Method:

- Because of vastly changed lifestyles in the military, many families wanted more of a recreational afterschool format with some homework assistance. They wanted their students to begin to learn the socialization skills.
- Reformatted our school day in all schools and began to offer the three tiered system of MTSS
- Begin by evaluating base curriculum (80% of all students should be successful with the regular curriculum)
- Once areas to strengthen in the base were identified, the next two tiers were added. The second tier is designed for about 15% of students.
 - These are students who need more support than the 80%.
- They attend specialized courses in reading and math that provide smaller classes, more interaction. They may also attend any program such as before, lunch and after school tutoring. These programs and those that are incorporated in to the day schedule provide small group (10-12) tutoring and other support.
- The third tier is the one that receives the greatest benefits.
 - During Tier 3, students are gathered in groups of no more than 3 students and provided intense tutoring. These groups may only meet 3 times per week depending on the schedule at the school. Students have the benefit of almost one on one help.

Funding:

- The program costs our district \$300,000 per year. It is district wide and involves over 60% of my core teachers.
- Program paid for through general fund

Results/Suggestions:

- The intense tutoring and support at Tier 2 and Tier 3 is very effective
- Research prior to implementing program (can take up to one year)
- Invite “experts” into the district to assist in developing a program that would be unique for your school without compromising the original model.
- Planning with expect can take up to one year, best results when many partners are involved
- The amount of money you spend on the program will vary

Contact: Ronald Walker

Geary County Unified Schools, KS

785-717-4007

ronwalker@usd475.org