

CONCEPT PROPOSAL TO ADDRESS MINORITY ACHIEVEMENT

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COMMISSION OF EXTERNAL EVALUATIONS

- For the 2010-11 school year, the Board of Education commissioned four external evaluations of BCSD programs. One evaluation focused on the longitudinal performance of minority students on state assessments.
- Evaluators presented their findings for the BOE during a work session in January.

FINDINGS – PACT/PASS

There are large assessment score gaps between White students and all other subgroups in Beaufort County. The past five years have produced the following trends:

- White students' scores are remaining consistently high or improving to even higher levels.
- Hispanic students' scores have increased steadily and quickly. Their gains have closed the gap between Hispanics and Whites in one of the most preferable methods. Both groups have grown but Hispanics have grown faster than Whites. Hispanics have surpassed Blacks in many cases.
- The growth of African-American students has been mostly positive. It appeared that African-American students were growing on PACT in all areas and in most areas of PASS. Even though they were growing, the gaps were not closed since White students were growing as well.

FINDINGS – PACT/PASS, CONT.

- Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Students have steadily grown at an impressive rate. Since this subgroup has almost doubled in size over the past 8 years, this is certainly a point of celebration.
- Female and male performance have been growing steadily. However, since both groups are growing and females were ahead to begin with, the gap is not closing.
- Subsidized meals students have been making growth in their assessment scores. The gap is beginning to slowly close between subsidized meals and full pay meals because subsidized meals students are growing faster than full pay meals. This is a preferable method of closing an achievement gap.

FINDINGS - HSAP

There are large assessment score gaps between White students and all other subgroups in Beaufort County. Over the past five years:

- White students' scores are remaining consistently high or improving to even higher levels.
- Hispanic students' scores have increased steadily and quickly. There has been a 13.6 percentage point gain in passage rates for Hispanic students. Their gains have closed the gap between Hispanics and Whites. Both groups have grown but Hispanics have grown faster than Whites. Hispanics have surpassed Blacks on HSAP scores.
- African-American students' scores on HSAP have remained almost the same. A large gap still remains between African-American and White students. In addition, new gaps have emerged as Hispanic students have surpassed African-American students.

FINDINGS – HSAP, CONT.

- Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students have been steadily growing at an impressive rate. They have increased their passage rate by 28.8 percentage points. Since this subgroup has almost doubled in size over the past 8 years, this is certainly a positive finding for the district. This has reduced the gap tremendously between LEP and non LEP students.
- Females have increased their passage rate on HSAP while males have decreased their passage rates on HSAP. This has created a gender gap that did not exist in 2005 but clearly exists now.
- Subsidized meals students have not made many changes in the percent passing HSAP. The gap between subsidized meals and non-subsidized meals still exist.

COMMENDATIONS

- 1) The subgroups of African-American, White, Hispanic, Male, Female, LEP and Subsidized Meals made positive gains on the PACT test from 2006 to 2008 in all four subject areas based on the percent of students scoring Basic, Proficient or Advanced.
- 2) LEP students experienced double digit percentage point increases for students scoring Basic or above on PACT from 2006 to 2008 in ELA and science.
- 3) White students outscored the state in most grade levels and subject areas on the 2008 PACT test and the 2010 PASS test.
- 4) White females, White males, African American males, African American females, Hispanic males and Hispanic females increased the percent of students scoring Basic, Proficient or Advanced from the 2006 PACT to the 2008 PACT.

COMMENDATIONS

- 5) The gap between LEP and non-LEP students lessened from the 2006 PACT to the 2008 PACT.
- 6) The percent of Hispanic students passing HSAP on their 1st attempt have increased over the past five years.
- 7) Female students in Beaufort County have increased the HSAP percent passing over the past five years. When the analysis is taken further and divided by gender and ethnicity, all three of the subgroups: White, African-American and Hispanic females have experienced increases.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) African American males are the lowest scoring group on the PACT 2008, PASS 2010 and the HSAP 2010. If Beaufort County School District wants to continue to make academic growth, this subgroup must be moved upwards on their assessment results.
- 2) In order to achieve Recommendation #1, it will be critical to examine the teaching and learning practices of faculty in schools with high percentages of African American students.
- 3) Continue to monitor interventions and supports for Hispanic and LEP students. Both subgroups are making measurable gains on the assessments reviewed in this report. However, gaps still exist. Given that this population appears to be growing, it is necessary to ensure their continued academic support.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4) Males in general, regardless of their ethnic background, are being surpassed by females. This is not necessarily a negative finding, however, the gap between male and female will need to be monitor. Both groups should continue to grow to ensure that the gap does not widen.
- 5) Both African American and White males have decreased in the percent passing HSAP on their 1st attempt over the past five years.

CONCEPT PROPOSAL

- We propose that the Board of Education approve the concept of an initiative to improve performance of all students with a concentration on accelerating performance of African-American male students. A specific plan will be shared with the Board at a work session. This is a concept proposal at this point.
- Additional energy is needed in high incidence schools to focus on minority achievement. Breaking the trend in student achievement will need specific strategies. Our concept proposal will emphasize a district-wide effort to mine the academic and leadership potential of this currently under-performing demographic subgroup

HIGH INCIDENT SCHOOLS

- The highest concentrations of African-American males are in 13 schools.
 - Approximately 50% of BCSD African-American males in grades 3-5 are served at Beaufort Elementary, Joseph S. Shanklin Elementary, Broad River Elementary, St. Helena Elementary and Whale Branch Elementary Schools.
 - Approximately 58% percent of BCSD African-American males are served in grades 6-8 at Robert Smalls, Whale Branch and Lady's Island Middle Schools.
 - Approximately 86% of BCSD African-American male high school students are served at Battery Creek, Beaufort, and Whale Branch Early College High Schools.

MINING THE ACADEMIC POTENTIAL

- Building capacity involves increasing staff members' knowledge and skill in schools with concentrations of poverty and minority students. High expectations for academic, athletic and extra-curricular involvement must permeate the schools.
 1. Professional Development in Sheltered Instructional Observation Protocol (SIOP) training has assisted in reaching Latino students in recent years. Training in SIOP will be accomplished for all teachers in high incidence schools between June 2011 and August 2012.
 2. Training in Understanding Children of Poverty and gender differences will also be implemented for all staff in these schools between June 2011 and August 2012.
 3. Currently, a grant-funded master's degree program to enhance teacher knowledge in math, science and literacy is underway for 64 teachers. 23 of which currently teach in our high incident schools.

MINING THE ACADEMIC POTENTIAL, CONT.

- Requiring athletic directors to actively advise and market athletes for college readiness is a current expectation; however, specific accountability measures will be developed by August 2011 to monitor attainment of goals.
- Pay for performance plans are in place in thirteen TAP (Teacher Advancement Program) schools for fall 2011. This program rewards teachers and staff for increasing student achievement on a value-added model. Twelve of thirteen schools high incident schools are TAP schools.
- To specifically address the issue of reading comprehension for secondary students, we propose to provide specialized training in reading instruction for all Social Studies teachers in grades 6 - 12. Social Studies, as a subject area, has outstanding potential for growth as teachers continue to help students learn how to read and process primary documents and non-fiction texts. The establishment of critical thinking skills and reading strategies in our adolescent students will positively impact their academic performance across the spectrum of courses they attempt.

MINING THE ACADEMIC POTENTIAL, CONT

- The importance of strengthening literacy and numeracy skills of secondary students, specifically African-American males continues to be a vital component of overall academic success. In pursuit of this challenging issue, we plan to employ a multi-faceted approach directed at enhancing both teacher quality and student capacity.
- We will complete in summer 2011 the restructure of middle school course sequences and expectations to better prepare students for high school coursework and college readiness.
- We have also established Enrichment Lab classes in Grade 9 for struggling students, many of which are African-American males, to increase time in English and Math classes. READ 180, a research-based support curriculum, will be utilized in each lab course to standardize and focus our targeted intervention for struggling readers.

MINING THE ACADEMIC POTENTIAL, CONT

- We propose to identify current eighth graders who are over-age for grade, who have been retained, or who are at risk for dropping out due to academic challenges and enroll them in a Springboard Program during 2011-12, to advance academic performance through intense teaching and support. The students will be identified in the spring of their eighth grade year, begin in early August, and continue during the 2011-12 school year. The program would allow students to enter high school in fall 2012 with at least six Carnegie credits as tenth graders, thereby moving them forward to graduate high school with their peers. Sustained support will be provided to the Springboard program students as they enter tenth grade to ensure success.
- There are also over-aged for grade high school students in each high school. Adult Education staff will meet with each student to identify individuals who could benefit from GED and/or adult education programs. Students who complete a GED or Work Keys certification through the Adult Education program can access a number of post-secondary opportunities at Technical College of the Lowcountry. Specific articulation programs will be provided by the school district/technical college instructional team

MINING THE ACADEMIC POTENTIAL, CONT

- Summer Technology Camps (Robotics and Animation) will be held for students in grades 3-5 and 6-8. Holding the camps during Extended Learning Time when transportation is provided ensures that all students can participate. Robotics Camps will be housed at Bluffton and Lady's Island Middle Schools as well as elementary schools throughout the district.
- Summer Readiness Camps will be held for rising students in grades 5 and 6 at WBES, WBMS, SHES and LIMS. Students will be engaged in a two week learning experience designed to reinforce academic and behavioral expectations. Also, rising 9th grade students at WBECHS participate in a summer readiness program as they pursue college credits and prepare for the entrance test to Technical College of the Lowcountry.
- A summer enrichment partnership has been established with the SC Governor's School for Science and Mathematics called Middle School to College. WBMS students have been invited to participate in week long research activities at the Governor's School in summer 2011.

MINING THE LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL

- Currently, Gentleman's Club programs are in place at Whale Branch and Robert Smalls Middle schools. All middle schools will host Gentlemen's Clubs for 2011.
- A Youth Leadership Institute will be conducted in June and August of 2011. A week-long intensive program on leadership with outside mentors will culminate with science field trips and college visits. Ten to fifteen young men from each middle school will be invited to attend, with a mix of elected leaders and high potential young men.
- Preparing students for college and career requires monitoring their progress and redirecting them when they go off course. Requiring athletic directors to actively advise and market athletes for college readiness is a current expectation and specific accountability measures will be developed by August 2011 to monitor attainment of goals. Involving parents of all student-athletes in discussion of their futures will be a clearly articulated set of practices to be outlined by June 2011.
- A district-wide Student Leadership initiative will begin in 2011-12 targeted to students in Grades 3 – 12.

APPROVAL OF CONCEPT

- We respectfully request the Board's approval of the concept of an initiative focused on building success for all students also emphasizing student performance in the high incidence schools mentioned in this report.