



Ohio Schools of Promise

Framework of Practice





SOP Theme 1: Ohio Schools of Promise deliver rigorous instruction aligned to the State's academic content standards.

1.1 State Standards

School uses state standards to explicitly plan, design and evaluate curriculum and instruction and assess student work (Haycock, 1999)

- 1.1.1 School aligns the **curriculum** vertically and horizontally with State standards so that students are exposed to the material they are expected to answer on state assessments (Picucci, Brownson, Kahlert, and Sobel, 2002).
- 1.1.2 The school **effectively implements** schoolwide a common, core, standards-based curriculum that is coherent, consistent, increasingly complex and challenging across grade levels (Balfanz and Maclver, 2000; Balfanz, Maclver, and Ryan, 1999, Schmidt, 1998).
- 1.1.3 School creates a unified and common curriculum for the entire school, divides the curriculum into manageable components and aligns curriculum with **teaching materials and assessments** (Just for the Kids, n.d.).
- 1.1.4 Standards are **highly visible** throughout the school and in every class with examples of exemplary and proficient student work displayed (Center for Performance Assessment, 2001).
- 1.1.5 School **incorporates all students**, including those who received special education and English as a Second Language services, in general education classes and provide them with the same content received by other students (Picucci, et. al, 2002).

1.2 School Focus

School focuses on student academic achievement as the highest priority or the mission of the School.

- 1.2.1 School's focus is on **attainment of rigorous standards**. School displays samples of proficient work and communicates the standards to staff and students alike (Reeves, 2000).
- 1.2.2 Principal uses **measurable goals** to establish a culture of achievement. High levels of student proficiency are expected, communicated and pursued (Carter, 2000).
- 1.2.3 School sets **measurable and high goals for all students**. School views special education as a means to fully integrate students with disabilities into the general

education program. Students are provided every means of support and assistance they need. Educators view placement in special education as a temporary rather than permanent placement (Council of Chief School Officers (CCSSO), 2002).

- 1.2.4 School's focus is on **early intervention** to bring students to grade level by first grade. (CCSSO) 2002).
- 1.2.5 School **rewards students and teachers** for commitment to high expectations by recognizing their efforts and embedding this recognition in the daily practices of the school. (Picucci, et. al., 2002).

1.3 Instructional Coherence

School promotes instructional coherence or an instructional framework that specifies and aligns the content, tools, methods of teaching and assessment, and the expectations and climate for learning both vertically across grades and horizontally within grades (Newman, Smith, Allensworth, and Bryk, 2001).

- 1.3.1 School develops **grade-by-grade standards** that help identify instructional priorities and clearly define what teachers should be teaching. (Just for the Kids, n.d.). School **coordinates grade level** curriculum, instructional strategies and assessments of students among teachers (Newman, et. al, 2001). Teachers within a grade use common instructional strategies and assessments (Newman, et. al, 2001).
- 1.3.2 Principals and staff **plan and align instruction** to standards and assessments and ensure students learning of State and district standards (Johnson and Asera, 1999). School principal and teachers, above and below current grade levels, know exactly what is to be taught and learned at each grade level and in each subject. (National Center for Education Accountability (NCEA), 2002).
- 1.3.3 Curriculum and assessments of students **proceed logically** from one grade level to the next and offer a progression of increasingly complex subject matter rather than repeating rudimentary material previously taught (Newman, et. al, 2001).
- 1.3.4 School **extends instructional time** in reading and mathematics to help students meet standards (Haycock, 1999).
- 1.3.5 Teacher **grading and evaluation of student work** is based on the achievement of a standard and not a comparison to the work of other students (Center for Performance Assessment, 2001).



1.4 Assessments and Data-driven Decision Making

District and school personnel are actively involved in gathering, analyzing, displaying and using student achievement data.

- 1.4.1 School **uses data to identify areas of weakness** in school performance by disaggregating data by grade level, subject area, learning strand, gender, ethnicity, income levels and disability (Picucci, et. al, 2002).
- 1.4.2 School **displays** visible charts, tables, and graphs that represent student achievement in the hallway or other public places where students, teachers, parents and the public can see school effort toward student achievement (Center for Performance Assessment, 2001).
- 1.4.3 If any student fails to make sufficient progress, administrators meet with teachers to assist in developing an **intervention strategy**. Administrators and teachers use assessment data to identify students in need of tutoring, small-group instruction and other support. (CCSSO, 2002)
- 1.4.4 School **continuously assesses student progress** and intervenes immediately when students or teachers are struggling.
 - School carefully chooses tests and classroom assessments (Just for the Kids, n.d.);
 - School checks student progress in core curriculum areas daily, weekly and monthly (Just for the Kids, n.d.);
 - Teachers use multiple informal and formal assessments to assess individual student learning of State standards (Just for the Kids, n.d.);
 - Kindergarten through second-grade teachers administer diagnostic reading inventories (Just for the Kids, n.d.);
 - Principal, teachers and instructional specialists discuss the results of student assessment and progress of individual students (Just for the Kids, n.d.);
 - School sets instructional targets for all students (Just for the Kids, n.d.).



SOP Theme 2: Ohio Schools of Promise provide leadership that leads to the continuous improvement of the school

2.1 Common Vision

School staff develops and maintains a common purpose for the organization that is rooted in a deep understanding of the strengths and needs of their students (Lab and RMC Research, 2000).

- 2.1.1. Principal fosters **shared beliefs** and a sense of community and school (Waters, Marzano, and McNulty 2003)
- 2.1.2. Principal establishes **clear goals** and keeps those goals in the forefront of the school's attention (Waters, et. al., 2003).
- 2.1.3. Principal sets high and unyielding academic goals and **accountability** from staff and students for their attainment is expected. Principal uses measurable goals to establish a culture of achievement where excellence and high levels of proficiency are pursued (Carter, 2000).

2.2 Educational Leadership

School administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students (Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards, Council of Chief State Schools Officers (CCSSO), 1996).

- 2.2.1. Principal provides **instructional leadership** and support to ensure the strong learning opportunities and motivation exist in every class in the school (Balfanz and Maclver, 2000; Knapp, Shields, and Padilla, 1995; Waters et. al., 2003). Principal spends most of the time observing and conferring with teachers, monitoring teacher performance and student achievement, researching potential programs and teaching demonstration lessons (Just for the Kids, n.d.).
- 2.2.2. Principal establishes **management** practices that incorporates a set of standard operating procedures and routines that protect teachers from issues and influences that would detract from their teaching time or focus (Waters, et. al., 2003; CCSSO, 2002).
- 2.2.3. Principal builds strong lines of **communication** with teachers and among students. Principal communicates and operates from strong ideas and beliefs about schooling advocating on behalf of the school to all stakeholders (Waters, et. al., 2003).
- 2.2.4. Principal develops **relationships** that involve quality contact and interactions with teachers and students. Principal demonstrates an awareness of the personal aspects of teachers and staff. Principal recognizes and rewards individual and whole school accomplishments and acknowledges failures together (Waters, et. al., 2003).

- 2.2.5. Principal inspires and leads **new and challenging innovations**, which actively challenge the status quo. Principal adapts his/her leadership behavior, including professional development, to meet the needs of current situations. Principal is comfortable with the dynamics of change and uses data to address undercurrents and/or potential problems he/she may encounter. Principal is continually monitoring the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on student learning (Waters, et. al., 2003; National Partnership for Excellence and Accountability in Teaching (NPEAT)).
- 2.2.6. Principal facilitates the **involvement of parents** helping them to make the home a center of learning (Carter, 2000).

2.3 Participatory Decision Making

School increases the number of groups that are empowered to make and implement decisions that can multiply the opportunities for identifying and applying practices that are effective for students (Lab and RMC Research, 2000).

- 2.3.1 Principal involves teachers in the design and implementation of important decisions and policies (Waters, et. al., 2003). **All key stakeholders** engage in forums where they can give input regarding programs and policies and are kept informed of progress and problems (Johnson, Lein, and Raglan, 1997) and for influencing the school's reform efforts (Balfanz and Maclver, 2000; Mizell, 1994; Bryk, Kerbow, and Rollow, 1997).
- 2.3.2 School leader creates a **collective sense of responsibility** for improvement through joint planning and involvement (Johnson and Asera, 1999).
- 2.3.3 Master teacher provides **leadership to peers** by leading peer evaluations, team teaching, and formative assessments (Carter, 2000). Building administrators, instructional specialists, and master teachers also give faculty members constant and immediate feedback on new teaching strategies and their effect on student performance and also issues related to classroom management (Just for the Kids, n.d.).
- 2.3.4 Teachers identify their own **professional training needs** and participate in the development of the learning experiences in which they will be involved (NPEAT).

2.4 Continuous Learning

Teachers participate in sustained, focused and curriculum-specific staff development that shows them how to successfully use new and more demanding curriculum materials; enables them to learn effective instructional strategies and provides them with content knowledge they need (Research Advisory Committee, 1998; Cohen, Wilson, and Hill, 1997; Chubb, 1997; Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin, 1995).

- 2.4.1 Principal ensures that staff is aware of the most current **theories and practices** and makes the discussion of these a regular aspect of the school's culture (Waters, et. al., 2003).
- 2.4.2 By **piloting new strategies and structures** on a small scale, staff bring new ideas and energy into the school, exercise their skills as decision makers and refine the collective understanding of objectives for continually improving practice (Lab and RMC Research, 2000).
- 2.4.3 Professional development is primarily **school-based and built into the day-to-day work of teaching** (NPEAT). Teachers receive continuous and ongoing in-class implementation support (e.g., modeling, peer coaching, troubleshooting, collaborative problem solving and help getting the materials they need) from external sources as well as from respected and able peers in a non-evaluatory setting (Knapp, Shields, and Turnbull, 1995).
- 2.4.4 School provides professional development that helps staff recognize the **advantages of school, family and community connections** (Henderson and Mapp, SEDL, 2002).
- 2.4.5 Planning for professional development incorporates the analysis and evaluation of the **differences between actual student performance and** (a) the goals and **standards** of learning and (b) the **instruction and other processes** that are involved in implementing the lessons learned through professional development (NPEAT).



SOP Theme 3: Ohio Schools of Promise design instruction to ensure every student's success.

3.1 Beliefs

Educators believe that they can succeed with any student regardless of the nature of the home situation, the student's previous performance or diagnosis, resource difficulties and whatever other constraints might confront the school (Lewis, 2001).

- 3.1.1. School that establishes **high expectations** for all students – and provides the support necessary to achieve these expectations – has high rates of academic success (Brook et al., 1989; Edmonds, 1986; Howard, 1990; Levin, 1988; Rutter, et al., 1979; Slavin, et al., 1989).
- 3.1.2. The school's focus is on the **academic success of every student and the school** articulates this in all aspects of planning, organization and use of resources (Johnson, Lein, and Ragland, 1997). School focuses energies on helping students learn and succeed rather than handling conflicts or serving the needs of adults (Johnson and Asera, 1999).
- 3.1.3. School has **no excuses** for academic failure of any student and staff will do whatever it takes to ensure success (Johnson, Lein, and Ragland, 1997).
- 3.1.4. All teachers in the school are expected to meet the **rigorous demands** of instructional programs (Just for the Kids, n.d.).
- 3.1.5. School staff believes that the **creative use of resources** and **multiple intervention strategies** are necessary to address issues impacting learning. Staff works together to ensure students receive the additional help they need (Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), 2002).

3.2 Innovative Methods and Practices

School experiments carefully with new ways to improve teaching and learning (Lewis, 2001).

- 3.2.1 **School allows, encourages and expects grade level teams** or site teams to try a variety of approaches to stimulate students' academic achievement (Johnson, Lein, and Ragland, 1997).
- 3.2.2 School selects and develops resources and programs based on scientific evidence and the specific **needs of learners** (National Center for Educational Accountability 2003).



- 3.2.3 Promising **practices, informed by empirical research**, drive the selection of programs and strategies (Just for the Kids, n.d.).
- 3.2.4 School gives teachers the **materials, training and support** they need to meet school wide goals (Just for the Kids, n.d.).
- 3.2.5 Teachers have support and some freedom to **customize** and localize the organization of teaching, instruction and curriculum (Clark and Clark, 1997; National Foundation for the Improvement of Education, 1996; Lampert and Eshelman, 1995; Little, 1993; LeMahieu and Sterling, 1991).
- 3.2.6 Teachers receive **continual feedback** on how their students are doing (Palmaffy, 1998) and on their strengths and weaknesses of different instructional approaches (Saphier and Gower, 1997).

3.3 Informed Instruction

School implements a “no-failure policy” that ensures struggling students are identified early and receive supports, such as additional tutoring to help them succeed (Picucci, Brownson, Kahlert, and Sobel, 2002).

- 3.3.1 School offers students **multiple opportunities for improvement** following weekly assignments of student progress (Reeves, 2000).
- 3.3.2 Teachers provide **immediate feedback and intervention** for students based on daily, weekly, or monthly reviews of student progress (Just for the Kids, n.d.).
- 3.3.3 School effectively **uses assessment data** to support student success. District and school administrators are actively involved in gathering, analyzing, and using student achievement data. Data are often analyzed by student, teacher, and grade level. If any student fails to make sufficient progress, administrators meet with teachers to assist in developing an intervention strategy. Administrators and teachers use assessment data to identify students in need of tutoring, small-group instruction, and other support (CCSSO, 2002).
- 3.3.4 School **regroups students for instruction** as they progress or experience difficulty. (Just for the Kids, n.d.).

3.4 Diverse Learner Needs

School focuses on each child's strengths, regardless of whether the child is disabled, has a primary language other than English or is from an ethnic-minority group, to develop effective instruction (Sanchez, Li, and Nuttall, 1995).

- 3.4.1 School incorporates all students, including those who receive special education and English-as-a-Second-Language services, in general education classes and provides them with the **same content** received by other students (Picucci, et. al., 2002).
- 3.4.2 School provides specific personnel and programs to students who are struggling including **tutorial assistance** during the school day and extended day or extended year programs. (Just for the Kids, n.d.).
- 3.4.3 School has systems for identifying interventions before diagnostic testing. School staff considers **special education referrals as the last resort**. Formal pre-referral teams are employed to ensure that all alternatives are explored before a student is referred for special education diagnostic testing (CCSSO, 2002).
- 3.4.4 School defines special education as the path to success in the general education program and school staff shares the view of special education as a means to **fully integrate students with disabilities** into the general education program. Students are provided every means of support and assistance they need. Educators view special education as a temporary placement. (CCSSO, 2002).
- 3.4.5 School uses **instructional strategies** that maximize teaching for meaning, motivation to learn and peer support for learning (Balfanz and Maclver, 2000; Knapp, 1995, Maclver, Plank, and Balfanz, 1997; Harris, Graham, and Deshler, 1998).

3.5 Resources and School Organization

School staff have the skills and confidence to act as wise consumers and managers of resources, paying close attention to the ways existing resources are deployed to maximize effectiveness for students, constantly scouting new opportunities, and resisting distractions that would interfere with the mission (Lab and RMC Research, 2000).

- 3.5.1 Students spend more **time on core subjects** (Reeves, 2000).
- 3.5.2 School restructures school day or school year to give teachers extra time for professional development, planning together, discussing student progress and reflecting on best practices. **Time** is structured to ensure daily and weekly collaboration around instructional issues (Johnson and Asera, 1999; Just for the Kids, n.d.).



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- 3.5.3 Staff use **structural changes** as a source of energy to catalyze reforms in how the school functions and to open up new ways of looking at students and their potential (Lab and RMC Research, 2000).
- 3.5.4 Principal visibly supports the school-wide commitment to help students become proficient and **reorganizes the schools' resources** (time, people and money) to enable that effort (Balfanz and Maclver, 2000; Mizell, 1994; Wohlstetter, Mohrman, and Robertson, 1997).
- 3.5.5 School administrator is free to use the **financial and curricular resources** to run the school and to influence implementation strategies (Carter, 2000; Corbett, Dawson, and Firestone, 1984). Administrator ensures that resource allocation decisions support high quality instruction (CCSSO, 2002).

SOP Theme 4: Ohio Schools of Promise engage parents and the community to support student success.

4.1 School Philosophy on Parent and Community Involvement

School recognizes that all parents (regardless of income, education level or cultural background) are involved in their children's learning and want their children to do well in school (Henderson and Mapp, SEDL, 2002).

- 4.1.1** School proceeds on the **assumption that families can help** improve their children's performance in school and influence other key outcomes that affect achievement (Henderson and Mapp, SEDL, 2002). School refrains at all times from blaming families for their children's low achievement and never assumes that families do not care about their children (Henderson and Mapp, SEDL, 2002).
- 4.1.2** School embraces a **philosophy of partnership** with families and is willing to share power with families. School makes sure that parents, school staff and community members understand the responsibility for children's educational development is a collaborative enterprise (Henderson and Mapp, SEDL, 2002).
- 4.1.3** School adopts a philosophy that family and community engagement is a key component of the whole **school improvement** plan (Henderson and Mapp, SEDL, 2002).
- 4.1.4** School **staff believe they can learn from families** about their expectations for their children's education. (Henderson and Mapp, SEDL, 2002).

4.2 Parents' Roles in Student Learning

School creates programs that support families in guiding their children's learning (Henderson and Mapp, SEDL, 2002).

- 4.2.1** School **communicates expectations** for students in each subject at each grade level (National PTA's National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement programs, 1997). School includes strategies to help parents improve their knowledge of State standards and their understanding of student work (Haycock, 1999).
- 4.2.2** School **provides workshops** on topics parents suggest and discussion groups on children's learning (Henderson and Mapp, SEDL, 2002).
- 4.2.3** School works actively with parents to make the **home a center of learning** so the mission of the school is extended into the home (Carter, 2000). School develops or adopts programs to engage parents in working with their children to develop specific

skills (e.g., demonstrations for parents, advice on how to use materials, helps parents assess children's progress and next steps or lending materials) (Henderson and Mapp, SEDL, 2002).

4.3 Family Communication and Engagement Practices

School focuses efforts on engaging families and community members in developing trusting and respectful relationships (Henderson and Mapp, SEDL, 2002)

- 4.3.1 **School welcomes and regards parents and families** as important members of the school and community (Johnson, Lein, and Ragland, 1997). School offers childcare, meals and transportation for major parent/family activities at school (Henderson and Mapp, SEDL, 2002).
- 4.3.2 School **disseminates information** on school reforms, policies, discipline procedures, assessments and school goals; school includes parents in any related decision-making processes (National PTA's National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs, 1997).
- 4.3.3 School staff are **respectful of cultural and class differences**, translates all communications with families into their home languages and provides interpreters at meetings (Henderson and Mapp, SEDL, 2002).
- 4.3.4 School asks families about the best times for them to attend events at school; and what kinds of events they would like to attend (Henderson and Mapp, SEDL, 2002). School adopts simple but effective practices of **teacher outreach** to families (e.g., making home visits, meeting face to face, sending materials on ways to help children at home, and telephoning routinely and when a child is having problems (Henderson and Mapp, SEDL, 2002).
- 4.3.5 School **provides staff resources and time** to create programs that invite and welcome parents and community members, honors the contributions of families and community and connects families and community members to learning goals for children (Henderson and Mapp, SEDL, 2002).

4.4 Partnerships with Community Organizations

School builds strong connections with community organizations (Henderson and Mapp, SEDL, 2002).

- 4.4.1 **School works with community organizations** to offer programs that encourage reading, writing and studying during evenings, weekends and summer (Henderson and Mapp, SEDL, 2002).
- 4.4.2 **School collaborates with community organizations** that want to improve the school (Henderson and Mapp, SEDL, 2002).
- 4.4.3 **School works with local after-school programs** to link their content to what students are learning in class (Henderson and Mapp, SEDL, 2002).



SOP Theme 5: Ohio Schools of Promise create a culture where each individual feels valued.

5.1 The Ecology of the School

Elements of the ecology of the school (i.e., the physical, material and inorganic) are adjusted in order to impact school improvement efforts (Boyd, 1992).

- 5.1.1 School provides adequate allocation of school **resources** including time and funding to influence implementation strategies (Corbett, Dawson, and Firestone, 1984).
- 5.1.2 School adjusts its physical **structures** including arrangements, scheduling, school and class sizes to facilitate school improvement (Louis and Miles, 1990).
- 5.1.3 School adopts and implements new policies to address the impact of student **demographic changes** (Fullan, 1991).
- 5.1.4 School adopts **policies and procedures** that give teachers more autonomy from direct external control and increases their ability to construct programs that meet the needs of their students (Chubb and Moe, 1990; Wehlage et. al, 1989).

5.2.1 Attitudes and Beliefs

The attitudes and beliefs of persons in the school shape a positive learning culture (Boyd, 1992).

- 5.2.1 School staff commits to putting the needs of children before all others. They focus on **individual student needs** and encourage students to become involved in extracurricular activities. (Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), 2002). Every student's potential is identified and developed through individualized assessments, appropriate placements, and ongoing encouragement from school staff (Schwartz, 2001).
- 5.2.2 School staff recognizes **diverse cultures** as components of the mainstream and establishes a balance between students' native ways of communicating, learning and behaving and the need for them to be educated, contribute positively to the school environment and develop skills for professional and social success in adulthood (Schwartz, 2001). Teachers demonstrate and articulate respect for all students as individuals and for their cultural differences and show this respect not only at school, but elsewhere in the community (Fort Worth Quality Review Project, 2001).
- 5.2.3 Each student understands what they need to do to reach his or her potential and to realize their **educational, occupational and life aspirations** (Balfanz and Maclver, 2000; Maclver and Plank, 1997a).

- 5.2.4 Each educator demands **high expectations** and encourages students to prepare for higher education. Educators believe they could succeed with any student regardless of the nature of the home situation, the student's previous performance or diagnosis, resource difficulties and whatever other constraints might confront the school (Lewis, 2001; Schwartz, 2001).

5.3 Relationships

Relationships between persons and groups of persons are part of the school culture and can facilitate improvement efforts (Boyd, 1992).

- 5.3.1 School develops **strong and supportive student teacher bonds** (Wenglinsky, 1997). School develops well-managed classes (Balfanz and Maclver, 2000, Corbett and Wilson, 1997).
- 5.3.2 School creates a **sense of family**. Respect for all students is obvious. Discipline measures are fair, consistent, quick and demonstrate respect for the student. (Lewis, 2001).
- 5.3.3 The atmosphere of the school is **cordial and friendly**. Students cite the school atmosphere as a strength. Students interact appropriately with each other (Fort Worth Quality Review Project, 2001).
- 5.3.4 School develops **collaborative work cultures** among teachers that raises morale, enthusiasm and the teachers' sense of efficacy. As a result, teachers are more receptive to new ideas (Fullan, 1991; Simpson, 1990; Smith and Scott, 1990).

5.4 School Norms

School develops and manipulates norms over time. School norms are influenced by the attitudes and beliefs of those inside and outside the school (Patterson, Purkey and Parker, 1986).

- 5.4.1 School staff demonstrates and articulates that they possess a **shared set of values**, beliefs, and attitudes related to teaching and learning (Fort Worth Quality Review Project, 2001).
- 5.4.2 School maintains a **safe and orderly environment** where staff and students demonstrate respect for each other and are free of fear; and where the code of conduct is well publicized, fair and uniformly enforced (Schwartz, 2001). Students can articulate and help to develop the standards of behavior they are expected to meet and behave accordingly (Fort Worth Quality Review Project, 2001).



- 5.4.3 The school **publicly recognizes** teachers and students for their achievements. Teachers and students are regularly apprised of other opportunities for achievement and recognition (Fort Worth Quality Review Project, 2001).
- 5.4.4 Each student shows exceptional **pride** in his or her school. Evidence includes not only a clean building and grounds but also symbols of pride and spirit posted on walls or worn by students (Fort Worth Quality Review Project, 2001).