

TDS provides comprehensive instructional reform through improved structural organization, curricula specially developed for highly challenged schools, and ongoing professional developments and technical assistance in effective instructional strategies. TDS schools' small learning communities and teacher teaming enable teachers to teach strong, standards-based lessons and develop relationships with students. Daily teacher team meetings and weekly subject area meetings ensure effective planning and instructional coherence. On-site math and language arts coach/ facilitators with reduced teaching loads are able to continue the coaching cycle and provide hands-on support to teachers. Extended periods of 75 to 90 minutes for core academic subjects give teachers time address student needs and build critical skills.

TDS curriculum uses instructional strategies that engage students with diverse backgrounds, learning styles, and interests. Language arts readings reflect authors and themes from a variety of backgrounds, helping students develop knowledge of their own culture as well as others. TDS instructional strategies also include differentiated activities for a variety of learning styles and skill levels. TDS provides teachers with training and resources as well as units and lessons that employ various text-based and experiential activities at the individual, small group, and class levels.. TDS' blend of whole-class direct instruction, cooperative learning in student teams, and individual practice gives students strong motivation for learning while helping them build both cognitive and social skills.

TDS' middle grades curriculum includes *Mastering the Middle Grades*, teaching life and study skills and career awareness; *Student Team Literature (STLit)*, curricula for a wide selection of books offering textual exploration, rich discussion, and project-based learning; and support resources for the *A History of US* series. TDS also offers materials and training to set up highly-effective special help labs in ELA and math for students most severely behind grade level.

TDS high schools' Ninth Grade Success Academy provides academic and social foundations for successful transition to high school through *Freshman Seminar*, a study, social, and career planning skills course. Math and ELA classes are each 90 minutes a day; research-based double dose courses accelerate learning for students below grade level. Career Academies for grades 10-12 feature similar academic supports and double dose courses for students below grade level in math or literacy. Challenging college preparatory core curriculum for all students is aligned to Illinois standards; those above grade level take accelerated math, science, and foreign language courses. Career-focused electives in Career Academies expose students to career experiences, develop related skills and knowledge, and emphasize connections between career and academic learning, as well as offering off-site career experiences. Specific career emphases for academies are based on student, parent, community, and staff interests.

TDS provided effective school turnaround services to Manual High School in Peoria through a SIG grant from 2008-2012; the school's composite score of students meeting or exceeding state test standards rose from 15.5% in 2008 to 35% in 2011 (down slightly to 29% in 2012), even as student mobility went from 30.9% in 2007-08 to 63.5% in 2011-12. TDS is currently the lead school improvement partner in several Chicago high schools; at Gage Park High School, composite PSAE scores rose from 7.5 in 2013 to 12 in 2014. In studies, Davis & McPartland (2009) found increased reading gains in 9<sup>th</sup> graders in TDS' Adolescent Literacy program; Ruby, Mac Iver, & Byrnes (2004) showed that high-poverty middle graders using TDS' STLit were 73% more likely to overcome reading deficits. Balfanz, Ruby, & Mac Iver's 2008 study of TDS' Math Acceleration Lab found that underperforming students enrolled in the lab significantly outgained a control group on the CTBS TerraNova Survey Math Test by 4.1 NCEs ( $p < .001$ ).

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