Case Study for Irving Elementary School

Grade 4

Centralia District 135

Centralia, IL

February 2003
### Irving Elementary School – Key Takeaways

#### Challenges Overcome

- Teachers identified a lack of communication between 3rd grade and 4th grade teachers. Superintendent has identified the cross communication gap as an issue to work on during the current and upcoming school year.
- District initiative to provide all students with the tools required for successful learning (safe environment, easy access to school, appropriate clothing, nutrition, etc.)

#### Catalysts for Change

- High mobility within district (some schools > 50%) forced a realignment of education centers to reduce student transfer rates.
- Increasing poverty levels in Centralia have created new issues for the educators outside of traditional areas (safety, nutrition, home violence, etc.)

#### Key Factors for School Success

- Principal’s opinions
  - Creative professional development practices
  - Strong support from community and parents
  - Dedication and passion of teachers
  - Solid leadership from superintendent’s office
- Teachers’ opinions
  - Teacher commitment
  - Grade specific collaboration and training
  - Experienced teachers
Irving Elementary School – Profile

**School Profile**

- Grades 4th
- Five year average: 182 students, 64% low income, 30% student mobility, 94% student attendance, 55-77% white, 22-42% black, 1-2% Hispanic
- 8 teachers in 2002-03
  - All 4th grade students in Centralia district attend Irving School. Sister school holds all 5th grade students
  - Teacher mobility rates – average mobility levels for Irving School
  - Teachers are split into two teaching teams, each focusing on specific groups of students
- Principal: Tyler Brown
  - 2 years as Principal at Irving

**ISAT performance**

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**Technology Profile**

- Each classroom has three dedicated PCs. Each teacher has dedicated PC. External computer lab has 20+ PCs with internet access. Computer lab is funded and staffed by Americorp resources
- Support: full-time, onsite IT coordinator and roving district IT coordinator
- Study Island, Accelerated Reader, Making the Grade
- E-mail communication extensive for teachers and administration
- Web based report card
Irving Elementary School – Data Collection and Analysis, Standard

Data Capture and Analysis

- Iowa Test of Basic Skills
  - Student results are analyzed by teachers and principal. Students are ability grouped using ITBS and beginning of year evaluations in order to focus curriculum material at appropriate pace and depth of content
- ISAT
- Teacher generated performance tracking
  - Teachers collect section test results during each grading period. Teachers track homework assignments and stress student accountability for completing assignments. Most of Irving’s data gathering processes are directed by teachers and are informal in nature

Implementation of Data Analysis

- Title I student placement is driven from ISAT/ITBS results and teacher evaluations
- Curriculum committee meetings conducted every six weeks to review progress and recommend modifications
- Students re-aligned into teaching groups based on progress or identified deficiencies
- Teachers have daily planning meetings with peers to test new teaching ideas based on grade book analysis
### Irving Elementary School – Data Collection and Analysis, Exceptional

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## Irving Elementary School – Leadership/Culture

### Leadership Roles
- Assistant superintendent responsible for primary curriculum decisions
- District superintendent very hands on with the activities at all Centralia schools
- School is “teacher” driven. Principal assumes role as a peer facilitator of school decisions
- District based technology coordinator with support staff directs technology initiatives. School appoints a technology advisor from the teacher ranks

### Communication
- Home-school facilitator used to reach students in their home environment. Effort is directed to increase parent involvement in school activities
- Weekly school wide meetings, district wide curriculum committees (6 wks), district wide subject meetings

### External Support
- Americorps volunteer from nearby junior college
- Franklin Network Community Association (FNCA) supports technology programs, school improvement programs, provides volunteers, performs grant writing
- Strong collaboration with local universities (7 schools)
- School summer camp program sponsored by community churches

### Professional Development
- District principals received “Gates Training”
- Peer workshops given monthly and are available to all teachers
- District relies on teacher “knowledge experts” that supply training workshops to interested teachers
- Teachers attend training sessions out of district as well as receive training courses on school site.
- Greater teacher demand for training than budget supports
### Irving Elementary School – Miscellaneous

#### Hard Copy Appendices
- Teacher assessments
- District assessments
- Others

#### Funding Channels
- School requested grants
- FNCA grants
- State allocated education funds
- Federal education funds (NCLB)

#### Teachers Corner
- Teachers view the results of ITBS and ISAT tests as effective indicators of student progress. Teachers place a greater reliance on standardized tests than subjective letter grading when evaluating student educational needs.