

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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Multi-tiered, ongoing job-embedded professional development has been a hallmark of the TDS program. In each of its city sites, TDS fields a team of three instructional facilitators. Two of these are experts in math and English language arts instruction, while the third focuses on School and Student Support Services (S4). The math and English language facilitators provide professional development to train teachers in their respective fields, using research-based instructional strategies designed to engage and motivate disadvantaged students and to help those who are achieving below grade level to accelerate learning. In addition, each school designates highly-skilled teachers, one in math and one in ELA, to serve as onsite coaches in their respective fields, while a School Transformation Facilitator (STF) coordinates the school improvement program overall and facilitates communication with all stakeholders.

TDS instructional facilitators provide direct professional development and modeling of best practices for teachers, both in pre-service trainings and through ongoing technical assistance. They also work closely with the onsite school math and ELA coaches, equipping them to provide continuous support to teachers (particularly new or younger teachers and those who may be working outside of their primary content areas). Facilitators work with coaches and teachers to implement TDS curricula developed for students living in poverty, to identify and employ strategies based on the most current research in the science of learning, and to create and maintain extra-help labs for those in greatest need of support (students more than two years behind grade level in math or reading). In addition, the TDS teacher team structure creates a professional community in which teachers support one another, working together on improved instructional strategies, lesson planning, student supports, and instructional coherence. Through the tiered involvement of TDS instructional facilitators, onsite instructional coaches, and colleagues with different strengths and experiences, teachers in TDS schools have access to not monthly, but weekly and even daily opportunities for professional development. This helps to create a culture of achievement that will continue beyond the program's implementation in the school.

The S4 facilitator works directly with principals, onsite School Transformation Facilitators, and other school staff to develop the staff's capacity to make effective use of Early Warning Indicator data to identify and assist students most at risk, and to implement strategies to create a positive school climate that enables all students to reach their highest potential. In addition, the S4 facilitator works directly with teachers using TDS' *Mastering the Middle Grades* and *Freshman Seminar* curricula, study and life skills courses that help students navigate the challenging transitions of adolescence, develop social skills and self-management, and explore career options and life goals. These facilitators, along with the TDS Regional Manager and the School Transformation Facilitators, work closely with school and district administrators to ensure that the programs implemented are aligned with the goals and objectives of the district and the State of Illinois.

The effectiveness of the TDS' tiered professional development and the full coaching cycle are documented in two recent papers focusing on ELA instruction: <http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Davis-McPartland-Pryseski-2014-The-Effects-of-Coaching.pdf> and [http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/ADLIT\\_Coaching-Paper\\_2010.pdf](http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/ADLIT_Coaching-Paper_2010.pdf).

TDS has long been a pioneer in the use of data to drive instruction. Before implementation begins in a school, TDS engages with school leadership, staff, parents, and community stakeholders to collect and analyze data pertaining to academic achievement, school climate, attendance, behavior, and other key benchmarks. This information makes it possible to identify strengths and resources as well as areas of need and possible improvement strategies.

During implementation of the school improvement program, TDS helps schools set up an Early Warning Indicator (EWI: attendance, behavior, and course performance) data analysis system that provides regular snapshots of performance indicators and enables teachers and staff to identify immediately students who are off-track or slipping off-track in any of these areas. The TDS School Transformation Facilitator helps to equip school leadership and staff in the use of EWI data, while TDS instructional facilitators in math and English provide professional development on how to use formative as well as summative assessments to improve instruction. Teacher teams meet bi-weekly to analyze students' EWI data within their small learning communities, and adjust instruction, individual interventions, and school climate practices accordingly. In addition, daily meetings of instructional teams facilitate informal review of students' ongoing academic performance and allow teachers to share best practices and suggest ways to improve instructional strategies.

TDS provides quarterly reports to each school summarizing how many students are currently off-track on each indicator and how these numbers compare to prior years. In addition, TDS collects a quarterly Transformation Plan from each school summarizing its current status on essential components within the pillars of change, actions initiated (including timeline) to strengthen that component, and goals and evidence of impact. School climate surveys are collected each spring from teachers, principals, and students; state achievement and diagnostic testing data are also collected. TDS generates an end of year report for each school, summarizing its prevention and recovery rates and goal attainment rates. When reports are released, a series of webinars assists field-based staff and managers to interpret them and make course corrections as indicated.

TDS has effectively used data in its Chicago schools to bring off-track students on track and keep them there. For example, in John Hope College Preparatory Academy in Chicago, as TDS helped school staff to monitor student data and effect appropriate interventions, average daily attendance rose by 6% between 2012 and 2014, from 76.6% to 82.6%; during the same period, the number of freshman on track in the EWI indicators rose from 68.5% to 78.8%. 93% of students off-track in behavior were brought back on track, and 98% of students overall were on track in behavior by the end of the year. Similarly, during the same time period at Gage Park High School, average daily attendance rose from 75.1% to 79.7%, and the four-year graduation rate increased from 41.8% to 56.6%. Chicago Talent Development High School, which Talent Development operated from 2008-2014, used data to drive intervention so effectively that the school an average daily attendance of 89% through 2014. It also had a 90% five year graduation rate, as contrasted to the 85% overall graduation rate for the School District of Chicago.

TDS has a robust infrastructure to ensure accurate and timely program monitoring. In each school, TDS collects outcome, planning, and implementation data and uses this data for performance management and evaluation and to provide useful timely feedback to the schools, TDS field staff, and partner organizations. Feedback focuses on the school's progress in preventing students from slipping off the graduation path and in helping students who do slip off-path to recover. With assistance from the TDS School and Student Support Services (S4) Facilitator, the School Transformation Facilitator in each school helps school leadership and staff set up or align a data collection system for student-level EWI data (attendance, behavior, and course performance), and organize and facilitate bi-weekly meetings of teacher teams and associated support staff to monitor students' EWI data, analyze trends, plan interventions, and evaluate progress. TDS Instructional Facilitators also submit regular reports of technical assistance provided to each school, as well as the progress and challenges they observe.

TDS collects and processes this EWI data quarterly and provides a quarterly report to each school, summarizing how many students are currently off-track on each indicator and how these numbers compare to prior quarters and prior years. The TDS Field Manager also meets quarterly for implementation review with school principals, STFs, and the S4 facilitator. TDS collects a quarterly Transformation Plan from each school summarizing its current status on essential components within the pillars of change, actions initiated (including timeline) to strengthen that component, and goals and evidence of impact.

Finally, each School Transformation Facilitator submits data to the TDS internal research team for analysis and then for review by the TDS Management Team. School Climate Surveys are conducted each spring with teachers, principals, and students; state achievement and diagnostic testing data are also collected. TDS then generates an end of year report for each school, summarizing its prevention and recovery rates and goal attainment rates as compare to TDS's key goals. When reports are released, a series of webinars assists field-based staff and managers to interpret them and make course corrections as indicated. Annual roll-up reports across all TDS schools and within each TDS city are generated for network-wide and city-wide planning, evaluation, and goal setting. TDS uses this information to re-direct its program development and support efforts in any areas of challenge the data reveal.

TDS recognizes that importance of family and community involvement in both the activities of a school and its strategic planning. For this reason, TDS integrates outreach and collaborative practices throughout its scope of activities and works intentionally with the school staff and partners to identify and capitalize on opportunities for greater community inclusion.

Inclusion of all stakeholders begins with the initial planning process. TDS works with the school administration and district to reach out to parents and community organizations to involve them in the transformation planning process, inviting them to participate in focus groups and planning sessions so that TDS can understand the needs of the community and the school. TDS works with schools to maintain those relationships and leverage them to increase overall participation during implementation.

Many elements of the TDS model include community engagement as an integral component. The TDS Early Warning Indicator (EWI) system enables schools to quickly identify students who are falling off track and develop individual interventions for each student. This highly personalized approach to student success significantly increases the frequency and quality of home contacts by teachers, both to solve problems collaboratively and to report back good news when the interventions have their impact.

One of the pillars of TDS' work is to help the school develop a Can-Do climate. This means creating an environment of respect and support in which all students see school as relevant, safe, and engaging. This pertains to adults entering the building as well. Recognizing that some families have had difficult experiences with schools themselves, TDS works with the staff to create a welcoming physical and affective environment in the school, one in which goals, appropriate student data, and student work are prominently displayed.

Each quarter, TDS schools implement Report Card Conferences (RCCs) during which students have structured individual conversations with concerned adults about their goals and current progress towards those goals. For these conferences, schools recruit volunteers from local community groups, businesses and churches. Community members develop understanding of the students and their needs, build relationships, and consider becoming more involved at the school and/or offering opportunities (such as mentoring or internships) for students outside of school.

Shortly after the Report Card Conferences, Celebratory Assemblies are held, in which student achievement and growth are celebrated, and student voice is highlighted through essays, poetry, song and other expressions. Parents and community partners are actively encouraged to attend these events and to participate in planning them.

After 20 years in school improvement, TDS has learned that successful school reform requires school and district stakeholders to be able to maintain new practices without relying on external partners. TDS works with schools to develop a sustainability plan that builds local capacity to maintain TDS structures and strategies after formal implementation is over.

TDS first works with school and district stakeholders to conduct a needs assessment, analyzing student data, district and school capacity to implement the TDS model, and the context for implementation. This background helps to set student outcome goals and benchmarks, customize a transformation plan, and develop a timeline with action steps to monitor implementation and achievement of goals and benchmarks. As the school meets goals and internalizes components of the TDS model, it develops capacity to sustain the model beyond the initial 3-4 year grant period.

Securing commitment to the TDS model from all stakeholders is crucial to sustainability. TDS conducts awareness sessions with many stakeholder groups: school boards, district and school leaders, staff, collective bargaining units, students, parents, business and community members, and other organizations in the school. Once understanding and a sense of local ownership are established, TDS works to develop distributed leadership in the school: leadership and academy teams engaging in strategic planning and ongoing decision-making to drive implementation of the TDS model. TDS provides significant professional development and facilitation to identify resources, protocols, and strategies that build the capacity of the distributed leadership system, so that leadership and academy teams are equipped to carry out this work.

TDS schools use peer-driven, job-embedded professional development for cost-neutral sustainability. Schools select on-site math and literacy instructional coaches who work with TDS instructional facilitators to develop expertise in the model so they can provide ongoing job-embedded professional development. An onsite School Transformation Facilitator (STF) and a regional School and Student Support Services (S4) facilitator help school develop Early Warning Indicator (EWI) systems and facilitate team meetings to examine EWI data and identify and evaluate interventions. School leadership and staff thus learn to conduct activities to maintain TDS structures and instruction without external assistance. TDS job-embedded professional development, bi-annual conferences for principals and coaches, and a national network of coaches and facilitators sharing best practices help build this capacity to implement the model.

The TDS Field Manager (FM) also fosters sustainability through regular communication with district leadership, including formal quarterly reports on student outcomes, implementation, and next steps. The FM works to ensure that the TDS model is embedded in the district's strategic plan, and helps the district analyze resources to ensure that the district can fund the TDS schools' staffing model after the School Improvement Grant comes to an end. The FM communicates regularly with the school board and other stakeholders regarding implementation, student outcomes, and development of local support resources after the conclusion of the grant.

Schools that have implemented the TDS model are invited to remain engaged in the TDS network. Data collection and analysis and professional development for principals, coaches, and program coordinators are available for an annual fee. "Emeritus" schools also communicate with other TDS schools across the country about their respective successes and challenges. They may host visits from other schools interested in school reform and the TDS model. Maintaining communication helps reinforce implementation and ongoing commitment to the TDS model.

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