

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS
PEORIA DIVISION**

SA'DA AND TYJUAN JOHNSON,	)	
minors, by their parent and next friend	)	
FELICIA JOHNSON, et al.,	)	
	)	
Plaintiffs,	)	
	)	Case No. 00-1349
v.	)	
	)	Chief Judge Joe B. McDade
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF	)	
CHAMPAIGN COMMUNITY	)	Magistrate John Gorman
UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #4,	)	
	)	
Defendant.	)	

DEFENDANT'S NOTICE OF 2008 ACCELERATION PLAN

Defendant Board of Education of Champaign Community Unit School District #4, by their attorneys Franczek Radelet & Rose, P.C., submits the School District's 2008 Acceleration Plan. The School District states the following in support:

1. On September 3, 2008, the Court ordered the School District to submit its plan for accelerating progress in the areas of concern identified at the hearing by Court Monitor Dr. Robert Peterkin. The Court confirmed that the School District should submit the plan ordered on September 3, 2008 in an Order entered on October 2, 2008.

2. Accordingly, the School District files the attached 2008 Acceleration Plan. The 2008 Acceleration Plan documents the School District's plan to accelerate progress in the following areas identified by Dr. Peterkin: High School achievement, discipline, and attendance and graduation rates; and Special Education.

3. In addition, Dr. Peterkin identified that the District should address during the 2008-2009 school year its obligation to provide two elementary strands in North Champaign,

conditioned on good faith efforts to obtain funding, and that it should conduct a second climate study. The School District provides the following updates regarding its Northside Seats initiative and plans to conduct a second climate study:

a. During the 2007-2008 school year, a Northside Seats Committee consisting of District and Plaintiff representatives was established and met regularly to address the Consent Decree requirement to add two elementary strands in north Champaign. The Committee reached a unanimous recommendation in August 2008 that the Board of Education adopted at its September 15, 2008 meeting. The recommendation is to rebuild Booker T. Washington Elementary School as a three-strand school and to add a new strand to Garden Hills Elementary School. The School District continues to make every good faith effort to find and obtain necessary funding for the addition of the two strands. A funding referendum is currently on the ballot for approval during the November 4, 2008 election; if the referendum passes, the District has designated use of those funds to address its Northside Seats commitment.

b. The District has taken several steps toward conducting a second climate study. The District first sought proposals to conduct the climate study, and has received three responses. The School District has proposed that an Ad Hoc Committee be established to review the proposals, interview the respondents and provide comment on the design of the study. The School District has invited Plaintiffs' counsel and a Plaintiffs' representative to serve on the Ad Hoc Committee. The committee will also include District representatives and counsel, and Union representatives.

Respectfully Submitted,

CHAMPAIGN COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL
DISTRICT #4

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Dated: November 3, 2008

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned attorney hereby certifies that she electronically filed the foregoing **DEFENDANT'S NOTICE OF 2008 ACCELERATION PLAN** with the Clerk of the Court using the CM/ECF system which will send notification of such filing to the following on this 3rd day of November, 2008:

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High School Achievement Acceleration Plan

High School Achievement Goals

- Accelerate learning by all students, but especially African-American students.
- Decrease the achievement gap between African-American and non-African-American students as measured by grade distributions, Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) scores and graduation rate.

Targets

- Increase the number of African-American students receiving A's, B's, and C's, while simultaneously decreasing the number of African-American students receiving D's and F's as measured by grade distributions.
- Increase the number of interventions and the number of students participating in interventions for PSAE.
- Increase the completion percentage of quarterly assessments to ensure that 11th grade students complete quarterly assessments.
- Monitor grades of 12th grade students to ensure students remain on track to graduate or are placed in credit recovery when needed.

Summary of Approach toward High School Improvement Goals

In order to improve academic achievement at the high school we must increase focus on accountability measures. Everyone must be expected to focus his/her effort and attention on student learning and must be held responsible and accountable for student learning. The expectation is that students will make progress, student performance will increase over time, and value will be added to student learning during the course of a year. It is expected that when students are having difficulty, interventions occur that are strategic, specific to the identified area of need, and timely. These interventions should result in measurable growth. A mechanism for measuring the effectiveness of the intervention will be implemented so that judgment can be made about the appropriateness of the intervention. Interventions that result in high yields in learning according to research will be implemented.

Acceleration Plan Action Items, Outcomes, and Timelines

Our goal is to accelerate student learning of all students, but especially African-American students. Student learning will be measured by grade distribution (GD), PSAE results (results on ACT and Work Keys), and graduation rates.

To accelerate growth in each area we must implement the following intervention action items:

1. Identify students' GD, PSAE, and graduation rate. Identify the students progressing as expected and the students not progressing as expected. Identify the students receiving Special Education services.
2. Set specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely (SMART) goals in each area.
3. Monitor the progress of students and involve teachers and students in monitoring their own progress.
4. Establish a Strategic Acceleration Team to analyze results and identify areas, opportunities and strategies to accelerate learning for strategically identified groups.

5. Evaluate results on a regular basis to identify students who are not progressing, teachers who are in need of assistance, or curriculum issues that need to be addressed.
6. Design and implement campus, grade, department, course, and student interventions to address needs of identified groups of students and teachers.
7. Monitor attendance in, participation in, and effectiveness of interventions on improving student learning for identified groups.
8. Administer short-term, formative, periodic evaluation of student performance and progress relative to GD, PSAE and graduation rates.
9. Evaluate participation rate in periodic evaluation, actual grade distribution, progress on assessment standards, and graduation progression.

Action Item 1: Achievement Monitoring

Identify students' GD, PSAE, and graduation rate. Identify the students progressing as expected and the students not progressing as expected. Identify the students receiving Special Education services.

Implementation Timeline

The identification of targeted students will occur during the first two weeks of the each quarter. The target groups will be reevaluated on a regular basis as new information is received from assessments and observations. Principal monitoring sheets must be updated as new students exhibit the need for interventions.

Item Description

- *Grade Distribution*

In order to accelerate learning, the current level of learning must be identified. The first measurement of learning we will use is the course grade distribution. The grade distribution represents the grades students are earning in their current classes and the distributions of A's, B's, C's, D's, and F's. On a weekly basis a C-D-F watch list is produced. This list identifies the students who have received a C, D, or F and the reporting teacher for that student. A general campus summary will be provided by the principal. The general campus summary below is a good example of the weekly campus summary.

For all students:

There are x out of y students with at least one low C, D, and/or F.

There are x out of y students with at least one F.

Targeted Subgroups:

There are x African-American students with at least one low C, D, and/or F.

There are x African-American students with at least one F.

There are x African-American students in honors/AP-level classes with at least one low C, D, and/or F.

There are x African-American students in honors/AP-level classes with at least one F.

There are x African-American junior students in honors/AP-level classes with at least one low C, D, and/or F.

There are x African-American junior students in honors/AP-level classes with at least one F.

There are x African-American students eligible for special education services with at least one low C, D, and/or F.

There are x African-American students eligible for special education services with at least one F.

The general campus summary will be distributed to staff so that they can reflect on student performance, interventions used in the classroom, and rationale for grades. The weekly list will be reviewed by administrators to identify early patterns of student, teacher or curriculum issues that may need more attention. The information from the weekly C-D-F list will also be used to schedule walkthroughs so that additional support and interventions can be provided if needed.

- *PSAE*

In order to accelerate performance and make adequate yearly progress, it is imperative that additional attention be placed on assessment standards for PSAE. The current 11th grade students participated in a practice PSAE as 10th grade students, and their scores have been placed on the principal monitoring sheet. All students will be engaged in PSAE intervention initiatives. The level of intervention needed will be determined throughout the year. In November, a second practice PSAE will be administered to confirm the identity of those students who are most in need of intensive intervention in preparation for PSAE.

- *Graduation Rate*

The graduation rate will be measured based on the number of students who enrolled in August 2008 as 12th grade students compared to the number of students who graduate in May 2009. Identification of students who are in jeopardy of not graduating will occur at the beginning of each quarter. Counselors will identify students based on their credit acquisition and actual grades received. Once the initial list is developed, students' schedules will be modified in order to enroll students in the appropriate credit recovery classes to regain credit and get on track to graduate. Principals will monitor students via the grade distribution C-D-F list and principal monitoring sheets.

Expected Outcome

Principal monitoring systems include the identification of students who are in need of additional attention due to prior year's PSAE benchmarks and course grades. Students receiving special education services will have been identified and ensured they are receiving the appropriate level of services. A list of seniors who are not on track to graduate will have been produced. The AP/Honors Task Force will monitor grade distributions and electronic reporting of interventions. The intensive monitoring and focus on interventions will make the monitoring of grades and implementation of interventions more effective and efficient, accelerate learning and increase student grades.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

Principals, Counselors, Director of Secondary Curriculum and Professional Development, Director of Information and Instructional Technology, and Director of Special Education

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Principal, Director of Secondary Curriculum and Professional Development, and Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Person Accountable for Results:

Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Action Item 2: SMART Goals

Set specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely (SMART) goals in Grade Distribution, PSAE and Graduation Rate.

Implementation Timeline

SMART Goals will be set during the second quarter in the areas of grade distribution, PSAE and graduation rate. As assessments are administered, SMART Goals are reevaluated.

Item Description

- *Grade Distribution*

SMART Goals must be established in math, science, social science, English, and AVID. The goal for the overall campus will be that the most common grade for African-American student as measured by end of quarter grades will be an A, B, or C. In AVID, the goal will be that the most common grade for African-American students be an "A" or "B." Actual results will be compared to these goals to determine if additional classroom or curricular interventions are needed. Using prior years' data to identify trends will be helpful in communicating goals and rationales for changes.

- *PSAE*

The PSAE is a combination of the ACT test and the Work Keys exam taken by 11th grade students. SMART Goals will be set in the areas of reading and math to make adequate yearly progress by meeting the safe harbor standard of 10% improvement over last year's score. The assessment standard that is assigned to each quarter or grading period on the map will be assessed during that period. The measurement of the assessment standard will be short and feedback will be quick. A system to measure a standard or group of standards per month will be established and a goal for performance will be set. The Strategic Action Team will develop the strategies to implement this activity.

- *Graduation Rate*

SMART Goals will be set to increase the graduation rate for all students. The graduation rate measures how many students who start a school year as 12th grade students complete the requirements for graduation. The percentage of students on track to graduate will be monitored on a quarterly basis and compared to the SMART Goals. Credit recovery options will be available to students not on track to graduate.

Expected Outcome

In each area mentioned above SMART Goals will be set so that all will have tangible targets toward which to work and measure progress. The targeted goals must be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

Director of Secondary Curriculum and Professional Development, Principals, Director of Special Education

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Principals, Strategic Action Team, and Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Person Accountable for Results:

Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Action Item 3: Engagement

Monitor the progress of students and involve teachers and students in monitoring of their own progress.

Implementation Timeline

Student progress will be monitored on a weekly basis through the C-D-F list. On a quarterly basis, student performance on quarterly assessments will be monitored to determine intervention needs. Student progress toward graduation will be monitored at the beginning of each quarter.

Item Description

In order to ensure that acceleration is occurring, we will monitor student progress toward SMART Goals in the area of GD, PSAE preparedness and graduation rates. It is imperative that teachers and students play an active role in monitoring their individual progress. All stakeholders must take responsibility for the results and be held accountable for the improvement of the outcomes.

- *Grade Distribution*

In order to monitor grade distributions, a weekly watch list is produced with the names of students and their teachers' classes in which a grade of a C, D, or F was received. Once the list is produced, the following actions will occur:

- The watch list will be provided to teachers. Along with the watch list, the principal will provide a summary of the watch list broken down by targeted groups of students.
- Once the teacher receives the list he/she will review the list, the teacher will reflect on the performance of the students, make contact with students who are receiving "F's," and implement level 1 interventions for those students.
- The principal will review the watch list with administrators and discuss any correlations between achievement, attendance, and discipline.
- The principal will review data to identify trends or potential areas that need to be addressed through conferencing, staff development, and/or walk-throughs.
- The principal will ensure the specific action below is taken at the 4-week, 6-week, and 9-week marking period.

4-Week Check

- Every four weeks, the teacher will meet with the students in their class who received an F and will distribute the Student Academic Action Plan. The student will lose social privileges, such as off-campus lunch, participation and attendance at extracurricular activities, and club attendance, until grades have increased to passing or student is participating in assigned interventions. Completion of action plans will allow students to participate in social privileges. Deans are responsible for collecting Student Action Plans and clearing students from social probation.
- The principal will review the past three watch lists to look for students who have remained on the list for two or more weeks. The principal will assign teachers who give out a high number of F's to administrators and each administrator will meet with teachers to discuss the F's and determine what supports are needed for the students and teachers.
- A Student Advocate will be assigned to African-American students who appear on the list for two or more weeks. The Advocate will be responsible for checking in with the student and ensuring that he/she is taking advantage of the assigned interventions.
- Documentation will be requested from teachers concerning the interventions that have been implemented.
- If a student appears on the watch list for three weeks, the administrator assigned to the student will review the student's attendance, discipline and participation in the assigned intervention.
- A Strategic Acceleration Team meeting will be held to discuss the individual students who have been on the list for three or more weeks and evaluate the appropriateness of the interventions and consider additional options. The student, parent, and Student Advocate will be invited to participate in this meeting.

6-Week Check

- At the 6-week check, a meeting will be set up with the students who have remained on the F list for the last three weeks, their parents and Student Advocate.
- A Strategic Acceleration Team meeting will be held to discuss the individual students who have been on the list for three or more weeks and evaluate the appropriateness of the interventions and consider additional options. The student, parent and Student Advocate will be invited to participate in this meeting.

9-Week Check

- At the 9-week check, a meeting will be held by the principal with the administrators and teachers of students who have remained on the F list for three or more weeks.
- The administrator assigned to the students who have been on the list for three weeks will review interventions assigned, intensify interventions, or consider scheduling changes to place students in support classes.
- A Strategic Acceleration Team meeting will be held to discuss the individual students who have been on the F list for three or more weeks and evaluate the appropriateness of the interventions and consider additional options. The student, parent, and Student Advocate will be invited to participate in this meeting.

- *PSAE*

In order to ensure higher levels of learning as measured by the PS AE, a system of monitoring interim progress on assessment standards will be established. The current 11th grade students took a practice PS AE during the spring of 2008. A number of students failed to take the practice PS AE; therefore, there exists no information concerning these students' PS AE preparedness. In essence, all students need attention to PS AE preparation and, therefore, the interventions must be implemented campus wide, department wide, subject wide, and on the individual level. A practice PS AE will be administered in November and it is important to increase student participation in the assessment.

In order to monitor the progress of students' PS AE preparedness, we will take the following actions:

- Use the Strategic Action Team to review curriculum maps and assessment standards.
 - Identify reading and math assessment standards to be covered during the three-week period.
 - Identify fundamental skills that students must possess to demonstrate mastery of the standard that could be addressed in non-testing areas during the three-week period.
- Communicate the assessment standard of the period to the campus and identify other departments that can help with the fundamental skill of the three-week period.
- Use five-to-ten question, short assessment or another class activity to measure the identified reading and math standards.
- At the end of the three-week period, administer the assessment or include items in common assessments administered on campus.
- Use results to design a short, time-in activity to reinforce concepts.
- Develop a comprehensive PS AE plan for targeted students.
- At the beginning of the second quarter, develop a PS AE class, during the day that will last for one quarter, for targeted groups that will focus on direct instruction on ACT and Work Keys assessment using Win Key and other aligned software programs.
- At the beginning of the 3rd quarter, provide after-school ACT prep classes available to targeted students first and then open to all students based on need and availability.

- Review data from practice PSAE and 3-week progress checks and assign students to more intensive interventions during the day, after school, or on Saturdays.
- Use data to select and target students to participate in a PSAE (Scholars) Workshop that will occur once per quarter during the fall and twice per quarter during the spring to address key PSAE concepts in an extended block of time during the school day.
- For students who are assigned to ISS, ensure that access to Win key program is available for students who have completed assignments or for students who do not have any class work.
- Provide access to PSAE preparation materials or the Win key program during study hall classes for students who do not have class work.
- For students who are suspended, investigate evening school option that would focus on PSAE concepts, if class work is not available.

- *Graduation*

In order to increase the number of 12th grade students that graduate on time, an audit of credits will occur at the beginning of each semester. Students who are not on track to graduate will be engaged in the following:

- Students will be enrolled by counselors in the courses needed for graduation;
- Students will be enrolled in credit recovery on campus;
- Students whose schedules allow will be enrolled in the Academic Academy for the courses needed, provided the space is available and they meet the Academy's eligibility requirements;
- The percentage of students on track to graduate will be closely monitored and will follow the same monitoring process as the targeted group from the watch list;
- Before and after school opportunities will be available for students who are in need of more options for credit acquisition.

Expected Outcome

The Watch List is being produced and both principals are providing Weekly Campus Summaries to teachers. Dialogue is occurring in team meetings concerning interventions needed and rationale. Both campuses have submitted comprehensive extended day proposals which focus on providing interventions and support for identified students. All plans are required to clearly tie programs to their impact on African-American students in honors, grade distributions, PSAE prep or graduation. This focus will allow us to better utilize our resources and should lead to acceleration within these groups.

High school principals have also developed a system to involve students in the monitoring of their achievement and in providing additional information to students and parents concerning intervention options. Students are required to complete a weekly form on interventions attended. This system is expected to increase student accountability for participation in interventions offered.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

Principal

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Principal, Director of Secondary Curriculum and Professional Development, Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services, and Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum Design, Educational Services and Equity

Person Accountable for Results:

Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Action Item 4: Strategic Action Team

Establish a Strategic Action Team to analyze results and identify areas, opportunities and strategies to accelerate learning for targeted student groups.

Implementation

The Strategic Action Team will be formed at both campuses. Representatives from both high school campuses and the District will make up the District Strategic Action Team. Logistics of acceleration activities will be defined by the end of the first quarter.

Item Description and Expected Outcome

A Strategic Acceleration Team made up of teachers and other campus personnel will be created with the purpose of developing campus-wide activities that will lead to acceleration of learning as measured by PSAE. The Strategic Action Team will review curriculum maps and assessment standards to identify reading and math assessment standards to be covered during the three-week period and to identify fundamental skills that students must possess to demonstrate mastery of the standard in non-testing areas during the three-week period. This team will be composed of volunteers who are committed to thinking creatively about designing activities that will increase students' time on task and leveraging campus resources to meet the needs of students relative to PSAE.

The team will engage in back-loading of PSAE concepts into curriculum. The teachers will identify fundamental skills necessary for success on the PSAE by writing down their thought processes as they are attempting to respond to PSAE items. From their collective notes, the team will identify fundamental skills necessary to solve the items. These skills will be shared with all teachers and a schedule will be developed by the team of when the skills will be reinforced during the three-week period.

PSAE Scholar Seminars will be designed by the Strategic Action Team. Members of the team will develop a process to demystify the assessment by mapping their thought process as they take the assessment and the thought process of an 11th grade African-American student as they are taking the test. The team members will also identify and develop culturally relevant activities that can be used to teach the identified skills. These members will present the seminars at each campus four or five times before the PSAE.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

Principal and Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Principal and Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Person Accountable for Results:

Principal and Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Action Item 5: Evaluation

Evaluate results to identify students who are not progressing, teachers who are in need of assistance, or curriculum issues that need to be addressed.

Implementation Timeline

The process of evaluating results will be ongoing throughout the quarter and during the quarter when assessment results are available.

Item Description and Expected Outcome

- *Grade Distribution*

The process for using the watch list and monitoring of grade distribution above will produce the data that will be analyzed and evaluated during this step. The watch list will reveal students who are having difficulty, but it will not necessarily reveal the reasons and rationale behind the difficulty. In order to make meaning out of the data and draw valid conclusions, the quantitative data must be triangulated with qualitative information from the teacher, student and administrative observation. Trends must be identified that will lead to reflective questions that will provide answers. The answers will provide fuel for future actions. As grade distributions are evaluated, the results will be used to make informed decisions about walkthroughs, teacher assignments, curriculum issues, assessment standards that need more attention, conversations with Content Area Chairs, assignment of additional staff development, development of interventions for students, campus discipline and consequence assignments, attendance improvement issues, and use of other campus resources. It is critical that the relationship is made between learning and the impact learning results have on all actions and decisions that are being made.

- *PSAE*

The Strategic Acceleration Team will engage in a process that will help to clarify the PSAE components and key concepts in layman's terms. In essence, members of the teams should take the PSAE assessment and record their thought process and the fundamental skills necessary to be successful on the PSAE. ACT also provides resources to help clarify essential concepts. A fundamental skill is a general skill that can be taught and reinforced by teachers in multiple content areas. Identification of fundamental skills by teachers other than content area teachers helps to demystify the assessment expectations. Once the fundamental skills are identified, this information will be aligned with the stated assessment standard. Because the assessment standards are a part of the curriculum map and the curriculum map is structured around the academic quarters, the Strategic Acceleration Team will be able to identify fundamental skills to be reviewed and reinforced during a three-week period in all classes across the campus in the area of math and reading. Teachers in courses other than Math or English will select the fundamental skill most aligned to their content area. At the end of the three-week period, a progress check on the fundamental skill will be conducted in the Math or English class and results shared in PLC groups. From these activities, students who need more intense interventions will be identified. The Strategic Action Team will conduct focus group meetings

with selected students to collect information concerning their perspective of interventions to search for ideas for improvement

- *Graduation*

(Same as explanation under grade distribution except the focus will be on seniors as of August 2008.)

Person Responsible for Implementing:

Principal, Honors Support Team, Strategic Action Team

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Principal, Director of Secondary Curriculum and Professional Development, and Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Person accountable for results:

Principal, Director of Secondary Curriculum and Professional Development, and Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Action Item 6: Interventions

Design and implement campus, grade level, department, course and student-level interventions to address needs of identified groups of students and teachers.

Implementation Timeline

Each campus will complete a plan for interventions and a budget during the first quarter for campus-wide needs, department needs and individual student needs.

Item Description and Expected Outcome

Campus-wide interventions will be developed by the Strategic Action Team. The Content Area Chairs along with teachers within the content area will develop interventions for departments, courses and student-level interventions.

- *Grade Distribution*

In order to intervene for students who are struggling, each campus is allotted extended day funds. These funds will be used to design activities for students to receive attention in addition to what they receive during the school day. The majority of the activities designed to address grade distribution focus on tutoring activities designed for individual students. An example of the tutoring format is provided below:

There are three types of extended day activities, as follows.

1. General tutoring: tutoring, addressing the needs of all target groups; Tuesday through Thursday for 2 hours after school and Friday for 1 hour before school.
2. Honors tutoring: after school tutoring, addressing the needs of target groups 1 and 2; once per week for 4 hours.
3. Seventh hour tutoring: tutoring during 7th hour for target group 4, with carryover to all target groups; Monday through Friday during 7th hour.

- **PSAE**

A campus-wide intervention is defined as an activity that encompasses teachers across curricular areas and across grade levels. For example, it has been determined that the ability to read a chart, a graph, and interpret a pictorial diagram is a fundamental skill that students need regardless of content or grade level. A campus-wide intervention to address this identified skill deficit would be to encourage and require the use of charts, graphs, graphic organizers and pictorial diagrams in all lessons and in assessments. Because the ability to interpret visual models is a skill that is not subject bound, all teachers could support this initiative. Many other skills could be addressed globally by the entire campus in this format or others. The key concerning campus-wide initiatives is that the skills and resources of the entire campus are leveraged to address globally identified needs. This is a way of increasing students' time-on-task focusing on critical skills for PSAE success without using a direct test prep approach. Teachers are able to use their own subject area to teach fundamental skills that are essential to student success on PSAE. However, at times test-taking strategies are important as well and campus-wide focus on test taking skill development is also necessary for all students.

The other intervention actions that should be taken are listed above under *“Step 3: Monitor the progress of students and involve teachers and students in monitoring of their own progress.”*

Person Responsible for Implementing:

Principal

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Principal

Person Accountable for Results:

Principal

Action Items 7, 8, and 9: Implementation Monitoring

Item 7: Monitor attendance in, participation in and effectiveness of interventions on improvement of student learning for identified group.

Item 8: Administer short-term, formative, periodic evaluation of student performance and progress relative to GD, PSAE, and graduation rates.

Item 9: Evaluate participation rate in periodic evaluation, actual grade distribution, progress on assessment standards and graduation progression.

Implementation Timeline

The logistics associated with action items in step 7, 8, and 9 will be completed during the first quarter and will be implemented during the second quarter.

Expected Outcome

It is imperative that attendance and participation in the development interventions is documented so that effectiveness for individual students can be measured. On a six-week basis an administrator will review attendance and participation log to ensure that the targeted students are

receiving the interventions that have been designed. The effectiveness of all interventions will be measured by comparing movement of grade distribution rates, attendance and participation rate of students assigned, completion rate on quarterly assessment data and actual results, and credit acquisition rate toward graduation of 12th grade students.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

Principal

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Director of Secondary Curriculum and Professional Development

Person Accountable for Results:

Principal

High School Attendance Acceleration Plan

High School Attendance Goals

- Accelerate learning of all students, but especially African-American students.
- Accelerate the attendance rate of African-American students to meet the Equity Implementation Plan Flexible Goal of 95% attendance rate.

Targets

- Reduce the number of days of lost instructional time due to attendance issues.
- Increase the number of interventions received by truant students.
- Improve attendance auditing procedures and increase home visits.

Summary of Approach Toward High School Attendance Goals

In order to improve the attendance in the high schools, auditing attendance procedures and monitoring attendance reports are of great importance. It is critical to student achievement that we make every effort to provide home visits, tutoring, credit retrieval and focus groups. Research has determined the crucial link between student engagement and tutoring to attendance improvement. The Truant Interventionist/Student Advocates (TISAs) will encourage truant students to join athletic teams and school clubs and participate in school activities to ensure a sense of belonging and to help develop relationships between the school, community and the student. The TISAs have been instructed to connect truants to tutoring services in school and in the community. The Attendance Coordinator will visit the high schools on a weekly basis to evaluate the effectiveness of the Check & Connect researched based attendance initiative and troubleshoot any concerns of the TISA. Modifications will be made quickly and needs will be addressed effectively. Professional opportunities will be made available to the TISAs for skill building and problem solving. A new COGNOS report, African-American top truant list, was requested by the Attendance Coordinator. This report is examined weekly to implement immediate strategies to improve African-American attendance. The TISAs have been trained in the running of reports and are required to constantly monitor the attendance of the students in their buildings as well as communicate with parents of truants and attendance secretaries and all other support staff on their campuses. TISAs have been trained by the Attendance Coordinator and Director of Pupil Services to be advocates for truant students. In SY2009, the TISAs will work collaboratively with their campuses to improve the attendance and achievement of truant students.

Acceleration Plan Action Items, Outcomes, and Timelines

Our goal is to accelerate attendance of all students, but especially our African-American students and our low income students. In order to accelerate attendance in each area, we have developed the following intervention action items:

1. The Attendance Auditing Team will monitor the implementation of attendance initiatives.
2. Every six weeks hold meetings with the Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services, Department of Pupil Services, Technology Department, Truant Interventionist/Student Advocates, High School attendance staff, Principals, Deans

- and the Attendance Auditing Team to audit attendance processes and reporting and identify challenges and solutions.
3. TISAs will speak at the all-school convocations held quarterly to inform students of attendance rates, attendance goals and to present the quarterly contest initiative.
 4. Develop campus focus groups of students who have been truant in the past, but are now exhibiting improved attendance.
 5. Campus quarterly luncheons for students who have attained 95% attendance rates.
 6. Develop monthly parent workshops for parents of truant students.
 7. Send monthly attendance progress reports to parents of truants.
 8. Develop an accelerated attendance emergency plan if a campus attendance rate drops below 91%.
 9. Design a ghost MySpace account to search for truant students.
 10. Compare the monthly list of students with excessive absenteeism with the list of students with the most disciplinary incidents and monitor performance of those students.
 11. Develop a comprehensive follow-up to the Knock On the Door campaign that will include incentives for students and be designed to increase awareness about truancy and its implication for the community.

Action Item 1: Monitor

The Attendance Auditing Team will monitor the implementation of attendance interventions.

Implementation Timeline

Attendance intervention auditing will occur at the beginning of every week. The auditing will begin September 2008 and will be ongoing to ensure proper reporting. Full audits will be conducted every four weeks and reports will be provided to the Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services concerning successes, challenges and systematic issues that need additional attention.

Item Description

The internal accountability auditing team made up of the Attendance Coordinator and two parent liaisons will contact parents of truants in the high schools to provide additional assistance and determine if the needs of the child were met by Unit #4. Each member of the Attendance Auditing Team will be assigned a campus to monitor. The Attendance Coordinator will run the African-American top truant report from Cognos with parent information on Mondays and provide the parent liaisons with the list for the campus they are assigned to monitor.

Each Monday, parents of truants who have missed five or more days will be contacted by phone calls or home visits by a member of the auditing team and asked if they need any further assistance and if they are satisfied with the help provided by Unit #4 attendance staff. If the parent of the truant needs additional assistance, the Attendance Coordinator or parent liaison will provide assistance. The Attendance Coordinator will then assign the campus TISA to follow-up on the interventions. The Attendance Coordinator will develop a form to document the attendance audits.

Expected Outcome

The close monitoring of the attendance interventions is expected to lead to an increase in the number of interventions received by truant students and an increase in attendance.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

Attendance Coordinator

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Attendance Coordinator and Parent Liaisons

Person Accountable for Results:

Attendance Coordinator

Action Item 2: Attendance Audit

Every six weeks hold meetings with the Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services, Department of Pupil Services, Technology Department, Truant Interventionist/Student Advocates, High School attendance staff, Principals, Deans and the Attendance Auditing Team to audit attendance processes and reporting and identify challenges and solutions.

Implementation Timeline

The attendance meetings will occur every six weeks and will begin October 2008.

Item Description

The Attendance Auditing Team, Truant Interventionist/Student Advocates, High School attendance staff, Principals, Deans, Department of Pupil Services and the Technology Department will hold meetings every six weeks to discuss and rectify any problems or questions and concerns with the entry and reporting of attendance data in order to ensure proper reporting. Minutes will be taken of the meetings and action plans will be assigned to members. This item will streamline data entry processes for each high school campus so that the reliability of the data can be improved and real time decisions can be made.

Expected Outcome

The close monitoring of the attendance data entry and reporting is expected to lead to more accurate and timely accounting of students' attendance. By improving the reliability of the data, the resources allocated to attendance initiatives can be more effectively and efficiently utilized. This action began October 2008.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

Attendance Coordinator

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Attendance Coordinator

Person Accountable for Results:

Attendance Coordinator

Action Item 3: Convocation

The Truant Interventionist/Student Advocate(TISA) will be on the agenda quarterly of all-school convocation meetings to inform high school students of school attendance rates, the 95% attendance goal, and to engage students to participate in school wide attendance initiatives.

Implementation Timeline

The TISA will be included on the agenda as speakers for a quarterly convocation at each high school beginning second quarter of school year 2009.

Item Description

High schools will have all-school convocations or assemblies at least once a quarter. The TISA will speak at the convocation to familiarize the students with the role of the TISA and to inform students of the attendance rate goal of 95%. Each quarter a different contest or initiative will occur in the high schools. Prizes awarded to the winners of the attendance contest could be dances, buy outs for basketball games, movies etc.

Expected Outcome

The intent of this step is to increase awareness of the importance of attending school regularly and to reduce the number of days of lost instructional time. This action is intended to build excitement and motivate students to attend school.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

TISA

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Attendance Coordinator

Person Accountable for Results:

Attendance Coordinator

Action Item 4: Focus Groups

Develop focus groups composed of students who have been truant in the past, but are now exhibiting improved attendance.

Implementation Timeline

All campuses will hold focus groups beginning in October 2008 to be ongoing the 2009 school year. The focus groups will meet at least twice a quarter to provide support to each other and information to TISAs about how to improve attendance of other truants.

Item Description

Each TISA will hold bi-monthly focus groups with truant students who have missed two or more unexcused days of school. Topics for focus groups will be submitted to the Attendance Coordinator for review. On the bi-monthly intervention report submitted to the Attendance Coordinator, the TISA will report the dates on which focus groups were held and who attended.

During each focus group the TISA will have a drawing of incentives for those students who have improved their attendance. Incentives can include detention reductions to those students with improved attendance. The main focus of this step will be to use the improved truants to gather information about specific issues surrounding other truants that may be within the control of the school. Once these issues are identified, the students' input will be used in developing proactive solutions.

Expected Outcome

Truancy has been identified as one of the warning signs of students headed for potential delinquent activity, social isolation or educational failure via suspension, expulsion or dropping out. (*Juvenile Justice Bulletin, November 2000*). The focus groups are designed to promote students' engagement with school, to provide students with a support group to share their concerns about school attendance, and to share information that will have a positive impact on other potentially truant students.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

TISA

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Attendance Coordinator

Person Accountable for Results:

Attendance Coordinator

Action Item 5: Attendance Incentive

Campus quarterly luncheons for students who have achieved 95% attendance rates.

Implementation Timeline

The luncheons will begin the second quarter SY2009 and will occur every quarter SY2009. The attendance improvement team in each school will determine with the TISA the venue and the menu. The TISA will provide the names of the students that have achieved 95% attendance rate.

Item Description

The luncheons will be designed to celebrate the successes of the students. They can occur on campus or off as determined by the attendance improvement team on each campus. This activity is one mechanism for rewarding and celebrating students who have made efforts to change their attendance and attend school on a daily basis.

Expected Outcome

The intent of the celebratory luncheons is to encourage and motivate students to continue to make good choices as they relate to school attendance. The luncheons will provide recognition for students who have improved their attendance rate. The luncheons are important because most of these students and their effort would often go unnoticed otherwise.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

TISA and Attendance Improvement Team

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Attendance Coordinator

Person Accountable for Results:

Attendance Coordinator

Action Item 6: Parent Workshops

Develop monthly parent workshops for parents of truant students.

Implementation Timeline

The parent workshops will begin in October SY2009.

Item Description

The parent workshop will be organized and planned by the TISAs with the assistance of the parent liaisons. During the Knock On the Door Campaign, response cards were distributed to parents. Parents who completed the response cards requested information on several items including parenting information, transportation and the availability of social services. The design of the workshops will be informed by and will include information in the areas requested by the parents.

Expected Outcome

The intent of this action is to enhance the connections between home, school and the community through relationship building and education. The regular meetings will also act as a support group for parents who are experiencing similar challenges.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

TISA, Parent Liaison, and Attendance Coordinator

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Attendance Coordinator

Person Accountable for Results:

Attendance Coordinator

Action Item 7: Progress Reports

Monthly attendance progress reports to parents of truants.

Implementation Timeline

Attendance progress reports will be prepared by TISAs and mailed to parents of truants with two or more unexcused absences on the 1st of each month.

Item Description

The monthly attendance progress sheet will be developed by the Attendance Coordinator. It will inform the parents of any problems or progress with their child's attendance and provide information about whom to contact when attendance issues arise.

Expected Outcome

The intent of this action is to keep parents abreast of the progress their child is having with attendance and improve communication between the school and the home.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

TISA and Attendance Coordinator

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Attendance Coordinator

Person Accountable for Results:

Attendance Coordinator

Action Item 8: Emergency Plan

Develop an accelerated attendance emergency plan if a campus attendance rate drops below 91%.

Implementation Timeline

To begin September 2008 and occur ongoing SY2009 as needed.

Item Description

If a campus attendance rate for African-American students drops below 91%, additional TISA staff will assist at the high school for a period of three weeks or until the African-American attendance rate shows improvement.

Expected Outcome

The intent is to provide extra assistance to campuses to bring about immediate improvement of the attendance.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

Attendance Coordinator

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Attendance Coordinator

Person Accountable for Results:

TISA assigned to the campus

Action Item 9: MySpace

Design a ghost MySpace account to search for truant students.

Implementation Timeline

This action will begin second quarter.

Item Description

Truant students are communicating on MySpace and Facebook. It is Unit #4's intention to find truants who are not attending school and encourage them via e-mail to return to school.

Expected Outcome

The intent of this action is to reach truants who have not been found by TISAs.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

Technology Department and Attendance Coordinator

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Attendance Coordinator

Person Accountable for Results:

Attendance Coordinator

Action Item 10: Cross Monitoring

Compare the monthly list of students with excessive absenteeism with the list of students with the most disciplinary incidents and monitor performance of those students.

Implementation Timeline

Monthly evaluations of the student lists will begin second quarter of SY2009.

Item Description

Both student lists will be run by the Attendance Coordinator at the beginning of each month. The data will be analyzed to track students and develop wrap-around services in an effort to improve behavior and attendance.

Expected Outcome

The intent of this action will provide support to students and determine whether there are other issues that impact attendance.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services and Attendance Coordinator

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Attendance Coordinator

Person Accountable for Results:

Attendance Coordinator

Action Item 11: Knock-on-the-Door Campaign

Develop a comprehensive follow-up initiative to the Knock-on-the-Door campaign that will include incentives for students and be designed to increase awareness about truancy and its implication for the community.

Implementation Timeline

Three major activities are planned to begin in November 2008:

1. Parkland College Men's Basketball program and Unit #4 are sponsoring a *Go to the Game* for students at Unit #4 schools who achieve 95% attendance rates.
2. Knock on Door brainstorming session.
3. State of the School District recognition for volunteers.

Item Description

Parkland College Men's Basketball program and Unit #4 are sponsoring a *Go to the Game* for students at Unit #4 schools who achieve 95% attendance rates. Students who achieve 95% attendance will have their names put in a hat before a home game. Sixty names will be drawn. A school bus will be provided and the students will attend the game and sit in a section for Unit#4 students. They will be recognized at half time by walking to the center of the basketball court and being introduced and applauded.

The volunteers of the Knock-on-the-Door campaign will be invited to attend a brainstorming session to provide strategies and solutions to address the needs expressed on the parent reply cards.

A State of the School District Recognition Dinner will be in November. Knock-on-the-Door campaign volunteers will be recognized. The Superintendent will be the speaker. Proceeds will go to the attendance program to support tutoring and initiatives.

A public service announcement by the Superintendent will be released concerning the importance of attending school.

Expected Outcome

The activities listed above are expected to increase awareness about the importance of school attendance and continue the community dialogue and involvement in the development of comprehensive initiatives.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

Attendance Coordinator

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Attendance Coordinator

Person Accountable for Results:

Attendance Coordinator

High School Discipline Acceleration Plan

High School Discipline Goals

- Accelerate the provision of educational tools and alternative resources to eliminate unwarranted disparities in discipline incidents of African-American students compared to non African-American students.
- Analyze the relationship between discipline referrals received by high performing African-American students and high performing non-African-American students to determine whether high performing African-American students are receiving proportionately more disciplinary referrals and the causes of any disproportionate referrals.

Targets

- Reduce the suspension rates of African-American students by 15% from the SY2008 rate.
- Reduce discipline referrals and actions in subjective categories by 15% from the SY2008 rate.
- Increase instructional time by reducing the number of days out of school due to suspension by 15% from the SY2008 rate.

Summary of Approach toward High School Discipline Goals

Acceleration to eliminate unwarranted disparities in disciplinary incidents will occur through increased accountability and monitoring of the campus implementation of the procedural steps outlined in the District's Operational Plan. The success in reducing the number of incidents on the middle school and elementary school level along with the research from the National Council of Culturally, Responsively, Educational Systems (NCCRESt) will be used to inform the implementation of campus wide discipline systems at the high school level that are culturally responsive. In essence, these systems will have an emphasis on teaching appropriate behavior and personal responsibility, the establishment of positive relationships between students and adults, the development of alternatives to suspensions, the implementation of positive supports for behavior, incentives and recognition for students who are behaving, and the establishment of positive peer social groups.

In addition, a more intense focus will be placed on ensuring that campuses are using discipline as interventions designed to change behavior and are cognizant of the impact that discipline has on achievement and other educational outcomes. Principals will be accountable to focus on the number of days of lost instructional time due to discipline. Recognizing that less than 20% of students and teachers are responsible for 80% of the disciplinary actions, the identification and monitoring of these students and teachers will continue and they will be targeted for early interventions and support. A more intense weekly monitoring of the supports and interventions will occur throughout SY2009 in order to ensure acceleration.

Administrators are the key to establishing the climate that exists in the schools and the addition of two new principals is expected to enhance the reduction of discipline incidents. However, the climate in the classroom is directly influenced by the teacher, and it is imperative that culturally competent classrooms are the norm. A more intense focus on embedding cultural responsiveness throughout the school and classroom will occur. In order to accelerate awareness and understanding, the concepts espoused in PBF training will be infused throughout the high school campuses through professional development sessions, certification courses, book studies and school improvement days.

The research is clear about the relationship between school climate and achievement; as academic interventions are implemented, higher levels of student learning are realized and fewer disciplinary

incidents occur. However, when discipline incidents occur, how the system responds will have lasting impact on the educational outcomes. The action items outlined below seek to eliminate unwarranted disparities in student discipline for African-American students compared to non African-American students.

Acceleration Plan Action Items, Outcomes, and Timelines

1. Strengthen the accountability, implementation and monitoring of current disciplinary initiatives.
2. Build shared awareness around cultural competence, culturally responsive systems, and revitalize PBF at the high schools.
3. Implement NCCRESt key components of a culturally responsive discipline management system on both high school campuses that parallel systems at middle and elementary school campuses.
 - Establish an expectation that appropriate behavior will be taught in every class. Documentation that the class and campus rules were taught and that the students understood the consequences for violating the rules will be required every quarter (NCCRESt: teaching of behavior).
 - Identify students with the highest number of disciplinary incidents and identify adult mentor advocates to meet with these students to ascertain the root of the problem and establish a positive connection (NCCRESt: positive relationships). Monitor these students through walkthroughs and auditing of discipline referrals to ensure the consistent application of disciplinary consequences.
 - Develop alternatives to suspension and instructional uses of in-school supervision (NCCRESt: alternatives to suspension).
 - Establish social peer groups specifically designed for the African-American students (NCCRESt: positive behavior supports).
 - Establish a plan for recognizing and rewarding the students who are following the Student Code of Conduct (NCCRESt: positive behavior supports).
4. Set SMART Goals monthly for grade levels across the campus and hold monthly or regularly scheduled meetings with students to discuss disciplinary numbers and progress toward goals (NCCRESt: personal responsibility).
5. Select core group of high performing students and analyze the African-American high performers' discipline, achievement and attendance compared to the non-African-American students. Conduct focus groups to ascertain reasons for differences.
6. Develop a Discipline Intervention Team on campus to brainstorm, develop and implement campus-level initiatives to reduce discipline disparities.

Action Item 1: Accountability

Strengthen the accountability, implementation and monitoring of current disciplinary initiatives.

Implementation Timeline:

The accountability implementation monitoring form will be fully implemented by the second week in October.

Item Description

The Principal will be expected to meet bi-weekly and produce documentation of challenges and successes for the targeted groups in the areas of discipline, attendance and achievement. A bi-weekly update will be provided to the Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services that will include an update on progress of acceleration initiatives and an identification of any barriers to success. The electronic update form will be completed by the principal at the end of every two weeks and submitted via email. The updates will be reviewed by the Assistant Superintendent and follow-up items will be addressed immediately.

Expected Outcome

The close monitoring of the acceleration initiatives is expected to lead to fidelity of implementation and improved educational outcomes for all students.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Person Accountable for Results:

Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Action Item 2: Training

Increase cultural awareness training and revitalize PBF at both high schools.

Implementation Timeline

A system of support designed to increase cultural awareness and revitalize PBF should be in place by the end of the first quarter. A literature review should be conducted during the last two weeks of the first quarter and articles should be disseminated to principals and shared with staff during the second quarter. Book clubs should be organized during the second quarter and should engage in a dialogue concerning PBF and its major tenets.

Item Description

Research has shown that as cultural competence of adults within the school is increased, the climate within the buildings is improved and unwarranted disparities in discipline decrease. PBF has the potential to transform the climate of our high schools, but a system of support must be established to improve sustainability. Initial PBF training has occurred; however, it is imperative that PBF be revitalized at both high schools. A PBF certification course is scheduled to occur during the second quarter with the goal of training a minimum of 20 people from both campuses. PBF is also offered as a district board credit course. A PBF support group will be organized during the second quarter that will be composed of PBF trained staff and will provide them an opportunity to meet regularly and share challenges and successes and provide support to each other. A book club will be created on each campus to read literature focused on developing cultural competence and strategies to eliminate unwarranted disparities in discipline. The PBF book entitled: *Positive Behavior Facilitation: Understanding and Intervening in the Behavior of Youth* will be the first book purchased for each campus. Twenty copies will be purchased for each campus to disseminate to staff to read. The book will be a resource for all teachers including, specifically, those teachers who are in need of additional assistance. Articles focused on cultural awareness and culturally responsive educational systems will be shared weekly with principals who will be asked to share with staff during faculty meetings.

Cultural competence training will be provided as a recurring theme for campus administrators during scheduled Administrator Academies scheduled for the fourth Tuesday of every month during the school year. Cultural awareness training and information will also be shared during school improvement days or district improvement days.

Expected Outcome

The intent of the actions within this step is to increase the awareness of the impact of culture on all that we do. It is anticipated that as educators are immersed in reading about culture and are informed about its implication within school systems, educational outcomes for African-American students will improve. Cultural competence is particularly important for educators of African-American students because disconnections may exist between the child's home experience and the value structures within our schools. As a result, some educators may misinterpret students' actions or responses as negative or problematic. Such reactions often alienate students from the rest of the school and can make them prime candidates for referral out of the classroom. By building cultural competence within our building, we will decrease the likelihood that students' actions are misinterpreted and unwarranted referrals out of the classroom will occur.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services and Principal

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Person Accountable for Results:

Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Action Item 3: NCCRESt

Implement NCCRESt key components to a culturally responsive discipline management system.

Implementation Timeline

The key components to a culturally responsive system should be implemented during the second quarter of SY09.

Item Description

According to NCCRESt, an effective discipline management system should include a clear emphasis on teaching appropriate behavior and personal responsibility, the establishment of positive relationships between students and adults, the development of alternatives to suspensions, the implementation of positive supports for behavior, incentives and recognition for students who are behaving, and the establish of positive peer social groups.

Component 1: Teaching of Appropriate Behavior

- Establish an expectation that appropriate behavior will be taught in every class. Documentation that the class and campus rules were taught and that the students understood the consequences for violating the rules will be required every quarter.

Component 2: Establishment of Positive Relationships

- Identify students with the highest number of disciplinary incidents and identify adult mentor advocates to meet with these students to ascertain the root of the problem and establish a positive connection (NCCRESt: positive relationships).

Monitor these students through walkthroughs and auditing of discipline referrals to ensure the consistent application of disciplinary consequences.

Component 3: Implement Alternatives to Suspension

- Develop alternatives to suspension and instructional uses of in-school supervision.
- Provide culturally relevant reading materials and PSAT preparation materials in ISS rooms.

Component 4: Establishment of Positive Behavior Supports

- Establish social peer groups specifically designed for African-American students.
- Establish a plan for recognizing and rewarding students who are following the Student Code of Conduct.

Expected Outcome

By implementing the components recommended above, it is anticipated that reductions in unwarranted disparities will occur. The elementary and middle school campuses have recorded demonstrable success at reducing the total number of disciplinary referrals by implementing behavior management systems that include the four components above. Focus at both high schools will be placed on ensuring that the components above are a part of the campus-wide systems at both high schools.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

Principal

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Principal and Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Person Accountable for Results:

Principal and Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Action Item 4: SMART Goals

Set SMART Goals monthly for grade levels across the campus and hold monthly or regularly scheduled meetings with students to discuss disciplinary numbers and progress toward goals. (NCCREST: personal responsibility)

Implementation Timeline

SMART Goals should be set during the month of October and be in place for the start of the second quarter.

Item Description

Each grade level should be a part of the SMART Goals setting process as it relates to disciplinary infractions. SMART Goals for discipline should be set with input from students. Once the goals are set, information should be shared with students and staff in order to increase buy-in and focus. For example, campuses may use a process similar to the one used at Stratton Elementary School and Edison Middle School where the goals were set out in front of students and teachers and all parties were clearly aware of what the behavioral expectations were. Sharing goals during a convocation setting will provide an opportunity to reach out to all students and make improving behavior fun and engaging.

Expected Outcome

Broadcasting the SMART Goals and the progress toward meeting the goals will enhance the likelihood that more students and teachers will buy in to the idea that classroom disturbances based on discipline issues is not acceptable.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

Principal

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Principal and Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Person Accountable for Results:

Principal and Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Action Item 5: High Performing Students Data Analysis

Select core group of high performing students and analyze the African-American high performers' discipline, achievement and attendance compared to the non-African-American students. Conduct focus groups to ascertain reasons for any disparities.

Implementation Timeline

The analysis of the high performing African-American students will occur during the first quarter when data is available.

Item Description

The African-American students will be closely compared with the non-African-American students to determine if disparities exist in the areas of discipline, achievement and attendance. Selected students will be interviewed to learn their perspective.

Expected Outcome

By analyzing this group of students, it is anticipated that information may be gleaned that will inform systematic decisions that are impacting educational outcomes for all students.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Person Accountable for Results:

Assistant Superintendent for Achievement and Pupil Services

Action Item 6: Discipline Intervention Team

Development of a Discipline Intervention Team on campus to brainstorm, develop and implement campus-level initiatives to eliminate unwarranted discipline disparities.

Implementation Timeline

The Discipline Intervention Team should be a campus-based team made up of teachers and other campus personnel to discuss discipline disparities and brainstorm on initiatives to eliminate unwarranted discipline disparities. The Discipline Intervention Team should be in place on the high school campus by the beginning of the second quarter.

Item Description

The Discipline Intervention Team will be structured much like the district-level Discipline Equity Task Force and will have a similar charge, to focus on the relationship between equity and discipline. The campus-based team will also be evaluating campus procedures and working collaboratively to develop incentives and new approaches to eliminate unwarranted discipline disparities.

Expected Outcome

The campus collaboration should lead to reductions in unwarranted discipline disparities and increased accountability.

Person Responsible for Implementing:

Principal, Assistant Principal for Achievement and Pupil Services, High School Deans and campus staff

Person Responsible for Monitoring:

Principal

Person Accountable for Results:

Principal

Special Education Acceleration Plan

Special Education Acceleration Goal: Accelerate efforts to eliminate, to the greatest extent practicable, unwarranted disparities in the assignment of minority students to special education programs and to operate such programs in an educationally sound and non-discriminatory manner.

Pre-Referral Process

Pre-Referral Goals

- Ensure referrals of African-American students for special education evaluations are warranted.
- Provide academic and behavioral interventions to targeted students prior to special education referral to ensure that referrals are warranted.

Pre-Referral Targets

- At all levels, increase the efficacy of the Building Intervention Teams (BITs).
- At all levels, increase the number of academic and behavioral support interventions and the number of African-American students participating in these interventions.

Pre-Referral Data Sources

BIT logs, BIT evaluations, building monitoring lists

Pre-Referral Action Items

1. Identify African-American students in need of academic and behavioral interventions and provide targeted interventions before students are referred for a special education evaluation.
2. Identify buildings with the highest special education evaluation referrals and greatest disparity in African-American student referrals for special education services, analyze targeted buildings' referral process, and provide training for targeted buildings.

Action Item 1: Interventions

Identify African-American students in need of academic and behavioral interventions and provide targeted interventions before students are referred for a special education evaluation.

Item Description

Many academic and behavioral support interventions can be provided to students who are not identified for special education services. By providing such early interventions, many students will be capable of succeeding without more intensive special education services. When students are not successful, even with such interventions, educators will be able to identify the possible need for warranted special education evaluation referrals.

Accountability: Principal

Implementation:

- A. Analyze African-American students' performance on academic assessments.
- B. Identify individual African-American students for targeted academic interventions. Interventions, at the elementary level, will be selected from Linda Dorn's Comprehensive Intervention Model.
- C. Provide academic support interventions to targeted students.

Monitoring: Principals will track individual students and the effectiveness of interventions using building monitoring systems or Assessment Walls. Interventions will be modified if unsuccessful.

Outcome measure: African-American students are identified for and receive academic supports. These supports should be successful in ensuring that referrals of African-American students for special education evaluations are warranted.

Action Item 2: Building BIT Improvement

Identify buildings with the highest special education evaluation referral rates and greatest disparity in African-American student referrals for special education services, analyze targeted buildings' referral process, and provide training for targeted buildings.

Accountability: Director of Special Education/Assistant Director of Special Education/Special Education Administrator/Lead Psychologist

Implementation:

- A. Analyze disaggregated BIT data to determine targeted buildings based on the buildings that have the highest special education evaluation referral rates and greatest disparity in African-American student referrals. Data will be disaggregated by building to include: ethnicity, grade, classroom, disability category for consideration during special education evaluation, percentage of students compared to the total school population, percentage of students compared to the African-American student population, and percentage of students compared to the Other student population. BIT logs will also be monitored to ensure students are receiving appropriate interventions over time prior to being referred for a special education evaluation.
- B. Evaluate BIT processes/practices in targeted buildings to determine areas in need of improvement. This data will be analyzed by special education administration to identify any anomalies which may indicate areas of concern. For example, a particular building may have a third grade classroom which is producing numerous referrals for special education evaluations over a short period of time.
- C. Provide training to targeted buildings' BITs to address identified areas in need of improvement.
- D. Building staff will develop action plans to address identified anomalies in BIT data.
- E. Assess targeted buildings' BIT improvement in areas in need of improvement.

Monitoring: The Director of Special Education and Principals will analyze BIT data to determine effectiveness of identification and training in areas in need of improvement.

Outcome Measure: BITs operate effectively so that the District makes warranted referrals for special education evaluations.

Evaluation Process

Evaluation Goals

- Ensure best practices are used when conducting evaluations of African-American students for special education.
- Ensure special education evaluations for African-American students are warranted.

Evaluation Targets

- Ensure that District eligibility criteria are applied with fidelity.
- Ensure IEP teams use non-discriminatory evaluation instruments when evaluating students for special education.

Evaluation Data Sources

District criteria, student files (eligibility review (ER) paperwork specifically), and documentation of tests and instruments used for special education evaluations

Evaluation Action Items

1. Conduct audits of the eligibility determinations made for African-American students to ensure District eligibility criteria have been applied with fidelity.
2. Prepare protocol identifying non-discriminatory evaluation instruments to be used by District IEP teams.
3. Establish District protocol for evaluation processes/practices used with African-American students entering the Early Childhood Center in special education.

Action Item 1: Eligibility Audits

Conduct audits of the eligibility determinations made for African-American students to ensure District eligibility criteria have been applied with fidelity.

Accountability: Director of Special Education/Lead School Psychologist and Audit Team

Implementation:

- A. Assemble an audit team composed of Lead School Psychologist, an external auditor (Nationally Certified School Psychologist), and at least two internal school psychologists.
- B. Create an audit checklist that will produce evidence regarding whether the District's eligibility criteria were applied with fidelity.
- C. Audit sample of student files of current African-American students in special education.
- D. African-American students in special education identified through the audit process for which District eligibility criteria may not have been applied with fidelity will be reevaluated for special education eligibility.

Monitoring: The Director of Special Education will analyze audit teams findings.

Outcome measure: Audit will demonstrate whether District criteria were applied with fidelity for African-American students. When the criteria are not applied appropriately, the District will reevaluate the eligibility determination to ensure that the District's criteria are applied with fidelity.

Action Item 2: Non-discriminatory Evaluation Instrument Protocol

Prepare protocol identifying non-discriminatory evaluation instruments to be used by District IEP teams.

Accountability: Director of Special Education/Assistant Director of Special Education/Special Education Administrator/Lead Psychologist/Special Education Equity and Achievement Coordinator

Implementation:

- A. Analyze documentation of test and instruments used for special education evaluations during SY2008, specifically the most commonly used tests with African-American students in the areas of: achievement, Intelligence Quotient (IQ), language, behavior, and adaptive behavior.
- B. Review research related to whether identified tests are discriminatory in relation to identifying African-American students for special education services.
- C. If needed, identify potential concerns of using identified tests and adopt the use of alternative or additional tests/instruments.
- D. Write and implement District protocol detailing specific tests/instruments to be used when evaluating African-American students for special education in the above noted areas.
- E. African-American students identified/placed in special education during SY2008 through the use of any instrument identified as potentially discriminatory will be reevaluated.

Monitoring: The Director of Special Education or her designee will ensure the use of non-discriminatory evaluation instruments for special education.

Action Item 3: Early Elementary

Establish District protocol for evaluation processes/practices used with African-American students entering the Early Childhood Center in special education.

Accountability: Director of Special Education/Assistant Director of Special Education/Special Education Administrator/Lead Psychologist/Special Education Equity and Achievement Coordinator/Executive Director of Equity and Achievement/Principal of Early Childhood Center/Early Childhood Staff

Implementation:

- A. Convene a committee of individuals noted in the accountability section above.

- B. Document the current evaluation processes/practices for African-American students entering the Early Childhood Center in special education.
- C. If needed, identify potential concerns regarding the current processes/practices and adopt alternatives. Some areas for examination might include: District criteria, tests/instruments, observation methods, family interviews, etc.
- D. Write and implement District protocol detailing specific process/practices to be used when evaluating African-American students for special education entering the Early Childhood Center.

Outcome measure: Standard District protocol for initial evaluation of African-American students entering Early Childhood Center will ensure warranted placements of these students in special education.

Achievement

Achievement Improvement Goals

- Decrease the achievement gap between African-American students eligible for special education services and non-African-American students eligible for special education
- Accelerate achievement of African-American students in special education

Achievement Targets

- Increase the number of African-American students in special education at all grade levels that are meeting or exceeding state standards on ISAT/PSAE/IAA.
- At all levels, increase the number of academic support interventions and the number of African-American students in special education participating in these interventions.
- At the secondary level, increase the number of African-American students in special education receiving A's, B's and C's while simultaneously decreasing the number of African-American students in special education receiving D's and F's.

Achievement Data Sources

ISAT/PSAE/IAA scores, building monitoring lists, C-D-F watch list, grade distributions, Quarterly assessment completion rates, and graduation rates disaggregated by building, grade, subject area, ethnicity and disability categories (when applicable)

Achievement Action Items

1. Analyze ISAT/PSAE/IAA data for African-American students eligible for special education services and provide academic support interventions to targeted students.
2. Provide reading supports/interventions for targeted African-American students eligible for special education services.
3. Evaluate the efficacy of inclusion practices throughout the District.
4. Monitor C-D-F watch list of middle school African-American students in special education.
5. Provide analysis, by building and disability category, of African-American students eligible for special education services, including detailed identification of move in, move out, and intra-District transfer students.

High School Special Education Achievement Acceleration

High School student eligible for special education services will be a targeted group monitored and provided interventions according to the mechanisms set out in the High School Achievement Acceleration Section of this Plan.

Action Item 1: Academic Support Interventions

Analyze ISAT/PSAE/IAA data for African-American students eligible for special education services and provide academic support interventions to targeted students.

Accountability: Director of Special Education/Assistant Director of Special Education/Special Education Administrator/Principal

Implementation:

- A. Provide analysis, by building and disability category, of African-American students eligible for special education services, included identification of move in, move out and intra-District transfer students.
- B. Compile disaggregated achievement data.
- C. Present data to building administrators and staff.
- D. Create building lists of African-American students to target for academic support interventions (i.e., double dose of instruction, literacy support, and small group instruction).
- E. For each student, identify specific academic support interventions.
- F. For each student and intervention, identify District personnel responsible for implementation.

Monitoring: Students and interventions will be tracked on principals' building monitoring systems or Assessment Walls. Interventions will be modified if unsuccessful in increasing students' achievement.

Outcome measure: African-American students in special education are identified for and receive academic supports. As a result of the increased academic supports, increased numbers of these students should meet or exceed standards on ISAT/PSAE/IAA.

Action Item 2: Reading Supports

Provide reading supports/interventions for targeted African-American students eligible for special education services.

Accountability: Director of Special Education/Assistant Director of Special Education/Special Education Administrator

Implementation:

- A. At the elementary level, train District staff in every building in Barton Reading and Spelling, Recipe for Reading and Wilson Reading.
- B. At the middle and high school levels, train District staff in every building in identified reading programs.
- C. Create building lists of African-American students to target for reading support.

- D. For each student, identify specific support interventions.
- E. For each student and intervention, identify specific personnel responsible for implementation.

Monitoring: The Director of Special Education will track training to ensure that all buildings have staff trained in the District-approved reading programs. Special Education Administrators will monitor reading interventions provided to individual African-American students eligible for special education services.

Outcome measure: Special education teachers will receive materials and training for specific reading supports to be used with identified African-American students. Improved achievement of African-American students will be monitored.

Action Item 3: Inclusion

Evaluate the efficacy of inclusion practices throughout the District.

Accountability: Building Principals/Special Education Teachers/Case Managers

Implementation:

- A. Use the evaluation tool developed by the District to assess the special education inclusion model across District campuses.
- B. Provide inclusion training for special and general education teachers.
- C. Form an oversight committee to provide ongoing evaluation of the efficacy of inclusionary instructional practices in the District.

Monitoring: The Director of Special Education will analyze staff participation, evidence of material presented, and completed training evaluations. The Director of Special Education will chair the oversight committee.

Outcome measure: African-American students in special education will be included and instructed to the maximum extent appropriate to meet individual student needs. The District will evaluate, train for, and monitor its inclusion practices, with particular emphasis on its effect on African-American students.

Action Item 4: C-D-F Middle School Watch List

Monitor C-D-F watch list for middle school African-American students eligible for special education.

Accountability: Middle School Principals/Special Education Administrator

Implementation:

- A. Review C-D-F list.
- B. Create building lists of African-American students to target for academic support interventions.
- C. For each student, identify specific academic support interventions.

- D. For each student, identify specific personnel responsible for implementation of support interventions.
- E. Report, by student name, concerns to Special Education Administrator.

Monitoring: The Special Education Administrator will review all presented concerns. Students and interventions will be tracked on Principals' building monitoring systems or Assessment Walls.

Outcome measure: The most frequently reported grade for a secondary, African-American student in special education will increase.

Family Engagement

Family Engagement Goals

- Enhance the African-American families understanding and participation in the special education process.

Family Engagement Targets

- Provide special education information to African-American families.
- Provide family support for African-American families engaged in the special education process.
- Enhance special education staff accountability of African-American family engagement in special education.

Family Engagement Data Sources

African-American Town Hall Meeting summary, monthly newsletters, committee meeting minutes, documentation of staff training, evidence of African-American staff recruitment efforts, and IEP progress reports

Family Engagement Action Items

1. Create an Advisory Committee/Support Group for families of African-American students in special education.
2. Provide training regarding special education family engagement for special education staff and families of African-American students in special education.

Action Item 1: Advisory Committee

Create an Advisory Committee/Support Group for families of African-American students in special education.

Accountability: Special Education Equity and Achievement Coordinator/Director of Special Education

Implementation:

- A. Create and convene a volunteer African-American Advisory Committee (AAAC) or African-American Support Group (AASG) composed of a total of approximately 18

family members of African-American students in special education, District staff, and community stakeholders. The AAAC or AASG members will: collaborate with each other in terms of issues of concern involving parents of African-American students in special education, serve as a source/network for families who do not know how to navigate systems within their school, and help to bridge any gaps between families, their child's school, the department or the District.

Timeline: Beginning January, 2009, the AAAC or AASG will convene every other month. Therefore, it will meet three times during SY2009 – January, March, and May.

Monitoring: Copies of the AAAC or AASG agendas and meeting minutes will be archived for documentation of completion.

Outcome measure: The AAAC/AASG will serve as a support/networking opportunity for families of African-American students in special education and will also help to shape information sharing, family and staff training, and District special education processes involving families of African-American students in special education.

Action Item 2: Family Training

Provide training regarding special education family engagement for special education staff and families of African-American students in special education.

Accountability: Special Education Equity and Achievement Coordinator/Director of Special Education

Implementation:

- A. Plan training regarding family engagement in special education. The training will focus on numerous components of the IEP process: pre-referral, evaluation, placements and services.
- B. Offer the training for special education staff and families of African-American students in special education.

Monitoring: The Director of Special Education will monitor effectiveness of training by reviewing training materials, sign in sheets and feedback forms.

Outcome measure: The training will serve as a source of information for families of African-American students in special education and special education staff. As families receive more information, they will become more engaged in the special education process. As special education staff receives more information, they will be more sensitive to and address family engagement issues of African-American students in special education.