

Teachable Moment

2009-10 WCPSS District Improvement: Summary

This is a summary of a full report available at:
<http://www.wcpss.net/evaluation-research/reports/2010/1016di10.pdf>

Background

In 2006-07, under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), WCPSS was placed in District Improvement because it did not meet AYP goals in reading for two consecutive years at all school levels. The two NCLB groups that performed below proficiency levels were limited English proficient students (LEP) and students with disabilities (SWD). The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP[®]) was selected as the primary strategy to meet the needs of LEP and SWD students as well as other students in elementary and middle schools. In 2009-10, WCPSS exited District Improvement in reading and remained in District Improvement in mathematics based on performance of Black/African-American and Hispanic/Latino students, students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (FRL), and SWD students.

Data Collection Methods and Analysis

To assess the level of implementation of the District Improvement Plan in 2010-11, the evaluator administered teacher surveys, conducted focus groups with teachers and SIOP[®] coaches, interviewed program staff, and analyzed the SIOP[®] training database.

Implementation

In 2009-10, SIOP continued as the primary District Improvement effort for elementary and middle schools. SIOP[®] reached more teachers through training and evolved to better support learning and teaching.

- **SIOP[®] training** numbers continued to increase. In 2009-10 alone, training was provided to 84% of teachers at targeted schools (with increased coaching support) and 28% at non-targeted schools. Training focused more on teacher and student needs at each school. Twelve schools received schoolwide training. The total number of SIOP[®] trained teachers increased from 588 in the previous year to 956. In non-targeted schools, most SIOP[®] training was provided at the school site. Overall, 89% of teachers at targeted schools received their training from the SIOP[®] coach. About three-fourths of teachers believed the SIOP[®] training was “mostly” or “somewhat beneficial.”
- At **targeted** schools, **coaches** provided instructional resources, conducted lesson observations and demonstrations, and offered co-teaching and teacher conferences as a follow up to the SIOP[®] training. Overall, 81% of all teachers received some type of coaching support.

- Over 549 **SIOP[®] modified focus lessons** were made available through the learning and teaching guides for grades 2-8 in language arts, middle school mathematics, Algebra I, and reading intervention. The number and use of SIOP[®] modified focus lessons increased substantially from previous years; awareness levels could still be improved (73% in targeted and 50% in non-targeted schools). Among all grade 2-8 teachers, two-thirds reported “almost always” or “frequently” using modified focus lessons, with half rating them as “somewhat beneficial.”
- **Implementation of training and buy-in** at schools strengthened: 92% of SIOP[®] trained teachers at targeted schools and 69% at non-targeted schools stated in the survey that they implemented SIOP[®] components. Also, 15 of 17 targeted schools integrated SIOP[®] into their School Improvement Plans.
- Teacher focus group participants noted that they regularly used vocabulary (“building background” component) and grouping strategies (“interaction” component). On the other hand, they did not frequently use content and language objectives. SIOP[®] coaches in their focus group commented that although implementation increased, teachers were still only partially implementing certain components.

The secondary component was re-shaped in 2009-10. In mathematics, a series of workshops were provided to 119 middle and high school Algebra I teachers on strategies to improve instruction for students, especially struggling students. In adolescent literacy, workshops were offered at high schools, and literacy coaches provided training and coaching to English I teachers at 12 schools.

Recommendations

Principals and school staff:

Use content and language objectives more consistently; use all components on which training was provided, discuss at PLTs; use available SIOP[®] focus lessons (in C-MAPP at <http://cmapp.wcpss.net/public/>); request a school-based SIOP[®] training; forward feedback on how lessons can be improved to coaches or the SIOP[®] team at siop@wcpss.net

The District Improvement advisory committee:

Revise the goals to reflect an increased emphasis on mathematics and on the needs of the current low performing NCLB subgroups; consider expanding training in non-targeted schools and reaching more teachers with the secondary component.



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