

Executive Summary

Village Elementary School 2010-2011 End-of-Year Report

Background

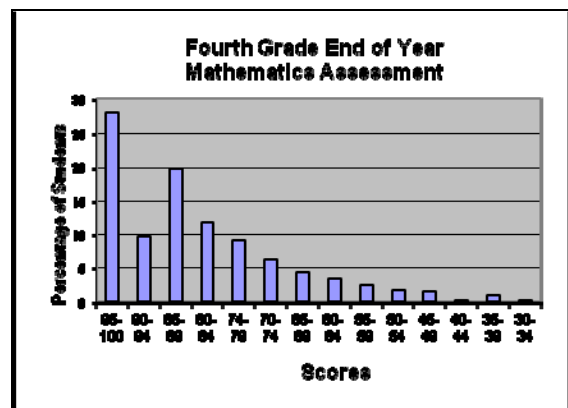
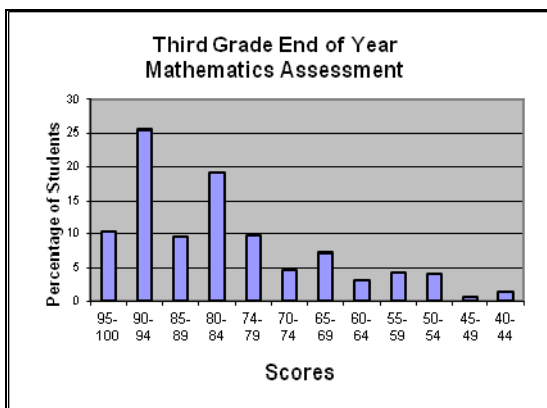
This report chronicles Village Elementary School's (VES) work toward achieving the goals of the district's strategic plan. It will describe curricular, instructional and assessment developments that enabled students to achieve at their highest potential. We will review the success of our high functioning professional learning communities (PLCs) and our pursuits as a learning school. Further, examples of how VES works to make connections within our school and the greater Montgomery community will be described. In 2010-2011 VES had a diverse population of students in grades three and four as follows: 56% White, 37% Asian, 4% Hispanic, 3% African American, <1% American Indian, and <1% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Additionally, 15% of our students received non-speech related special education services while 15% were in academic support programs.

Goal 1: Student Achievement and Attainment

School Goals were developed based on a review of performance data from the previous school year and focused on enhancing teaching and learning in mathematics, language arts literacy (LAL), and the related arts:

1. All VES students will increase their proficiency in mathematical problem solving through attention to choosing appropriate problem solving strategies, number sense, and fact fluency therefore scoring at or above 85% on the end of year common mathematics assessment.

Progress Toward Goal: On the end of year common mathematics assessment, 52% of third and fourth grade students achieved a score of 85%. Another 30% of third and fourth grade students scored between 70 and 84, and of this 30% half of them missed 85% by only one or two questions. A review of an item analysis reveals that the questions students did best on related to numbers and operations while questions related to measurement and data are where students had the most difficulty.

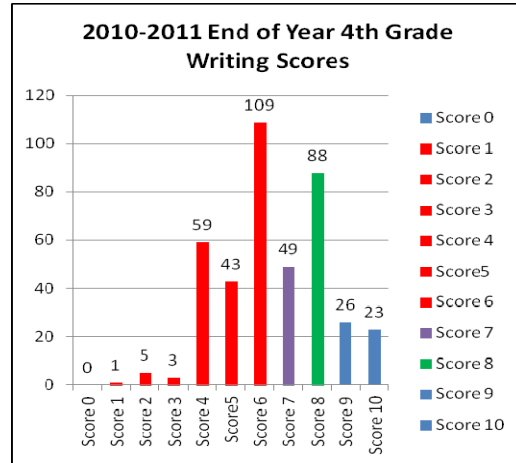
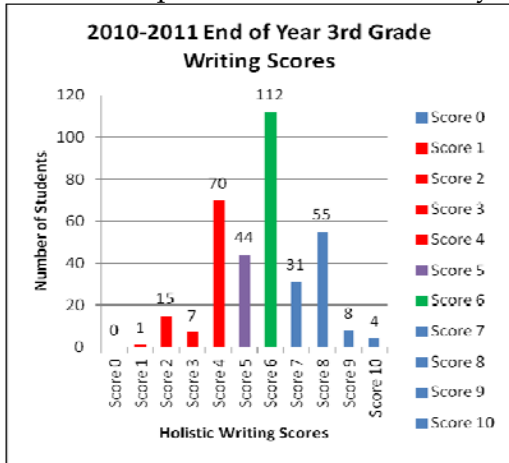


2. All VES students will improve their overall score and proficiency level in language arts literacy within two clusters; working within text and analyzing text therefore scoring 79% student proficiency on the NJASK and achieving the AYP benchmark target for the 2010-2011 school year.

Progress Toward Goal: On the NJASK, third grade achieved a 76.7 LAL proficiency rate while fourth grade achieved a 77.5 LAL proficiency rate. This represents an 8% increase in third grade and a 2.5% decrease in fourth grade from the year before. VES narrowly missed our 79% proficiency goals, but achieved the State AYP status as a result of our overall LAL growth.

- Our goal is to increase the percentage of *all* types of third and fourth grade learners who receive a score of either proficient or advanced proficient on the Language Arts Literacy portion of the NJ ASK assessment and score at or above the end of the year writing benchmark thus decreasing the number of students performing at a partially proficient level.

Progress Toward Goal: As indicated above VES narrowly missed our 79% proficiency goal, however we achieved the State AYP status in LAL. Student proficiency on our VES common assessment was also below expectations as indicated by the data below.



210 out of 347 third grade students or a 61% majority reached the grade level benchmark of 6 on the summative common writing assessment. 44 students or 13% of the third grade population were identified as slightly below benchmark and 93 students or 13% were further below the benchmark.

137 out of 404 fourth grade students or 34% of students reached the grade level benchmark of 8 on the summative common writing assessment. 49 or 12% of the fourth grade population were identified as slightly below benchmark. 220 students or 54% were further below the benchmark.

This is the second year VES has used a speculative writing prompt in response to a new type of NJASK prompt. Common assessment writings are scored holistically—readers evaluate the overall quality of the writing as a whole and do not compare one grade level writings to the other. Based on the assumption that all students are growing at their own pace into strong, capable writers, teachers compare each students’ work to his or her earlier writings to analyze growth. The assessment team looks for an overall score of the entire grade level to determine progress towards a school goal. We are continuing to fine tune instruction, students’ use of writing strategies and calibrating scoring done by our assessment teams.

- All VES learners will develop meaningful connections within the curriculum and demonstrate their learning across disciplines. Students will be provided with consistent content in related arts classes so that student learning and performance in the classroom setting is enhanced.

Progress Toward Goal: Related arts teachers focused on incorporating multicultural learning into their lessons. Students made real world connections, were actively involved in the learning process visually, aurally, and kinesthetically and came to class with some prior experience with the topics, having heard similar information in other related arts or academic subject areas. Rubrics and performance assessments were used to confirm student understanding.

Goal 2: Staff Performance and Professional Learning

Professional learning goals for the 2010-2011 school year were directly tied to our school goals and developed collaboratively by the School Professional Development Committee (SPDC), school leaders and K-4 supervisors.

- Improve teacher knowledge in and practice of small group reading instruction in order to address the needs of *all* types of learners and assess progress through the use of running records and supporting instructional strategies.

Progress Toward Goal: Teachers were trained during workshops on reinforcing and explicitly teaching multiple reading strategies. Teachers studied Common Core Standards for multiple grades and used them to revise curriculum, develop essential questions and create enduring understandings. Summer workshops were planned to help teachers implement readers' workshop and engage all students in daily literacy instruction and assessment.

2. Improve teacher knowledge in and practice of research-based writing instruction and the use of common rubrics for assessment that measured writing growth over the course of the year.

Progress Toward Goal: Teachers were trained to analyze writing data, identify student learning needs and target instruction to meet those needs. Teachers studied Common Core Standards for multiple grades. Teacher assessment teams identified characteristics and strengths and weaknesses of our writers based on rubric indicators. Further analysis of this data will help us identify trends with the ultimate goal of making curricular and instructional program refinements.

3. Increase the number of successful instructional strategies teachers use to support fact fluency and problem solving as measured by teacher feedback, documentation of strategies in teacher lesson plans, and student growth in fact fluency and problem solving proficiency.

Progress Toward Goal: Teachers participated in professional learning to improve problem solving and fact fluency instruction and assessment practices and acquired resources to support their work. Common Core Standards were used to design and pilot a new standards-based common assessment system. Item analyses of common assessments provided opportunities to brainstorm differentiation strategies and follow-up instruction for areas of curricular weakness. Special education programs were aligned to general education benchmarks.

4. Integrating curriculum across the related arts to advance student understanding in multiple content areas. Related arts lesson plans and student work will reflect this integration in at least two content areas.

Progress Toward Goal: Related arts teachers incorporated multicultural learning experiences in lessons by using Spanish to give directions or share information, teaching students to perform songs or create crafts that represent various cultures, or by incorporating multicultural activities, traditions and values into lessons using music, literature and historical information.

Additional professional learning achievements for the year are highlighted below:

- VES successfully established high-functioning Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Teacher teams developed the ability to identify strengths and weaknesses in student work, reflect on their teaching practices in collaboration with colleagues, create plans of action, and apply and assess new strategies to promote student achievement.
- Teachers received training in the use of Compass Learning Odyssey to assist them in providing differentiated instruction for students at all levels of learning. Students were introduced to Odyssey in technology classes and began using the resource at school and at home and during the after school Achievement Academy which provided targeted skill, content and test taking practice for our struggling learners. Odyssey workshops were also offered to parents.
- The Academic Support team and the VES school counselor created a PLC to: use student performance data to identify student needs and provide research-based interventions during small group and pull out instruction. Evidence of their work exists in binders that include student assessments, documented interventions, and work samples demonstrating progress toward goals.

The academic support student population was 15% of our total school population, 2% higher than the 2009-2010 school year. The collaborative efforts of our entire school and the focused analyses of assessment data has assisted us in better identifying and supporting the needs of learners not meeting benchmarks.

- The Pupil Assistance Committee (PAC) made great strides implementing goals set at the end of the 2010 school year. A tiered intervention system was implemented and created opportunities for students to receive interventions that varied in frequency and intensity based on need. SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely) goals were created for students, progress was monitored regularly using frequent assessments and specific interventions were documented and evaluated.

A total of 54 students were referred to PAC. 39 were male and 15 were female. 17 individual tier 2 goals were written and 13 were successfully accomplished. 22 individual tier 3 goals were written and 14 of those goals were successfully met. 7 students qualified for 504 plans and 15 were referred to the Child Study Team. 12 were found eligible for special education services. The rate of referrals to the Child Study Team was fairly steady for the past four years. The new PAC process has enhanced our ability to better identify struggling learners, build a system of collaboration and support growth in a more structured and effective way.

Goal 3: Connected, Known, and Valued

Village School strives to make our school community feel connected, known and valued in many ways.

- Responsive Classroom philosophies and practices are used throughout VES to foster a sense of classroom and school community and to support social and academic development through team building and independent learning activities
- Parents are invited to share information each spring to support an optimal placement for their children.
- Staff receives a biweekly newsletter, the *VES Bluebird* which contains information and dates.
- Parents receive a bimonthly newsletter by e-blast and posting on our website which provides timely information.
- Fourth grade students have an opportunity to serve as anchors for the VES Morning News. Parents may observe the live broadcasts which are posted on the Internet to allow worldwide viewing.
- Fourth graders serve as *Peer Partners* to promote character education initiatives such as *Mix It Up At Lunch*, *Young Scholars Fundraiser*, *Autism Walk* and *UNICEF*.
- Fourth graders participate in orchestra, band and chorus concerts which are open to the community. Third graders present a choral music show each spring.

Goal 4: Relationship of School to the Community at Large

Village School builds a welcoming climate that extends to our community at large.

- Students participate in grade level trips in the local community to support the curriculum.
- VES administration, staff and parents collaborate on our School Based Steering Committee (SBSC).
- VES annually hosts an open house, newcomers' reception, and back-to-school events with our PTA and participates in or hosts third and fifth grade orientation visits for incoming and outgoing students.
- VES supports a variety of PTA events including the Kickoff Party, SEPTA cookout, BINGO Fridays and Dads' Night Out.
- Teachers conduct twice annual parent/teacher/student conferences to discuss student academic and social growth. Teachers also communicate frequently on an as needed basis.
- Parent and community groups are invited to make presentations at faculty meetings or on the VES News on topics such as food allergies, fire prevention and summer reading programs.
- Village School opens its doors for community groups to hold meetings and conduct cultural and

service programs such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Chinese School.

- Community service and civic learning are integral parts of the program at VES. Our daily newscasts and cultural arts programs have included local politicians, university professors, authors, illustrators and performing artists to broaden the knowledge and experience of our students and community.

Next Steps for Success:

The analysis of the data points out to the Village School community the need to assist our struggling learners to overcome their challenges and to meet their individual bests. Therefore the greatest focus of our efforts will be on addressing district goals 1 and 2. Specific actions in this regard include:

Goal I: Fine tune curriculum and assessments to further align them with Common Core Standards as our students will be evaluated against them.

- Analyze common and standardized assessment data to track student growth at all levels of achievement, but focusing our attention on students and groups of students not meeting benchmarks in LAL and Mathematics.
- Work in collaboration with OHES to create systems for the earliest possible identification of struggling learners
- Develop and implement an effective transition plan that continues the important interventions necessary to achieve our goals for high levels of achievement and future attainment for all students
- Identify trends in assessment data to identify and target learners' needs and alter instruction in targeted ways
- Develop an academic support schedule that increases time for small group instruction, direct intervention support, collaborative planning, consultation and data analysis
- Continue to monitor and strategically respond to student progress data during the PAC and intervention development process
- Become more savvy with the collection, analysis, and use of data for immediate response to identified student needs
 - Begin an item analysis of new mathematics assessments to allow us to understand student learning as it connects to Common Core Standards
 - Greater use of Performance Matters software for data analysis
- Use Compass Learning Odyssey in new and different ways to provide individualized, differentiated learning for students at all levels

Goal II: Our staff is committed to professional learning and to continuous improvement, to the benefit of the students they serve. Specific needs that our analyses raise include:

- The need for continued professional development in the teaching of problem solving, fact fluency, differentiated reading workshop, comprehension and reading/writing strategy instruction, all areas where improvement will most directly impact student learning needs.
- Enhance assessment team work to ensure consistent and reliable use of the holistic scoring writing rubric

October 15, 2011 Executive Summary
Annual Report of Village Elementary School 2010-11

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