

YORK SUBURBAN MIDDLE SCHOOL
2012-2013 Quality Assessment Report

The building goals for the 2012-2013 school year focused on improving student achievement and incorporating Reading Apprenticeship (RA) strategies in all curricular areas. Each faculty member developed one Professional Development Target (PDT) reflecting his/her own professional need.

CURRICULAR INITIATIVES

Science

During 2012-2013 school year, the York Suburban Middle School science teachers focused on reviewing the Pennsylvania Common Core Reading and Writing standards. The teachers used monthly department meeting time to become familiar with the PCCS standards and read articles about the implementation of the common core standards into the science curricula. The teachers identified strategies and resources currently being implemented for each common core standard. As a result, the teachers were able to identify areas of focus for the upcoming school year.

The middle science department developed a 6-8 Study Island Overview which was implemented to better prepare the middle school students for the science PSSA in eighth grade. Sixth grade teachers created common assessments using Study Island for each of the units to better assess student progress on the eligible content. The seventh grade students completed biweekly assignments which either previewed eighth grade content or reviewed sixth and seventh grade eligible content. The seventh grade students also completed their first of five benchmark assessments at the end of seventh grade to establish a baseline for eighth grade. In eighth grade, the students completed weekly assignments to review concepts taught in sixth and seventh grade. Four benchmark assessments were completed in eighth grade. The use of Study Island in this manner created data for the teachers to efficiently assess the students' learning progress on the content and inquiry skills which helped to drive instruction in the classroom.

The eighth grade earth science and chemistry units were in the third and second year respectively, of implementation. The physics curriculum was adjusted based on data collected from Study Island and past PSSA's which resulted in scaling back on some eleventh grade earth science eligible content to make the necessary time for the eighth grade physics eligible content. As a result of these adjustments, the students were better prepared for the eighth grade science PSSA and two oceanography units were also effectively implemented in May to transition the students for the high school.

The sixth grade curriculum remained the same during the 2012-2013 school year. The Learning Map for the physics unit was updated.

Social Science

The York Suburban Middle School social science department addressed two new initiatives during the 2012-13 school year and enhanced the current curriculum and practices in two other areas. The new initiatives the department focused upon were to begin the task of addressing the Common Core Standards for ELA in the social studies curriculum and to review the Common

Core Standards in the area of civics. The department continued to work on the refining of common assessments at each grade level and the evaluation of the research matrix developed for the 6-8 social studies courses.

Through the course of the year, the department took on the initiative of incorporating the Common Core Standards for ELA in the social science curriculum. The department became familiar with these standards and identified how these standards were presently being addressed within the current curriculum. In addition, the department identified those standards which were not addressed in the instructional practices used in the social science curriculum or would benefit from further enhancement. This process included collaboration with the middle school English department.

In the area of civics, the department evaluated where the Common Core Standards for Civics were currently being addressed. The department further identified the content/standards which would be incorporated in a new area of instruction for the seventh grade social science curriculum. This would involve the addition of civics curriculum in the final quarter of the seventh grade.

As the department addressed several new initiatives, they continued to refine previous areas of focus. The department continued to evaluate, create, and improve common assessments. These common assessments continue to be an expectation and ensure that the students are receiving a consistent education at each grade level in the social studies curriculum. Student Learning Maps and Essential Questions continue to drive instruction.

The middle school social studies department continued its collaborative efforts by joining forces with the middle school librarian. York Suburban Middle School utilizes the Big6 research method to assist students with becoming efficient and successful learners through research. To establish a continuity and consistency, the social science department collaborated with the middle school librarian to develop a research matrix. This matrix identifies the research skills that every middle school student should be utilizing throughout his/her educational experience here at the middle school. The matrix identifies the identified skill and at which grade level each skill should be introduced, reinforced, and/or mastered. Through the course of the school year, each grade level implemented a research opportunity based on the research matrix.

The middle school department goals for the 2013-14 school year will include the following:

- to implement strategies which address the Common Core Standards in the area of ELA.
- to evaluate the civics curriculum as it addresses the Common Core Standards in Civics.
- to increase Depth of Knowledge within the social science curriculum.
- to continue to define the expectations for writing across the 6-8 social science curriculum.
- to continue to create common assessments as defined by the district.
- to continue implementing Reading Apprenticeship strategies in the social studies classrooms.

- to continue to review and improve LFS Essential Questions used to drive instruction.
- to continue to use and to become more familiar with the various components of SAS.

English/Language Arts

Common Core State Standards

As we transition to the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS), time was spent throughout the year aligning and revising the current Language Arts Curriculum to incorporate the CCSS. With the new standards, the reading and writing demands will increase creating a need for a greater stamina for students across all curricular areas. In order to achieve the deeper thinking and application, the type of questions and tasks required of students will need to be more complex. Depth of Knowledge levels have been a resource to help with the analysis of the current curriculum. Teachers are focusing on Level 2 and 3 types of thinking according to Depth of Knowledge which require students to extend beyond one or more texts. Teachers are aware of the Depth of Knowledge Levels of Thinking and are utilizing the levels when revamping curriculum to match CCSS. There are sample questions at each of the four levels that teachers are reviewing to ensure that the type of questioning being presented in the classrooms are going to push students to a more complex level of thinking.

Reading and Writing Across the Curriculum

Common Core State Standards moves reading and writing beyond the Language Arts classrooms and into the content areas. The Language Arts teachers are utilizing online resources such as SIRS Discoverer to find non-fiction articles that coincide with topics covered in the literature used within the curriculum as well as topics within the content areas. The middle school Science and Social Studies teachers are reevaluating the amount as well as the complexity of reading taking place in these courses to also meet the new standards. The English/Language Arts teachers are working together with the content area teachers in collaborative planning to help better incorporate reading strategies that are going to help students extend beyond the literal information. Two Language Arts teachers developed two CPE courses, pending approval from the state, which will provide the teachers within York Suburban School District access to multiple reading and writing strategies that can be utilized across all disciplines. This includes strategies from the Reading Apprenticeship Framework as well as the Jane Schaffer writing program.

Jane Schaffer Writing

In an effort to produce stronger writers as well as prepare the students for the demands of writing at the high school level and beyond, the Jane Schaffer Writing program has been introduced to all teachers within the middle school. The Jane Schaffer Writing program provides a framework for organizing writing whether it is persuasive/argumentative, informational, or response to literature. The content areas are expected to use this same language when completing writing assignments, so that students are given multiple opportunities to practice the skills of writing with a variety of prompts and tasks. The goal is that all students will become familiar with how to organize a strong piece of writing and move away from the stringent formula by adding more style to their writing.

Grammar

Language Arts Department Chairs from Elementary through high school are working on revamping the Grammar curriculum by using the CCSS to create a progression across the grades. As a middle school we are now in the process of adding to the curriculum to show what students will be expected to do at each grade level as well as how this instruction will be delivered. This area continues to be a work in progress as we research the best way to make grammar instruction meaningful and useful to all students.

Supplemental Programs

Study Island/Reading Workshop/LA Prep

Study Island is an internet based program where students have the opportunity to practice multiple choice questions related to reading and writing. The Pennsylvania standards are used when creating the questions, so the program is much like a PSSA. Study Island has recently updated their program to include questions aligned with the Common Core State Standards. Students in all three grade levels that are on the bubble whether it is low proficient, high proficient, or low advanced in Reading are placed in an LA Prep class where they utilize the Study Island program as well as receive direct instruction in order to help the students make progress on the PSSA. This class meets four days out of a six day cycle for 45 minutes. Students within each section vary from one cycle day to the next depending on each individual schedule. The LA Prep teacher is able to generate reports, and create small groups to address individual needs. This program begins in the fall and concludes after the PSSA testing is completed.

All students in grades 6th-8th completed three benchmark assessments on Study throughout the year. The 6th graders were also administered a MAP assessment three times throughout the year. The data was then analyzed by the Language Arts teachers to assist in making instructional decisions. This allowed teachers to form small groups to help better meet the needs of the middle school population.

Reading Workshop is a supplemental class that is required for students who are Basic and Below Basic in Reading PSSA. These students have an additional reading class for 45 minutes every day for 8th grade students and 45 minutes three times in a six day cycle for seventh grade students. Within the Reading Workshop class skills and strategies worked on in the regular Language Arts classes are reinforced. This course also provides front loading or reinforcing information covered in Science (7th) and Social Studies (8th) classes. This provides students with background knowledge, which in turn leads to better achievement in the content area courses. Collaboration between the workshop teacher and the Content Area teachers helps to provide a stronger reading program to be able to move this group from Basic/Below Basic to Proficient/Advanced. The students within the Reading Workshop program complete a MAP test three times a year. At the end of 2012-2013 school year 82% of the students in the 7th and 8th grade program have shown growth in reading according to this assessment. This growth reflects not only the current year, but previous years at the middle school.

Math

The York Suburban Mathematics Department continued to study data in order to drive instruction. In addition, we continued to investigate technology and its use in the mathematics classroom, worked together with the high school and elementary teachers to provide the best K-12 curriculum for all students and began to develop assessments for our new textbook series. As a grade level, we looked at our new textbook series in regards to eligible content, supplementary materials, technology support, and common core.

Our grade level departments analyzed Study Island Benchmark Tests in order to provide instruction for all students in the areas of greatest content needs. In addition to warm ups and classroom instruction, Study Island practice is used. Small groups of students were identified at each grade level for eligible content support based on the Benchmark testing. Grade level departments also worked together to develop common assessments based on Form A from our textbook. New assessments will be developed for the 2013-2014 year.

This year we met with the high school math department during two department meetings and met

with the 5th grade teachers for one day in May. Our emphasis at the high school was our new curriculum and the changes that will make in student placement, the Keystone Algebra 1 exam, and common assessments for Algebra 1 and Algebra 2. In our 5/6 grade meeting, we discussed our new series, the challenge that will come with Common Core, and placement for this coming school year. Our meetings are essential if we want to continue to have a flow from one grade level to another in our math education. Communication is key to success with all of the changes that are coming our way!

We developed a folder on the Share T Drive called Pearson Hub. In this folder we have separate folders for each of our textbooks. All assessments and materials related to new textbooks should be saved in these folders for everyone to access. The high school also developed a folder on the Share Drive called Secondary Share which is used by both high school and middle school teachers to share any assessments or other documents developed for our Algebra 1 or Algebra II courses.

Our workshop classes used the data from MAP testing to work with our Basic and Below Basic students in areas of weakness. A variety of strategies were used along with First in math, Study Island, and FASTT Math. Our Performance Math classes were taught this year by seventh and eighth grade teachers. We also had several other students join us throughout the year if they were available during activity period and scored low grades on our Study Island Benchmark tests. We also tried to support special education students, TIP students, and ES students in this support program when they were available.

The mathematics department goals are 2013-2014 will include the following:

- Continue to share RA strategies and implement strategies into the math classroom
- Share Brain Breaks that are used in the classroom
- Continue to investigate and share technology and its use in our classroom
- Evaluate new Common Assessments for our new textbooks and modify as appropriate
- Communicate with the high school math department through joint meetings
- Study core Standards and Eligible content in regards to our new textbook
- Continue to use data to drive instruction in order to prepare our students for the PSSA and Keystone Exam
- Continue to stay updated on the latest SAS information
- Continue to meet with 5th grade teachers to appropriately place students in the correct course based on the IOWA, MAP, and teacher recommendation looking at retention, acquisition, and work ethic

Special Education

- Team meetings focused on collaborative discussions in meeting consistency with procedures and implementation of tasks. (MAP testing, support expectations, progress monitoring collection and reporting).
- Implementation of RA strategies: double entry journal; talking to the text; 25 word gist; one sentence summary; and 3-2-1.
- MAP assessment was the focus for the 2012-2013 school year.
- Focused on looking at the various reports that the NWEA website offers. Read and analyzed the data from MAP.

- Discussed progress monitoring data. The team discussed the tools used and how to conduct progress monitoring.

Emotional Support and Alternative Education

- The ES/SPARK team continued to provide a supportive program for the students by communicating daily with the teachers and administrators.
- All students of the program successfully completed all academic requirements with many making the honor and distinguished honor rolls.
- All students achieved growth behaviorally. Many received no office referrals for the year.

Unified Arts

- Incorporating RA Strategies
- Using *Moodle* in classroom activities
- Revising individual lessons to provide to new student needs
- Incorporate new technology in each classroom
- Utilizing essential questions to focus students on the daily lesson
- Practical applications outside of a regular classroom
- Increasing reading/writing strategies
- Large and small group problem solving strategies
- UA collaboration to assist students with special needs

Foreign Language

Major focuses were assessments and curriculum.

- Common assessments were developed among teachers teaching the same language.
- Revised common assessments so that the percentage of the different topics assessed matched the percentage of time spent on those particular topics in instruction.
- Began looking at what grammar topics need to be taught and when.
- Developing quality Essential Questions has been a major focus of the department
- Essential Questions have been stored digitally for the students to refer to when preparing for tests or quizzes.
- Utilizing technology to enhance instruction was a goal of the department. SMART board ideas and examples were shared at department meetings.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

CHIPS (Caring Helpers Igniting Peer Success)

- Seventh and eighth grade students expressing a desire to participate in a peer-mentoring program spent one day in August 2012 in a training workshop.
- Following the workshop training, the CHIPS were prepared to: serve as tour guides for new students, to act as section mentors for new students, and to assist with the REACH program and the fifth grade orientation.

REACH (Reaching Expectations and Climbing Higher) Program

- The AM REACH program continued during the 2012-2013 school year. The AM REACH

program was designed as a proactive measure intended to assist students with organizational and study skills concerns. Each student in the AM program was assigned to a CHIPS mentor. As students met with success, they exited the program and were placed on a monitor status.

- In addition to the services of AM REACH, students met with their guidance counselors in a weekly luncheon club. During this luncheon, the counselors reviewed the student's academic progress and offered encouragement to motivate the student's academic performance.
- The PM REACH program began the third quarter of the 2012-2013 school year and included students from grades 6, 7, and 8 who were at-risk of failing their current grade placement PM REACH was available two afternoons a week from 3:00- 4:00. Middle School staff assisted students by helping them complete outstanding assignments and homework, organize notebooks, and study for quizzes and tests.

After School Homework Club

- The homework club met 3 times a week from 3:00- 4:00 pm. This program is open to all students who wanted to complete their homework before going home or who needed assistance with content material. The club was organized and supervised by teachers.

Clubs

- Teachers volunteered to host a variety of club options for students throughout the school year. Students selected a club of their choice and participated in the club activity two times a month. The club topics were varied and met the social needs of the students.

BUILDING LEVEL COMMITTEES

- **All Hazard School Safety Program**
- The safety committee continues to oversee the student and staff safety needs. The committee continues to revise and update the emergency evacuation plan and the shelter in-place plan for students and staff.

Olweus Anti-bullying Program or P.R.I.D.E.

- While academic achievement was the primary focus of the middle school staff, social skills needs were not neglected. To address the social pressures and challenges middle school students faced, all students participated in the PRIDE, anti-bullying program.
- Three year spiraling curriculum is implemented one day a cycle for the entire school year. Students attended two assemblies and were assigned to an Alliance group. Each Alliance group was composed of 10-12 students in grades six, seven, and eight. The Alliance group met once a cycle and was facilitated by a teacher trained in class meetings. Social skills topics were discussed in the class meeting format.

STUDENT SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

PSO

The Parent Support Organization continued to be an important part of our total school program. The subcommittees of the PSO provided assistance and support for many areas of our program. The organization hosted a sixth grade ice cream social and the end of the year carnival (Fun Day). In addition to sponsoring activities for students, the PSO assisted with the band, library, fund raising, and hosting of school events.

Student Council

Student Council continued to be a service-oriented organization.

- Under the advising of Mrs. Peggy Zirkle, Mrs. Judy Hershner, and Mr. David Darrah, student council organized activities such as: school dances, the magazine fund raiser, and the eighth grade dinner dance.
- Student council also contributed funds for the student lounge and to the American Red Cross, Dollars for Scholars, York Wildlife, and Animal Rescue.

PRESIDENTIAL ACADEMIC AWARD

Sixty-five eighth grade students received the Presidential Academic Award. This award requires a 3.5 grade point average over a three-year period and a standardized test score in the 85th national percentile or higher.

In summary, quality assessment at the middle school level goes beyond providing an excellent core academic program. The Middle School staff has developed diverse programs that are developmentally responsive to early adolescent needs. The team concept and teacher committee structures continue to be an excellent avenue to address both issues. This school year was filled with numerous successes and accomplishments.

PSSA RESULTS

AYP Percentages

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| Mathematics | 89% |
| Reading | 91% |

Overall Proficiency Percentage for the MS

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|-------------|-----|
| Mathematics | 92% |
| Reading | 91% |
| Writing | 92% |
| Science | 81% |