

School Improvement Plan
Narrative Overview
MARY LYON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Mary Lyon Elementary is the home of the "Lions".

101 E. 46th Street

Tacoma, WA 98404

Principal, Anita Roth

Average Class Size: 21

Middle School: Stewart

High School: Lincoln

Basic Ed. Building Budget:

Title I Building Budget

Building Condition: Lyon consists of a main building of 14 classrooms, a detached wing with 4 classrooms, and 4 additional portables.

Volunteer Opportunities: PTSA, Tutoring, Field Trips, Parent Programs

Special Offerings: Full -Day Kindergarten Program, English as a Second Language: ELL Services .5 FTE, Autism Program; 2.0 FTE

Activities: Before School Math/Reading Interventions, YMCA childcare, Girl Scouting in the School Day, Student Crossing Guards

After School: WAX Program, YMCA Childcare, Student Crossing Guards

Lyon Elementary is currently one of the oldest neighborhood schools in the Tacoma School District. Built in 1910, Mary Lyon will celebrate its 100th year this school year in June of 2011. The 2011-12 school year brought many changes. First through leadership with a new principal, Anita Roth, being named. Secondly by the addition of almost a 100 new students. This was due to the closure of neighboring McKinley Elementary and the redrawing of boundaries for Mary Lyon to include one-third of McKinley's population. This has made for a significant shift in the demographics of Mary Lyon.

Lyon is composed of a diverse group of students:

- Children of color -72%
- Free/Reduced lunch recipients - 69%
- English Language Learners – 15%
- Special Education Students – 19%

Description of Instructional Program:

In order to best service the needs of our community our school has a partnership of students, staff, families, and community who are working together to empower our students to meet the highest academic standards, to develop social and emotional maturity and to acquire the tools they will need for their future success. In order to accomplish this Mary Lyon Elementary school staff is committed to the following tenets.

- Offer rigorous and engaging curriculum and instruction
- Strive for higher standards and expect excellence
- Embrace change and improvement
- Encourage risk-taking in the pursuit of excellence in teaching and learning
- Celebrate diversity and differences
- Have a student-centered, collaborative environment
- Develop a genuinely collaborative work environment for students and staff

Lyon staff is committed to continuous growth as teachers. They regularly engage in professional development opportunities for the improvement of instruction in reading, math, science, instructional skills, and classroom management. Teachers attend monthly sessions as Professional Learning Communities with other grade level colleagues throughout the Tacoma School District. Within the Lyon educational community, they collaborate monthly to review student assessment data and plan instruction and interventions to support students in meeting standard. Last year we worked with a consultant to create our core beliefs about student learning, the role of teachers and colleagues, and to develop our beliefs, strategies, and vision for delivering the educational services of our school. The following core beliefs are the driving force for every decision and action at Lyon.

In order to be successful students, we believe children.....

- Will rise to high expectations in a safe, predictable learning environment, with structure and support.
- Have individual learning styles; they are still developing in many ways, including their social and communication skills.
- Need care, acceptance and to feel valued.
- Should be allowed to make mistakes and expected to learn from them with support, understanding and guidance as they meet the expectations of the learning community.
- Need teachers who are able to identify what each child needs to gain the skills, understanding, and belief system to meet expectations

This year begin putting that mission, vision and belief into action. We began the year with a book study on creating an inclusive classroom for students with autism. A second professional book study will be on ELL strategies to build comprehension and vocabulary.

Lyon is dedicated to each child's educational and social development. Our reading program consists of 90 continuous minutes of instruction in learning groups based on the child's instructional needs and reading level. Our goal is to provide intensive and small group instruction for students at all levels. All instructional decisions are driven by both summative and

formative assessment data. Each lesson is designed to meet state standards and consists of a specific targeted action outcome. Teachers describe their means for assessing student understanding and specific intervention strategies for students who are struggling with the concept. Teachers design math instruction for 60 minutes using the same lesson planning format. As in all Tacoma Elementary schools, students are engaged in “Math Expressions” materials which are calibrated district-wide according to a guide outlining the expectations for completion.

The greater Lyon community is an important component of our children’s education. We encourage families to join PTA and attend school events. We partner with Pacific Lutheran University to assist in training new teachers. We also partner with Washington State University who conducts a unit on Health and Nutrition. This year we will have two gardens going in for our students. The first came from a transfer of a garden grant that McKinley Elementary had been awarded from the City of Tacoma. The second will be a spring garden as part of the WSU research project on nutrition. Westminster Church provides after-school tutoring (WAX), and the YMCA provides before and after school childcare. We also invite our preschool parents to attend our Kindergarten Orientation, Back to School Ice Cream Social and invite all parents to our “Bring Your Parent to School” day and barbecue. We also hold training sessions for parents in order to assist them with understanding our curriculum and providing them with strategies and tools to support their child’s learning at home.

Lyon Elementary’s community population consists primarily of “blue collar” workers and retired persons. A significant number of families share housing with extended family members or friends.

Within five miles of Lyon, is a concentration small, individually owned restaurants, stores, mechanical, service and resource businesses. Many of these reflect the rich cultural diversity of the area. Social service agencies consist of Multicare WIC, Tahoma Associates, Lighthouse Senior Center, Pierce County Community Action, Eastside Family Support Center, Indochinese Cultural & Service Center, Pierce County Health Dept., Pierce County Human Resources and the Children’s Home Society. Four health clinics and nine libraries are also available resources for the neighborhood.

Additional Key Elements Part 1:

Parent and Student Involvement:

Lyon’s School-Parent Compact was reviewed and revised with input from the new administration in August of 2011. This was also translated for our Spanish families. The compact was then printed in our handbook and distributed to all parents and families at the beginning of the school year. The compact was discussed with parents and students during the

first session of Partnership Conferencing as well as during our AYP Parent Review session. See attached copy of LYON's School-Parent Compact.

School, Family and Community Partnership liaisons surveyed parents in the Spring 2011. Lyon school results indicate that 82% of our parents supported the Student Led conferences. Of the parents surveyed, 90% of them agreed that Lyon is a safe school. Communication was identified as positive by 60%. Eighty-five percent of our parents stated agreement that Lyon is focused on student learning and 70% agree that the education is rigorous and that teachers have high expectations.

Lyon elementary sends monthly newsletters to parents and families with information about upcoming events, items of concern and opportunities for involvement. Teachers send home progress reports and newsletters. They also provide accurate and current information on their classroom website. The district also has in place a communication system that allows our school to send personalized voice messages to parents to encourage parents and families to be actively involved in their children's education.

At Lyon, we invite parents to be a part of Bring Your Parent to School Day; provide a resource library; offer parent training opportunities; invite and train parents to provide tutoring help during school hours. This year the staff voted to hold an additional October conference with all parents to establish academic goals and set up compacts for the year. These are then monitored on an ongoing basis throughout the year. Student academic progress is shared with parents during Partnership Conferencing in October, December, March and June.

Along with compacts, parent policies are shared with parents at the beginning of the school year and during Partnership Conferencing held three times yearly. We have included our Parent Involvement Policy in our building plan. Title I parent involvement funds have been allocated to our school as required to support building based meaningful parent involvement activities. Progress reports provide additional information on student progress along with by-weekly newsletters, Connect-Ed messages and parent meetings.

Lyon's ELL Teacher, Principal, teachers, counselor and nurse work with local county programs to help families connect with needed health and social services. The district McKinney-Vento liaison connects homeless families in our school with social services and provides ongoing support. One of the community connections we have been able is a partnership with the Food Connection, which provides thirty students with food each weekend. In addition we provide space for a Hispanic women's group who are working on supporting each other through divorce and domestic violence. Many of the group's members are mothers of our students.

Coordination/Integration of Programs:

During Kindergarten registration, parents attend a presentation about the school and kindergarten programs, receive a packet of summer “school preparation” activities, and receive help/support in completing the registration forms. Preschool children eat in the school cafeteria as part of their transition to kindergarten.

Middle school counselors visit with students assigned to their school and provide information about the school. The middle school also holds an open house in the spring for students to attend with their parents.

Westminster Church provides after school tutoring for 3-5th grade students three days per week.

Technical Assistance:

The Tacoma School District provides the following technical assistance for school improvement planning in addition to the Title I/LAP Program Specialist; Curriculum & Instruction, School, Family and Community Partnership liaisons, Human Resources, Finance, Elementary Directors, Instructional Facilitators.

Fiscal Requirements:

LYON’s School Improvement Plan has been aligned with the Tacoma School District's Improvement Plan (DIP). It integrates Basic Ed., the Title I Schoolwide Plan, Head Start, Special Ed. and McKinney Vento Act.

While categorical and basic education funds are tracked separately in Tacoma, the programs work together to meet the needs all students and support the schoolwide program goals. Through the work of the Professional Learning Community, schoolwide planning and SCDM, Title I, ELL, Special Ed. and the Homeless liaison team with Basic Ed. to improve academic achievement in Reading and Math, coordinating services for identified students and families. Title I Instructional Facilitators help teachers coordinate intervention instructional services for our students with high academic needs. Title I also works closely with McKinney-Vento services within the district.

Response to Educational Audit:

Three themes emerge from our School-Wide program; reading, math, and climate. These themes are aligned with each of the Nine Characteristics.

1. Clear and shared focus: Instruction, intervention, professional development and collaborative planning are designed to align with the state standards and increase student

achievement in reading and math as well as develop behaviors/habits that will guide student academic success.

2. High Standards and Expectations: Standards are clearly identified and posted for students in each classroom, each day. Expectations for meeting standards are also clearly stated. Grade level teams were asked to write a SMART goal for either reading or math looking at how instructional practice affects outcomes. In addition teams review reading and math data monthly in grade level teams. Students at risk of not meeting these standards are designed an intervention plan that may include one or all of the following strategies: small group instruction, tutoring, home support, and before and after school instruction.

3. Effective School Leadership: Leadership is shared for the articulation and implementation of Lyon's school-wide program. The Principal guides, nurtures, and advocates for the staff, students, and vision for our school. Each teacher is responsible for providing instruction and gathering data about student progress to inform instruction. Teacher leadership is evidenced by participation in collaborative meetings focused on problem solving, assessment, and instruction. Additionally, teachers take a leadership role with parents and other family members via conferences, weekly newsletters, and Lyon's first annual "Bring Your Parent to School Day" in which parents learned side by side with their child and received training in how to support their child with schoolwork.

4. High Levels of Collaboration and Communication: Lyon staff meets collaboratively once a month as a whole team. In addition grade levels meet for during half day release to review and discuss data, plan instruction, as well as design interventions for individual students. Staff meetings are opportunities for collaborative discussion about school-wide issues or mini-lessons related to reading, writing, math, or student management. The mode of informational communication occurs via email and a weekly bulletin.

5. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Aligned with Standards: At Lyon, staff, students, and parents understand that the "curriculum" is based on the EALRs and State Standards. Classroom teachers post the expected learning for each lesson and utilize materials that have been selected by the District and in the case of reading, approved by the State. Evidence of the link between assessment and instruction is seen via the collaborative meetings among grade level teachers.

6. Frequent Monitoring of Teaching and Learning: Results of regular progress monitoring data directly influences instructional plans. The Instructional Facilitator provide support, model, and/or coach teachers who may be less experienced than others. The principal conducts regular walk-throughs and provides feedback and/or invites discussion of the observed instruction.

7. Focused Professional Development: Lyon's professional development has centered around reading instruction, math instruction, inclusive classrooms for autistic students and ELL strategies. Professional development opportunities build on the previous learning and emphasize strengthening the skills and implementation of each of the learnings.

8. Supportive Learning Environment: There are several indicators that substantiate Lyon as a supportive learning environment. Since the implementation of Love & Logic training, the number of discipline referrals has reduced considerably. Visitors frequently share that the atmosphere at the school is warm and welcoming.

9. High Levels of Community and Parent Involvement: Parents demonstrate their interest and involvement in their child's education by engaging in direct and regular contact with teachers and the school, attending conferences and open house. Parents also provide support by reviewing homework and signing off on reading logs. Future opportunities include training and hiring parents/community members to provide tutoring for students and providing classes on successful parenting.

Additional Key Elements Part 2:

Professional Development Plan/Calendar:

Professional development is embedded into the function of our school program. Staff meetings, team & data review meetings and parent meetings are each opportunities for learning and practicing, data analysis, and instructional improvement strategies. Student performance is reviewed weekly as a result of comprehension assessment and progress monitoring using the DIBELS. Based on this data, instructional needs are determined and trainings are coordinated. Lyon teachers will regularly attend professional development to increase their knowledge in the state's grade level expectations and instructional strategies.

Opportunities for on-going professional development: District Professional Development calendar:

Monthly staff meetings

Monthly grade level data meetings

Enhancements to the educational program for the school year:

Before school small group instruction

After school small group instruction

Individual tutoring by para and/or volunteers

Book Studies

Tacoma actively recruits highly-qualified staff with our job fair, letters of intent, recommendations to hire and applicant searches. We seek to attract and keep highly-qualified staff at our school by providing opportunities for quality staff development and professional growth. Through the Professional Learning Community, our staff has a voice. Our goal to provide a supportive learning environment includes support for staff. At Lyon, we have focused and transparent achievement goals, available and ongoing instructional support.

Professional Growth Plans for each teacher includes Standard III, 'Demonstrates knowledge of subject content and the elements of effective instruction' and focuses on Component IIIA, 'Demonstrates command of content-area knowledge and state standards as well as implements district-adopted resources and curriculum'. Staff development so support teachers include the following:

- * Standards Based Classrooms
- * Assessment and using data to inform instruction
- * Goal Setting
- * Grade level instructional strategies
- * Lesson planning

Teachers receive substantive feedback through formal observations, required by the district and informal observations, regular grade level meetings data meetings and walk-throughs. Staff also receives feedback as part of their Project Quality Professional Growth Plans.

Plan Implementation Calendar:

The Leadership Team (Principal, Title I Teacher, SCDM) meets regularly to review the success or struggles of instruction/systems based on the analysis of data.

Mechanism to monitor and adjust the School wide program as needed to better meet the needs of the school community:

Parent feedback

Surveys

Student achievement data

BERC instructional data

District Learning Scan

The schoolwide program is monitored periodically throughout the year. Data in reading is collected 3 times a year, in math 4 times. Regular progress monitoring occurs at least twice per month for each student. The data is analyzed and stored in Stage 7 of SIP: Monitor Implementation of the Plan. Adjustments are made as needed at these times. At the end of the

year, WASL data is reviewed and stored in Stage 8 of SIP: Evaluate Impact on Student Achievement. At this time the schoolwide plan is evaluated and revised based on the data and community input.

After the school has revised the plan it is sent to the Title I office for program review. From there, the plan is sent on to Elementary Directors and C&I. A district team reviews the plan to determine if the plan (strategies and activities) contributed to increased student achievement.

Timeline for Planning Process:

Evaluate, review, and revise to align with the District Improvement Plan by October, 2010. During the 2010-2011 school year Lyon Staff will evaluate the plan and revise activities to meet the needs of students and parents.

Monitor, Evaluate, Plan Review

Lyon's School Improvement Action Plan has components for evaluation identified. Additionally, goals and strategies are measurable. During the 2010-2011 school year, the effectiveness of these strategies will be monitored during grade level data meetings and reviewed monthly by the Leadership Team. As the effectiveness is evaluated, the team and subsequently, the staff will determine what, if any, adjustments will be made to meet our goals and objectives.

Lyon Strengths & Weaknesses

Lyon is a longstanding community of learners. One of our greatest strengths is the development and sustainability of positive relationships with our families and students. Parents trust our school staff to educate and care for their child. They know that they will be regularly contacted to discuss their child's strengths and weaknesses and that their knowledge of their child will be sought and considered when attempting to problem solve and/or meet student needs. Our families feel welcome in our school as indicated by our Climate Survey results. Parents take joint responsibility for their own child's education and are willing to support all children in meeting academic standards.

Another of Lyon's strengths is our integrated autism program. We have developed into a school where children who learn differently and may have behavioral or communication are welcomed, supported, and encouraged by staff, students, and parents. We have watched children who are not considered "typically developing" grow into confident learners who are willing to take risks in communicating, building relationships and academics. Our typically developing students have developed an intolerance for teasing and bullying, particularly of our more vulnerable students. They have taken pride and ownership in creating a school of

peace and organization and are developing strong skills in being a friend or at the very least, kind and respectful to all students. It has also been exciting to watch teachers be willing to learn how to provide instruction to a diverse group of learning styles.

Another demonstration of best practices is the commitment of Lyon Elementary to the research-based concept of Standards Based Teaching. Professional development has been provided to educate teachers on the methods associated with standards based programs among which are the learning targets being posted on the for each lesson and referred to throughout the lesson. Each child must be able to articulate what they are learning, why they are learning it as well as, at the end of the lesson, what they have learned.

The Lyon learning community very capable of interpreting our assessment data, diagnosing and prescribing interventions and will continue to develop and grow in our implementation of these and other academic interventions.

Lyon's weakness demonstrated by the inconsistency of instructional skills from grade level to grade level. Each level is working hard at the expected state standards but the articulation of the learning between grade levels needs support. We have struggled in addressing some of the significant academic needs of our students with a limited number of staff available to provide more intensive intervention. In addition as the number of students being served in the integrated autism program has grown and expanded to upper grade levels teachers need support in learning how to differentiate and provide a variety of intervention support for students who have difficulty in demonstrating their knowledge and skill.

As we continue to develop increase our skill and implementation of standards based practices and establishing strong partnerships with educational institutions such as, Washington State University and Pacific Lutheran University, we expect to see a significant improvement in all categories of our Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).