

Northside Elementary School
Schoolwide Title 1 Plan
FY 2006 – 2010

Introduction

Northside Elementary School is a Title 1 elementary school located in a suburban area with many of the characteristics typical of an urban school. The school serves grades Pre-K through fifth grade. The school opened its' doors for the first time in the fall of 1990. Eight new classrooms were added in 1997 – 1998 which enabled all students to be housed within the school.

Since our doors opened in the fall of 1990, Northside Elementary School has been committed to the mission that a strong democracy is dependent on a strong public education. Our school motto, “Building Our Future . . .One Child At A Time” clearly reflects this commitment. We believe that it is our sacred duty as guardians of our children to see that they become sensitive, capable, caring and involved individuals who will become responsible and independent citizens. Everything we do revolves around this mission.

Initially the school population was 35 percent minority with a 35 percent free and reduced lunch rate. The school zone has been changed twice and now we are a school with a population of 56 percent minority, a 62 percent free and reduced lunch rate and a 51 percent transition rate. These dramatic changes have reinforced our commitment that every child can learn and deserves our respect. To honor this commitment we have completely revised the way the curriculum is delivered and the way the students are managed.

The 1997 – 1998 school year saw major changes influencing instruction. Eight new classrooms were added that enabled all students to be housed within the school building. The Reading Recovery program was implemented, the Accelerated Reader program was begun, the Computer Skills Lab was established and first grade lowered class size by using the reduced class size model for the Special Instructional Assistance (SIA) program. During the 2002 – 2003 school year, the Computer Skills Lab was discontinued and special education began using the collaboration model for delivery of services. This facilitated more time on task as it lowered the amount of time used transitioning between classes. Currently Title 1 and EIP (Early Intervention Program) funds pay for six teachers which enables the Reading Recovery program to be fully implemented and lowers class size in several grade levels. In 2003 – 2004 the Falcon Academy which is an after-school program which assists at-risk students prepare for the CRCT was implemented and in 2004 – 2005 the ClassWorks Computer Program was implemented in a lab setting to help students in Reading and Math work at their individual level.

Mission Statement

The mission of Northside Elementary School is to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment where each child is challenged to achieve his maximum potential and become a productive individual.

Our Beliefs

Student learning is the chief priority for our school.

All students can learn, achieve and succeed.

Students learn in different ways and should be provided with a variety of instructional approaches to support their learning.

Each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, emotional and intellectual needs.

The learning process is most effective when responsibility is shared among teachers, administrators, parents and the community.

A strong commitment to continuous school improvement is needed to enable students to become confident, self-directed, lifelong learners.

Students can learn best in a safe and supportive environment where they are treated with respect and compassion.

By projecting enthusiasm, respect and compassion, each teacher models the joy of learning and the importance of developing positive character traits.

Accomplished During the 2001 – 2005 Schoolwide Title 1 Plan

Northside Elementary accomplished the following during the 2001 – 2005 Title 1 Plan:

- Northside Elementary continues the Accelerated Reader program and has achieved its schoolwide goals on an annual basis.
- Northside Elementary continues to provide three hours of language arts instruction on a daily basis with 60 minutes of independent reading, 30 minutes of which is sustained silent reading.
- Northside Elementary discontinued the CCC Lab due to lack of individual student growth but has implemented ClassWorks which focuses on individual student needs.
- Books have been purchased on an annual basis to augment the Accelerated Reader program and to supplement the leveled book library.

- Autumn Vavoso from Growing Strong Teachers has provided literacy training both schoolwide and for individual teachers during the 2001 – 2005 schoolwide plan.
- Staff development in the area of technology to enhance literacy instruction, facilitate communication with parents and other educators, and augment the collection of data which aids in the planning for instruction continues on an annual basis.
- Northside has undergone a curriculum audit to ensure that students are receiving quality instruction.
- Student agendas are provided for all students which provide each parent a calendar of school events and opportunities for participation.
- Schoolwide book studies focused on working with families from poverty has been held to help build relationships with parents.
- The school counselor continues to encourage students to take responsibility for their actions through sponsoring character education activities and assisting student in setting academic and behavior goals.

Evaluation of the 2000 – 2005 Plan

- Composite normed referenced test results show that Northside Elementary continues to maintain percentile ranks over 55%. Criterion Referenced Test results show that over 92% are performing on grade level in reading and math.
- The CCC Lab has been discontinued due to lack of student instructional growth. The ClassWorks program was implemented during the 2004 – 2005 school year.
- The focus on parent involvement has changed from volunteering at the school to involvement in the child's education. To encourage this, Northside Elementary has changed the format of our PTO meeting to allow parents and their children to interact together during instructional activities. Additional ways parents are encouraged to be involved with their child's education are through school, grade level, class and parenting newsletters, social activities, parent workshops, conferences, assemblies, eating lunch with their children and communication through email and agendas.

1. Comprehensive Needs Assessment of the Entire School

CRCT results from 2003 – 2004 show that 92% of students in grades 3 – 5 passed the reading and math sections of the CRCT. There were no discrepancies in the scores according to ethnicity but economically disadvantaged and students with disabilities did score lower on these tests. Only two years of data for our current normed reference test are available but average percentile rankings are stable at the 50 – 60 percentile ranking. Minority enrollment is stable at around 56% while enrollment of economically disadvantaged students has risen from 54 to 62% in two years and the transition rate rose to 51% during the 2003 – 2004 school year.

Goals:

Students will perform on grade level in reading.

Students will perform on grade level in math.

Students will be able to write an essay that is grade level appropriate and connects knowledge from the different subject areas.

Students will use grade level appropriate grammar and punctuation in written communication.

2. Schoolwide Reform Strategies

In order to meet our goals, Northside Elementary will continue to serve students with the Accelerated Reader program, collaboration and the ClassWorks computer program.

Students will continue to receive three hours of language arts instruction on a daily basis with thirty minutes of sustained silent reading and individualized instruction through our comprehensive literacy program. The following strategies will be utilized to ensure the achievement of our goals.

- Professional Learning will continue in the area of Comprehensive Literacy and working with the at-risk learner. Activities will consist of attending conferences, working with a literacy consultant individually, with grade levels and school-wide. In addition, book studies will be held on an annual basis.
- After-school programs for the at-risk learner (The Falcon Academy) will continue on an annual basis
- The media center will be an integral part of the literacy program, planning collaboratively, with each grade level, providing skills training for students as needed and purchasing materials that support the school's literacy focus.
- Assessment will be utilized on an ongoing basis to address the individual needs of the student.
- Professional learning will continue in the area of Math with aligning instruction to the curriculum, utilizing benchmarks for assessment and instructional purposes and curriculum mapping.
- Materials including manipulatives will be provided to enhance instruction.
- Professional Learning will focus on determining grade level appropriate writing and connecting it with the different subject areas. Activities will include attending workshops, working with consultants, book studies and grade level planning.
- An emphasis will be placed on students' use of effective writing skills across the curriculum.
- Classroom assessments of student learning will include direct measures of students' effective use of writing. Students will be provided with feedback on their progress.
- Professional Learning will focus on determining grade level appropriate grammar and punctuation in written communication. Activities will include attending workshops, working with consultants, book studies and grade level planning.

- Teacher developed rubrics will be used along with student portfolios to assess student progress and determine instructional focus.
- An emphasis will be placed on students' use of grade level appropriate grammar and punctuation in written communication.
- Classroom assessments student learning will include direct measures of students' effective use of grammar and punctuation in written communication. Students will be provided with feedback on their progress.

3. Instruction by Highly Qualified Professional Staff

All teachers at Northside Elementary are highly qualified. Staff members are encouraged to attend college classes, professional conference/workshops and school and system professional learning classes. We continue to strive to enhance our professional skills and achieve the goals as forth in our schoolwide plan and as changes in personnel occur, the selection of new personnel will be contingent upon the agreement to work towards these goals.

4. Professional Development

Professional Learning continues to be an integral part of Northside Elementary's success. A room dedicated to professional learning and research is now available for grade levels to hold their weekly professional learning meeting. Data is disseminated and discussed through the leadership team and book studies are held on an annual basis which encourages a closer look at the learning needs of our students. Focus for our professional learning is listed under the section Schoolwide Reform Strategies and also includes familiarization with the new Georgia Performance Standards and the backwards design model for the delivery of our curriculum and instruction.

5. Parental Involvement

As detailed earlier the focus on parent involvement has changed from volunteering at the school to involvement in the child's education. To encourage this, Northside Elementary has changed the format of our PTO meeting to allow parents and their children to interact together during instructional activities. This includes technology workshops which provide parents with resources to help their child at home and show how technology is incorporated at school. Communication is encouraged through email and school and county websites. Additional ways parents are encouraged to be involved with their child's education are through school, grade level, class and parenting newsletters, social activities, parent workshops, conferences, assemblies, eating lunch with their children and communication through email and agendas.

As required by Title 1 an informational meeting is held once a year ensuring parents are aware of the goals of our Title 1 program and how these goals are met. Parents are notified that all teachers at Northside Elementary are highly qualified and that teacher certificates are available in the office to be viewed at any time.

With our parents' assistance, our Parent Teacher Student Compact was updated during the 2004 – 2005 school year. The Parent Involvement Policy is in process of being updated at this time to ensure that parents are aware of their rights under the Title 1 program. In addition to the ways parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's education as mentioned earlier, Northside Elementary has held book studies to ensure that the faculty understands, respects and communicates effectively with families from at-risk backgrounds. Flexibility ensures that parents feel that they are valued contributors to their child's education.

6. Transition from Early Childhood Programs

Northside Elementary provides an Open House specifically for incoming Pre-Kindergarten and kindergarten students and parents before the school year begins. The faculty and staff including the administration, the office staff, the counselor, the Pre-K coordinator and the teachers and paraprofessionals work together to answer any questions or concerns parents have and to ensure that all students feel safe and secure and part of the Northside family.

As the school year progresses the Pre-Kindergarten classes are encouraged to participate in more of the school activities. Parent and Child (PAC) Time is offered twice a month to encourage parents to visit the school, work with their child and get to know their child's teachers and classmates. In the spring the Pre-Kindergarten students, along with all other incoming kindergarten students, are assessed as a gauge for readiness. Also in the spring the counselor and Pre-Kindergarten coordinator work together to provide a program for all incoming kindergarten students to visit the school, meet the teachers, participate in class activities and eat lunch in the cafeteria. Pre-Kindergarten and kindergarten teachers plan together to ensure continuity and to provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum.

7. Including Teachers in Decisions Regarding the Use of Assessment

Teachers are included in decisions regarding the use of assessments in a variety of ways. These include shared decision making through our leadership team, disaggregation of student data including achievement and school profile data, grade level and professional learning meetings, identification of individual, class and grade level strengths and weaknesses and modification of instruction through the Student Support Team. In this manner Northside Elementary ensures the improvement of the academic performance of individual students and the overall instructional program.

8. Effective, Timely and Additional Assistance for Students Experiencing Difficulty

The following strategies will be continued to identify at-risk students in a timely manner and provide assistance where needed:

- Teachers will review permanent records, Student Support Team (SST) records, previous test results and any other information provided to determine student strengths and weaknesses.
- Teachers will compile class profiles utilizing test reports to determine individual and class strengths and weaknesses and address these results while teaching.
- Student Support Team meetings are held on a regular basis to discuss strategies and procedures that would encourage student success. This would include communication with previous teachers who have insight about the student's learning styles. Students who would benefit from further testing will be referred for diagnostic or psychological testing.

9. Utilization of Resources

Funds to implement the school-wide plan are acquired by coordinating expenditures from resources such as Title 1, Title 2, Media, and Professional Learning

10. Inclusion of Special Agencies

Coordination of personnel and funds will be utilized to the utmost extent to provide for the implementation of the Title 1 School-wide Plan for Northside Elementary School. The following programs and agencies will be involved:

Gifted Education (FOCUS)

Special Education

Professional Learning

Pre-Kindergarten

Media

Classroom Guidance

Business partners

Community agencies

Other programs which may be available through system, state or community resources

11. Communication of Assessment Results to Parents

Parents are encouraged to confer with their child's teacher regarding results of the state's mandated assessments. Parents are informed of their child's performance through conferences, agendas, progress reports, report cards, phone calls, and notes home

12. Collection and Disaggregation of Data

Test data is collected according to state guidelines by the system Director of Testing and Instructional Technology. The State Department of Education will disaggregate the data and provide information to the system and the school. This data will be provided to the media through the system central office.

At the school level the Assistant Principal for Instruction along with teachers disaggregate national, state, system and school data to develop student profiles that help to ensure that the needs of individual students are met. Examples of information used include: scores from the ITBS, CRCT , STAR, HCLI (Houston County Literacy Inventory) and Math benchmarks along with data disaggregated from gender, ethnicity, free and reduced lunch and transition rates.

13. Provisions for Statistically Sound Test Results

The state mandated assessments meet reliability and validity requirements, therefore being statistically sound.

14. Public Reporting of Test Data

The disaggregated data shall be reported to the public in accordance with state guidelines. The State Report Card and local system reports shall be disseminated to the media at the state and system levels.

15. Summary

The schoolwide program will be evaluated annually through state and local testing. Northside Elementary will also utilize the following long term goals to assess the progress of our schoolwide program. The school's leadership team will meet as needed to monitor progress of the program.

16. Evaluation

The schoolwide program will be evaluated annually through state and local testing. The school's leadership team will meet as needed to monitor progress in the implementation of the program and to assess the effectiveness of the schoolwide plan. In addition, the leadership team will evaluate and modify the school improvement plan as needed on an annual basis. The following methods will be utilized in the evaluation of the schoolwide plan:

- Records of attendance for Professional Learning activities
- Analysis of annual Reading and Math CRCT results, including subpopulation
- Analysis of annual norm-referenced test results in reading and writing
- Analysis of county sponsored assessments such as the HCLI (Houston county Literacy Inventory) and Math Benchmarks
- Review of school assessments such as Accelerated Reader, Reading Recovery and STAR results.
- Media Center circulation records
- Review of daily schedules and lesson plans
- Review of student writing portfolios to determine writing achievement connected with the different subject areas and the appropriateness of grammar and punctuation usage