



Northeast Tacoma Elementary School Narrative

Northeast Tacoma Elementary continues to be a microcosm of our city, ever changing and growing in diversity! We enjoy a range of ethnic and economic diversity. Our student learning environments range from two half-day preschools (Special Education and ECEAP) , all day school for kindergarten through 5th grade. Northeast Tacoma Elementary also receives funds through the Learning Assistance Program, a federal program which provides additional reading and math assistance to students in grades 3 through 5. Northeast Tacoma Elementary maintains high standards of instruction by hiring only highly qualified teachers. Students completing fifth grade and living in our attendance area usually attend Meeker Middle School and, later, Stadium High School. Northeast Tacoma Elementary is located at 5412 29th Street NE, Tacoma, Washington, 98422. We invite parent and community comments and input for our plan. Anne Tsuneishi, Northeast Tacoma Elementary principal, can be reached at (253) 571-6940 or at stsunei@tacoma.k12.wa.us.

OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT: 2010-11

Continuous Improvement Process and Stakeholder Participation

The content of this plan represents the ongoing work and goals established within our school for the 2010-2011 year. The goals and strategies in this plan represent and are influenced by the ongoing work of our staff members within grade level teams and as a part of whole-staff work sessions. The specifics of our attached Action Plan set forth our school-wide reform efforts and are a result of our staff's review of student assessment data, the prioritization of goals, and the next steps in our work toward student achievement.

Review of Data to Establish Improvement

NET Achievement

Spring Data (expressed as a percentage of students meeting standard)

Grade 3	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Reading	71.3	74.1	70.2	64.4	65.6
Mathematics	62.5	77.8	66.0	47.1	64.1

Grade 4	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Reading	70.1	69.7	63.4	75.3	60.5
Mathematics	39.5	43.9	51.2	33.7	40.0

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Writing	53.8	50.0	54.9	56.2	45.3
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Grade 5	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Reading	72.8	56.6	64.7	71.6	71.8
Mathematics	44.4	43.4	48.5	50.0	37.6
Science	13.3	9.2	20.6	30.7	12.9

The school wide data from the 2010 MSP indicates areas of strength and areas of concern. The reading scores indicate an area of concern, as scores decreased in 4th grade, but remained the same in 3rd and 5th. In Math, we experienced gains in 3rd and 4th grades, but a significant loss in 5th. Writing and Science are also significant areas of concern.

Our instructional focus in math will be the implementation of our new math program as we work to increase the level of academic success in mathematics. The District's support of this work with the infusion of math coaches, ongoing professional development for educators combined with our school's weekly grade level collaboration sessions and the development of intervention and enrichment plans will all contribute to the work designed to significantly and positively influence our students' achievement. (See action plan for specific intervention strategies.)

We are not satisfied with our current indicators of growth on the MSP and are therefore intentionally focusing our efforts to significantly improve our students' achievements in this area. We look to higher achievement as measured by the 2011 MSP.

Attendance

(Average daily attendance K-5)

2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
94.8%	94.5%	94.7%

Planning for Transitions (between grade levels and grades)

Research tells us that students who struggle with school are most likely to "fall through the cracks" when transitioning from one grade span to the next. Northeast's school wide program provides support to parents and families of students who will be experiencing a significant grade transition (P-K; K-1; 5-6). Our plan for transitioning incoming Kindergarteners includes: staff meeting to discuss incoming services, a plan for parents, First Day of School Open House, kindergarten staff contacting local daycare centers. Kindergarten teachers also host a Kindergarten Parent Orientation prior to the start of school.

Northeast Tacoma and Meeker Middle School work as partners in a transitional summer school for students moving to 6th grade. Each spring, middle school counselors meet with each 5th grade class to field questions and provide information about the various middle school options available to our students. Meeker administration will meet with 5th grade parents at our May Coffee with the Principal. They will also meet with 5th grade students in class. Students also give the middle school their schedule and class preferences in the spring.

Characteristics of High Performing Schools

We are striving to meet all of the Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools; however there are three that we are focusing on this year:

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1. **Clear and Shared Focus** is promoted through the strong alignment by all staff about our beliefs and values about working with children, about learning, and about our climate. Northeast Tacoma achieves clear and shared focus through:
 - Weekly common, collaborative time for staff planning and student data review
 - Focused professional development
 - Aligned, research-based curriculum
 - Integrated parent involvement
 - Instruction using all available resources (e.g., ELL, LAP, General Education, and Special Education)

High Levels of Collaboration and Communication is established through strong contact and dialogue between teachers, staff, and families. Northeast Tacoma achieves clear high levels of collaboration and communication through:

- Weekly common, collaborative time for staff planning and student data review
 - Staff meetings focusing on a professional development need
 - Caring and positive relationships among staff and students
 - Partnerships with families and community members to promote the well-being of students
 - Multiple means for communicating with stakeholders, e.g., newsletters, connect -ED, electronic communications
2. **Frequent monitoring of learning & teaching** is demonstrated by analyzing what we are doing against the results we are getting. Northeast Tacoma frequently monitors data, learning, and teaching in a variety of ways:
 - Disaggregated information is constantly analyzed and monitored to insure that all students are receiving instruction at their most appropriate level. Students are moved as needed. We will maintain individual student data tracking system for teachers to plan instruction around as a team.
 - Using district and classroom based assessments in addition to state assessments to determine areas of student need. Aligned assessments identify misconceptions, gaps in learning, and helps teachers' instruction become most efficient and effective.
 - Northeast Tacoma staff implements research based materials to reading groups appropriate for that reading level.
 - Teachers will progress monitor students at least monthly (twice monthly for students not at benchmark) and use the data to make instructional decisions.
 - Northeast Tacoma staff provide 90 minutes of reading instruction daily at a child's instructional level. Staff use data to determine the best place for each child in this system.

Professional Development Opportunities

Northeast Tacoma aims to provide professional development activities that will be meaningful to teachers and lead to increased student achievement. This year, the staff will attend professional development opportunities: District Math Expressions, Math focused Professional Learning Community meetings, Marilyn Simpson Standards Based Instruction, Mandt, FOSS Science, Broadway Center Graduate Series, The Race and Pedagogy Conference, WERA, Pierce County Incident Command, and a whole staff training on standards based report cards.

Highly Qualified Teachers

All teachers in Tacoma are required to meet the NCLB highly qualified teacher requirement. Human Resources sends each school a list of the teachers with their teaching qualifications. Northeast Tacoma's

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principal signs an attestation form to confirm all staff are highly qualified. In the event that a staff member does not meet the highly qualified requirements, a NCLB HOUSSSE Plan of Assistance is developed for the teacher. To support teachers working to achieve highly qualified status, along with all staff striving to provide excellent instruction, our school's professional development/training focus on best practices in reading and math. 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.

Provisions for staff training in Tacoma include opportunities, incentives and compensation. Staff receive extra pay to attend these classes and clock hours/university credits are frequently offered. The district also supports and encourages school-based training that support the school's SIP goals with building-based optional day pay for certificated staff. Administration and our instructional coach provide on-going and embedded support and follow-up to professional development. The administration through informal and formal observations ensures implementation in the classroom. 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'.

Para educators and other staff receive workshop pay to attend both district and school workshops. Administration and teachers work with paraeducators to focus on successful student performance on the State Essential Learning's. All paraeducators that work with students in the instructional setting meet NCLB highly qualified requirements. Ongoing professional development is offered at the district level. As an integral part of our staff, paraeducators are encouraged to attend Northeast Tacoma's trainings.

Recognition of Non-Academic Learning

Northeast Tacoma Elementary not only celebrates academic growth, but fosters non-academic achievements. Northeast offers choir for 4th and 5th graders, Percussion club, Track for 3rd-5th grade students, Art Docent lessons for all students, and ASB for 3rd through 5th graders. The school counselor serves students in individual and small group settings working on friendship and social skills. Our Artist in Resident will facilitate a mural celebrating our Vision Statement, "Together we learn!" in which all students will participate. All students will be taught chess to promote strategic thinking skills.

Safe and Supportive Learning Environment

The Northeast Tacoma Elementary School staff is purposeful and intentional in its work to create a safe and supportive environment. The Safety Committee has implemented systems such as emergency backpacks for classrooms, fire, lock down and earthquake drills, and plans and procedures for various situations. Our school wide discipline plan also supports student learning. Staff members participate in our neighborhood Safe Streets group which meets at our school.

Equity Issues

The District's focus on cultural competency and the Action Plan for closing the achievement gap will drive our school's efforts this year. Because many of our students are on free or reduced lunch we acknowledge that their learning needs cannot be met if their basic needs at home go unmet. Our weekend Snack Pack program sponsored by My Sister's Pantry helps the neediest children. Our new Community Outreach Committee meets monthly. It has started a book study (Eric Jensen's Teaching Children in Poverty), adult/student mentor program, food drive, and presents their learnings at staff meetings.

Technology

Northeast Tacoma Elementary continues to build upon the use of technology in a variety of ways to enhance student learning. Technology within the classroom includes computers in every classroom, the daily use of document camera/LCD projector bundles, opportunities for word processing, internet

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research for project-based learning, and the use of a mobile computer cart. Teachers use appropriate technology whenever possible, including classroom websites.

Parent, Family and Community Involvement

Increasing parental involvement is one of our main goals. Northeast Tacoma staff have created a welcoming environment, where community and family members want to come to school. Family events are well attended due to staff efforts to make school information accessible and friendly. We encourage parents to attend curriculum nights through student performance, showcasing student work, and providing training opportunities through curriculum nights.

We know that communication builds strong partnerships so Northeast Tacoma elementary sends home monthly newsletters with information about upcoming events, items of concern and opportunities for involvement. Teachers send home progress reports and provide information on their SWIFT websites. The district also has in place a communication system (Connect-Ed) 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. Student academic progress is shared with parents during Partnership Conferencing in October and March. At these times academic goals are set, assessments and report cards explained, and compacts and expectations shared. Progress reports provide additional information on student progress.

We have included our School, Family Compact and Parent Involvement Policy in our building plan. LAP parent involvement funds have been allocated to our school as required supporting building based meaningful parent involvement activities. Parents and staff work together to develop and support parent involvement training/activities for 2010-2011.

Along with partnerships with families, we understand the importance of partnering with community members as well. Our school, along with Tacoma Public Schools, the TPD and multiple community organizations, is working to address safety-related challenges. Northeast Tacoma's school counselor and ECEAP facilitator provides information and resources to families in need of additional community support. Some of the many community partnerships we have established include: PTA, McDonalds, My Sister's Pantry, Broadway Center, Marine View Presbyterian Church, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Turning Point Church, Northwest Community Center, Shop with a Cop, FISH, Weyerhaeuser, and Kiwanis.

Northeast Tacoma Elementary is an ELL regional school. We have a half time ELL teacher and an hourly tutor. We have 6 Bilingual staff (Spanish and Russian) who help our families access school services. As a medically fragile site, NET has a full-time LPN and a part time RN on staff. Northeast Tacoma's counselor 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.

Coordination of Fiscal Services

Northeast Tacoma's School Improvement Plan has been aligned with the Tacoma School District's Improvement Plan (DIP). It integrates Basic Ed., LAP, Special Ed., ELL, and McKinney Vento Act.

While categorical and basic education funds are tracked separately in Tacoma, the programs work together to meet the needs of all students and support the school wide program goals.

Several groups coordinate services for identified students and families including SCDM, LAP, ECEAP, ELL, and Special Education. All these organizations work to increase academic achievement. The Instructional Coach helps teachers coordinate intervention instructional services for our students with high academic needs.

The Tacoma School District provides the following technical assistance for school improvement: LAP School Contact, Curriculum & Instruction, Finance, Elementary Directors, Instructional Coaches School administrator, and OSPI. Purchasing supports expenditures, Human Resources facilitates staffing and monitors Highly Qualified information, Research & Evaluation provides data.