

***Plan for Continued Success
(S. I. P.)
Volney Elementary School
2009-10***



Principal Hendrickson and TEAM

Greatness is not a function of circumstance. Greatness, it turns out, is largely a matter of conscious choice, and discipline.

-Jim Collins

School Improvement Plan Report

Name of School: Volney Elementary

Address: 2592 State Route 3
Fulton, NY 13069

Phone: 315-593-5570

Principal: Jeffrey Hendrickson

School Improvement Team Members:

Deb Arden/Grade 5 Teacher _____

Kathy Biss/Reading Teacher _____

Erin Brewster/Grade 4 Teacher _____

Bill Cahill/Grade 6 Teacher _____

Carrie Foster/Music and Band Teacher _____

Jeremy Greer/ Math Specialist _____

Catherine Healy/Grade 2 Teacher _____

Mary Kimball/Grade 6 Teacher _____

Kevin MacDougall/Reading Teacher _____

Deb Petrie/Special Education Teacher _____

Kathryn Rowlee/Kindergarten Teacher _____

Joan Sawyer/Grade 3 Teacher _____

Stephanie Zimmerman/Special Educator _____

Report Date: 2008-2009

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Part 1: Profile

A. Executive Summary

Introduction:

In this section of our school improvement plan, an overview of student performance data, and student and community demographic data is provided. In addition, a summary of the major sets of data within each of these categories is outlined.

1. Student Performance Data

The student performance data collected for the Profile is summarized in subsequent tables taken from The State Education Department website.

State Measures: State-wide assessments of student learning in ELA and mathematics are currently given in grades 3-6, with NYS assessments in science given in grade 4, and social studies in grade 5. Grade 4 ELA, Math and Science results are shown from the 05-06, 06-07, 07-08 and 08-09 academic years. The percentage of our students meeting the state standards is greater than the state's average in each area; therefore, this school made AYP under NCLB. Our students' performance exceeds the state average in all areas.

2009	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
ELA	86%	84%	86%	76%
SS			96%	
Math	96%	89%	100%	89%
Science				
2008	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
ELA	67%	81%	83%	69%
SS			85%	
Math	93%	91%	87%	89%
Science		100%		
2007	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
ELA	76%	86%	78%	79%
SS			95%	
Math	96%	94%	91%	92%
Science		100%		
2006	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
ELA	85%	68%	77%	59%
SS			98%	
Math	96%	89%	75%	77%
Science		100%		
2005	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
ELA		82%		
SS			91%	
Math		98%		
Science		98%		

2. Student and Community Demographic Data

The total enrollment of Volney Elementary School is currently 452, which is an increase from last year's population. An explanation of this is largely due to the sister school model, through which we have enrolled approximately 20 students from Fairgrieve this year. In addition, the percentage of racial ethnic groups represented has increased, but remains at a constant minimal level. The percentage of low-income students (i.e., students eligible for the free- and reduced- lunch program) remains fairly constant, and the mobility rate has slowly decreased.

The students of Volney Elementary School are residents of a rural community. As of the year 2000, there are 6,094 people, 2,188 households, and 1,686 families residing in the town. The racial makeup of the town is 98% White, .26% African American, .30% Native American, .28% Asian, .05% Pacific Islander, .21% from other races, and .82% from two or more races. .69% of the population is Hispanic or Latino of any race.

There are 2,188 households out of which 38.8% have children under the age of 18 living with them, 61.4% are married couples living together, 9% have a female householder with no husband present, 22.9% are non-families. 17.4% of all households are made up of individuals and 6% have someone living alone who is 65 years of age or older. The average household size is 2.79 and the average family size is 3.11.

In the town the population is spread out with 28.3% under the age of 18, 8.2% from 18 to 24, 29.9% from 25 to 44, 24% from 45 to 64, and 9.6% who are 65 years of age or older. The median age is 36 years. For every 100 females there are 104 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there are 103 males.

The median income for a household in the town is \$43,532, and the median income for a family is \$46,408. Males have a median income of \$40,585 versus \$25,974 for females. The per capita income for the town is \$19,029. 6.2% of the population and 3.9% of families are below the poverty line. Out of the total people living in poverty, 5.9% are under the age of 18 and 3.6% are 65 or older.

3. School Characteristics

Volney Elementary School is a public, rural K-6 elementary school. The school was built in 1969. There have been relatively few changes in the composition of staff. One additional set of data presented is the operating expenditure per pupil. This allocation has not increased significantly over the past few years, despite rising operational costs and increased learning needs of our students.

Part 2: Beliefs and Mission

Overview: Narrative Description of the Process of Defining the School's Beliefs and Mission

Volney Elementary School defines its beliefs and mission by engaging in a consensus-building process that involves teachers, administrators, parents, business leaders and representatives of community service agencies.

The school's School Improvement Team examines Volney's profile data. In particular, a focus is placed on demographics, achievement levels of students, and the opinions of our teachers, parents and community members about the quality of our school. Examination of this data helps us to identify key issues pertinent to the needs of the students and community we serve in our school.

In addition to this analysis, we consider major findings of educational research about the teaching and learning process, future trends, and the changing expectations of today's workplace. These implications are reviewed by the improvement team, as we develop our beliefs and define our mission, which help us to take into account "best practices" identified through research and the challenges and opportunities our students will likely face in the future.

Our Beliefs:

- The individuality of every student is valued and nurtured.
- Student learning is the chief priority for our school.
- A comfortable, safe and inviting environment promotes student learning.
- Teachers, staff, administrators, parents, students and community members work together to provide a supportive and enriching learning environment
- Students learn in different ways and should be supported with a variety of instructional approaches.

Date January 27, 2004
Reaffirmed June 1, 2009

Our Mission:

Our mission is to strive for a caring, cooperative community of respectful and responsible citizens dedicated to learning.

Date January 27, 2004
Reaffirmed June 1, 2009

Part 3: Desired Results for Student Learning

Narrative Description of the Process of Defining the Desired Results for Student Learning

The School Improvement Team of Volney School works together with the staff to develop a shared vision for student learning that is stated in terms of desired results for student learning and performance indicators.

The district goals are identified and discussed with the other elementary buildings to provide for a common platform from which all buildings could grow. We continue by reviewing our beliefs and mission, as well as the latest findings of educational research and future trends related to defining expectations for student learning. In addition, we review our state standards for student learning and our current district instructional objectives. We also look for commonalities and differences between the current year's goals and this year's proposed goals.

The results of those areas reviewed indicate that three goal areas (Emphasis on Writing, Focus on Intervention, and Positive Parent Involvement) are identified as the highest priority for continued improvement. A summary of a description of students' current levels of achievement of the goals is provided on the following page. The purpose of collecting evidence of student achievement is to help us establish baseline data so that we can monitor improvements in student learning over time.

Based on our analysis of current data, the review of the student achievement data contained in our profile (Part 1), the extent of alignment of the goals with our beliefs and mission (Part 2), and the degree of consistency of the goals with our state's standards for student learning and district's instructional objectives, we drafted our statement of desired results for student learning and performance indicators. A summary of the desired results for student learning and performance indicators is outlined at the end of Part 3.

Analysis of Student Learning Needs: Description of Students' Current Level of Achievement of the Desired Results for Their Learning

Emphasis on Writing - Since reading and writing are so closely connected, it is essential to improve writing in order to improve overall literacy.

- Students will spend more time writing.
- Students will receive informative and constructive feedback about their writing to perform more targeted revisions.
- Students will have many ways to demonstrate their capabilities as writers.
- Students will have their writing assessed on a regular basis.
- Students will demonstrate and use a common vocabulary about writing.

Focus on Interventions

By implementing interventions, students of all academic ability levels will be able to make progress.

- Students will receive the appropriate supports and interventions.
- All students will make academic progress through support and appropriate interventions.
- Students will be monitored through the use of common and formative assessments.
- Student learning will improve due to collaboration between staff members.
- Students' need for AIS will be determined by consistent entrance and exit criteria.

Positive Parent Involvement

Increasing parental involvement will result in improved attendance and achievement by the students.

- The school will create activities that include parents, as volunteers and guest, strengthening the collaborative efforts of parent and teacher relationships.
- The school will use communication, through a variety of vehicles, assisting in building relationships between staff and parents.
- The school will increase opportunities for parents to share skills and talents by participating in PBIS reward day activities and parents as reading partners.

Desired Results for Student Learning and Indicators of Student Achievement

Desired Results for Student Learning

Indicators

Interventions

- Teachers work regularly in teams, learning together, collaborating and implementing best practices, using data in order to improve all student achievement.
- Student data will show an increase in academic achievement from September through the end of May.
- Teachers will be informed of all previous major interventions implemented, and given access to the information when appropriate (IEPs, FBA/BIP, VIT, SWIS data, etc.).
- Teachers will develop common assessments in teams, and utilize those assessments to identify the need for interventions.
- Teachers will be educated about the Volney Intervention Team process.
- Teachers and parents will be informed about the purpose and process of Response to Intervention.
- Students will receive necessary instruction and support from appropriate staff, based on data from assessments (AIS, School-Home liaison, Mentors, interventions from VIT, etc.).
- Intervention providers will regularly monitor student progress.
- Teachers will be provided with readily accessible research-based intervention practices.

Desired Results for Student Learning

Indicators

Parent Involvement

- Students will show more pride in their work because parents are more involved / informed about the process.
- Parents will be more aware of classroom procedures and expectations.
- Parent comfort level will increase, resulting in better attendance in formal conference time.
- Parental support will increase, resulting in improved attendance and achievement by the students.

Writing

- Explicit instruction and modeling will help students become better writers.
- Regularly using rubrics to assess student writing pieces allows students to get feedback about their learning and make improvements.
- The use of rubrics sets the expectations of the teacher and the writer.
- Increased writing opportunities will allow students to experiment, and try new genres of writing, hence showing progress in their writing.
- Having increased opportunities to share writing will provide incentive for students to interact with their writing in more meaningful ways.
- Using a student-generated portfolio allows the writers the ability to see progress and to participate in conferences with parents and teachers.

Part 4: Analysis of Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness

Introduction

In this section of our school improvement plan we provide an overview of instructional and organizational effectiveness to identify our school's strengths and limitations. We utilize this information to help us identify ways we can build on our strengths, as well as address the limitations of our school's instructional and organizational effectiveness, as we develop our school improvement plan.

Our instructional system and our curriculum and assessment practices are strong, and our instructional strategies are currently being studied and practiced, particularly in the areas of aligning strategies with the goals for student learning. With respect to the school's organizational conditions, opportunities for shared decision making and collaboration are strong. The extent to which the school extends the school community through collaborative networks of support for student learning has been limited, but is improving. Our professional development programs offer relevant training that is extensive and aligned with the desired results for student learning.

In light of these findings, we collected evidence pertaining to those areas identified as strengths, as well as those areas identified as limitations. A summary of our findings is provided on the following pages. In addition, we examined the extent to which our instructional practices and organizational conditions are aligned and provide students with a coherent instructional program.

Based upon our analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness we identified priorities for improvement. The priorities we established were based on the following three goals:

- to build on our school's strengths
- to address our limitations and areas in need of improvement
- to strengthen the alignment and coherence of the school's instructional and organizational practices

A summary of the priorities for improvement is provided at the end of this section.

SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Areas of Strengths

The content of the curriculum is consistent with the desired school wide results for student learning and the mission of the school.

Instructional strategies and learning activities are well aligned with the desired school wide results for student learning.

Leadership opportunities for students and staff are widely available.

Evidence

- Learning expectations in each content area are clearly identified and support the desired school wide results for student learning, and the mission of the school.
- Textbooks and other curriculum materials are selected on the basis of their alignment with the goals for student learning.
- The evaluation of the curriculum is based on the review of the extent of alignment with the goals for student learning and the mission of the school.

- Teaching strategies adequately address the school wide goals for student learning.
- The design of teaching strategies and learning activities fully takes into account the learning needs of all students.
- The technology-based resources available to students are adequate to support students' effective use of technology as a tool for learning.

- There is evidence of the consistent and effective use of shared decision making models.
- Staff members participate actively in collaborative teaching.
- Staff mentors help determine professional development needs and are responsible for planning programs.
- Cooperative learning activities, school wide student and staff responsibilities, and homeroom leadership responsibilities provide students with a variety of leadership development opportunities.

The school environment is inviting, safe, and orderly.

- Student disciplinary records verify that the majority of problems are created by relatively few students, and that consistent, corrective actions occur when such problems arise.
- Student accident reports document that the school environment is safe for both students and staff.

The professional development programs provided for staff adequately address the desired results for student learning and the changing learning needs of the students served by the school.

- The professional development programs provided by the school address the design of instructional strategies and assessment practices aligned with the desired results for student learning.
- Teachers and teacher assistants are provided with sufficient information about the types of learning needs unique to special education students.
- The professional development programs provided by the school offer adequate opportunities to learn about or exchange ideas related to the effective use of research-based instructional strategies to promote student achievement.

SUMMARY OF LIMITATIONS AND SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Areas in Need of Improvement

In order to improve our intervention practices, we will more effectively use data to monitor student academic and behavioral trends within the building. In so doing, we will facilitate/foster an environment that will allow for the success of all students.

The number of academic based parent involvement opportunities and level of parent communication about academic success of all students can be improved upon.

Writing instruction, while occurring in every classroom, does not utilize a consistent program that supports continual growth of all student writers.

Evidence

- Data can more effectively be used to make academic and program decisions at both the building and classroom levels in order to increase academic achievement. Data recording and reporting will need to be continually honed in order to make it more readily available and usable.

-Faculty and staff will collect data that ensures that all parents will be contacted regularly in order to discuss academic achievement.

-Teachers will use a writing program and collect data on student achievement on a regular basis. Through the use of collaborative teams, common writing assessment and feedback for writers will become a more systematic approach.

Analysis of the Overall Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness From a Systems Perspective

(e.g. evidence of the extent of coherence and congruence of the instructional practices and organizational conditions of the school)

- Overall, the instructional practices and organizational conditions of our school are congruent with each other and are well aligned with the school's mission and beliefs. For the 2009-10 school year the Identified Areas of Focus will be:

Priorities for Improvement:

- **to build on the school's strengths**
 - build on the strengths of the alignment of the curriculum with the desired results for student learning in designing instructional strategies and learning activities.
 - build on the school's data collecting program in order to ensure that all students have opportunities for success. Teams will regularly meet to discuss student achievement and make necessary adjustments to instruction.
 - build on the collaborative culture that exists within our school to successfully implement our school improvement goals.
- **to address limitations and areas in need of improvement**
 - focus on extending the school community by building and sustaining collaborative networks of support for student learning and promote discussions about student achievement (parent involvement).
 - Work to create an intervention system that better identifies student needs and is able to address them at the school wide, classroom, and individual level.
 - Utilize the collaborative culture of the building to promote professional development in the area of writing.

Action Plan #1

Desired Results for Student Learning: Writing

Timeline: 7/09-6/10

Goal Statement: By May 2010, teachers will explicitly teach and model the 6 + 1 Writing traits as measured by a portfolio of at least 4 student-generated samples consistent with NYS writing standards.

Action Steps	Estimated Resources	Data Support	Person(s) Responsible
<p>Teachers will be provided professional development in the 6 + 1 Traits of Writing.</p> <p>Teachers will increase the time for instruction in writing by at least 10%.</p>	<p><u>The 6 + 1 Writing Traits</u> by Ruth Cullen</p> <p>Time for professional development</p> <p>Estimate of time spent teaching writing now</p>	<p>Surveys will be used to determine needs</p> <p>Pre and post surveys</p>	<p>Administration / Principal</p> <p>Teachers</p>
<p>Teachers will facilitate more creative writing as encouraged by the 6 + 1 Traits of Writing.</p> <p>Teachers will provide supportive feedback allowing for student growth in Writing.</p>	<p>Publishing technology-computer lab</p> <p>Parent volunteers</p> <p>6+1 Writing Rubrics</p> <p>Information on effective feedback</p>	<p>Teacher made pre and post surveys to assess student engagement in writing.</p> <p>Use of rubrics and other methods of feedback</p>	<p>Principal</p> <p>ELA coordinators</p> <p>PD group in school</p>
<p>Teachers will provide a variety of venues to allow students to showcase their work.</p> <p>Teachers will establish portfolios of student-generated writing samples.</p>	<p>Use of newsletter to highlight upcoming events</p> <p>Time for sharing & collaboration</p> <p>Time to discuss/share within building/faculty groups</p> <p>Ongoing collection of student entries to portfolio</p>	<p>Calendar of events</p> <p>Grade level reports</p>	<p>Grade level teams</p> <p>Principal</p> <p>ELA facilitators</p>

Action Plan #2

Desired Results for Student Learning: Positive Parental Communication

Timeline: 7/09-6/10

Goal Statement: Goal Statement: By the end of the 2009/2010 school year, Volney faculty and staff will engage in positive parental communications for each student, a minimum of four times, as measured by anecdotal records.

Action Steps	Estimated Resources	Data Support	Person(s) Responsible
<p>Incorporate parental communication within the school through a variety of different means (email, phone calls, letters, home visits)</p>	<p>Templates for newsletters / articles to convey positive student achievement</p> <p>Email banks</p> <p>Postcards</p>	<p>Parent confirmation slip, signed, stating that article was received and read.</p>	<p>Faculty</p> <p>Staff</p> <p>Parents</p> <p>Volunteers</p>
<p>An increased emphasis will be placed on the importance of communication between the staff and parents to increase student achievement.</p>	<p>Professional articles used to reinforce the importance of parental involvement and begin the dialogue between parents and faculty</p>	<p>Anecdotal Records kept by faculty and staff.</p>	<p>Faculty</p> <p>Staff</p> <p>Parents</p> <p>Volunteers</p>
<p>Create a comfortable, safe and engaging environment, which welcomes parents and promotes positive school-home relationships.</p>	<p>Bring a guest to lunch to promote family and community involvement.</p> <p>Invite parents to participate in reward days.</p> <p>Invite parents to participate and become reading partners with students.</p>	<p>Parent questionnaire available to be completed at Bring a Guest to Lunch.</p> <p>Volunteer opportunities for reward day shared with parents at the beginning of the year.</p> <p>Training video for parents as reading partners.</p>	<p>Faculty</p> <p>Staff</p> <p>Parents</p> <p>Volunteers</p>

Action Plan #3

Desired Results for Student Learning: Interventions

Timeline: 7/09-6/10

Goal Statement: Working in teams in order to properly implement interventions, teachers will create and administer at least three common assessments in a chosen subject area, from September through May, as measured through rubrics for completed and graded work samples.

Action Steps	Estimated Resources	Data Support	Person(s) Responsible
Grade level teams will meet regularly to create the assessments.	Professional development Staff development Teacher planning time Curricular materials to create assessments	Common Assessment Results	Team Members Classroom Teachers Special Education Teachers Principal AIS Teachers
Teachers administer common assessments to determine needed interventions.	Team time for collaboration	VIT Work samples Rubrics	Principal Team Members AIS Personnel (if needed)
Teachers grade common assessments and set up interventions.	Team time for collaboration Ongoing progress monitoring Rtl VIT Understanding of Rtl model	Rubrics AIS entrance/exit exam	Team Members Teachers Home School Liaison Principal AIS Teachers