



Basic Information	
Date:	4/3/2014
District:	North Lawrence Community Schools (5075)
School:	Heltonville Elementary (4873) Todd Tanksley, Principal
IDOE Outreach Coordinators:	Kara Yates Karen York

I. Site-Visit Observations

Classroom Observations	Faculty/Student Group Interview Responses
<p>The Outreach Coordinator visited 4 classrooms during the hour scheduled for observations.</p>	<p>Turnaround Principle 1: Ensuring that the principal has the ability to lead the turnaround effort.</p>
<p>Classroom Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning objects were not present in classrooms. • Student work is displayed. • Student progress data is not prevalent in classrooms 	<p>To be determined by Asst. Superintendent Dr. Brown by April 15.</p>
<p>Classroom Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classrooms are spatially arranged to encourage learning. • It appears that students feel safe in asking for help or assistance from teacher or aide 	<p>Turnaround Principle 2: Establish a school environment that supports the social, emotional, and learning needs of all students.</p>
<p>Behavior Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the majority of classroom an air of respect is evident between Teacher and Student. • The students of Heltonville Elementary are very well behaved in the classroom. • Classroom activities are conducted efficiently 	<p>2.1 Is there a clear and consistent behavior system in place? Are goals set regarding behavior based on the analysis of data? What systems are in place to ensure staff and student safety?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers implement behavior system individual and as a school – chart in classroom – behavior expectation strip with clips in classroom • School-wide – first incentive day on Tuesday – tiered awards drawn
<p>Instructional Execution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking for understanding practices are used but not effectively. After each of these practices little or no cycling back occurred to ensure understanding for all students. While ‘cold calling’ was utilized in classrooms, there is a tendency for some teachers to call on students with raised hands. • Small group and individual activities are occurring in a few classrooms. Whole group instruction is a common thread through most classrooms • Gradual release instructional practices utilized in one classroom 	<p>How often will this happen?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every nine weeks <p>2.3 How are high expectations communicated to staff, students and families?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From principal – incentive program – good grades/attendance/behavior – every nine weeks • Working hard on istep remediation – trying to see if kids improve – Teacher believes that kids if feel successful they will do better. • Positive encouragement by teacher.
	<p>Turnaround Principle 3: Ensure that teachers utilize research-based, rigorous effective instruction to meet the needs of all students and aligned with State Standards.</p>
	<p>3.2 How do you use student learning data to inform the selection of instructional strategies?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data – dibels and level groups based on reading level • Small group activity and aide will then help • Baseline test – how they work on their writing and weekly test • Inserts in report card

Engagement

- Students are very compliant.
- Student engagement was adequate in the four classrooms visited. Improvements could be made in this area

3.4 How do you know that students are engaged and not just being compliant?

- Asking questions will tell me that they aren't just spacing out.
- Movement
- Everybody answers incorrectly - will have students repeat until correct
- Whiteboard work
- Thumbs up/down

Turnaround Principle 4: Ensure that teachers have the foundational documents and instructional materials needed to teach to the rigorous college-and career- ready standards.

4.3 What formative assessments are used by the school to gauge student learning? Do you review the results of these assessments? When? With whom?

- Dibels – helpful when you need to talk with a parent – send work home for parent to help
- Progress monitoring – sometimes I don't get to monitor progressing
- Acuity
- New topic in math – formative assessment – what they know and go from there
- Grammar – formative to see where the kids are and go from there
- Some Acuity data chats with kids
- Set reading goals in accelerated reading

Turnaround Principle 5: Develop skills to better recruit, retain and develop effective teachers

5.2 How often are teachers observed? Do they receive feedback afterwards? What evaluation system is in place?

- Pops in maybe every two weeks – no feedback provided. Teacher would like suggestions.

5.3 and 5.5 What are some examples of professional development provided? Who decides what PD is needed and how it is delivered? How does the principal know that the PD was effective and implemented in classrooms?

- Every day after school – meet as a staff – run down of the day
- Formal – Ruby Payne training – no follow up in classroom yet
- Study island PD
- Webinar – weekly writer
- Corporation decides the PD
- Smekens/Gifted and Talented – share what has been learned with the faculty

Turnaround Principle 6: Ensure the school-wide use of data focused on improving teaching and learning.

6.3 How often to teachers review data? Which teachers are involved? Who leads the review? How often? What is the outcome of the review? (PD? Teaching strategy?)

- Leading the looking at data – Principal
- Teachers don't know how to look at acuity
- Study Island math results – what they know, what I need to go back over. Needs more training on study island.
- Does not meet as a group to talk about data – not officially as a group

Turnaround Principle 7: Redesign time to better meet student and teacher learning needs and increase teacher collaboration focusing on improving teaching and learning.

7.2 How is remediation for students represented in the schedule? Is there a scheduled intervention program?

- Sidewalks for LA – leveled readers
- Flip/Flop time – half of the kids in the room for 20 minutes work with kids
- Commuter Time – use that time for math
- Data used – day by day work before they get to a test – study island.

Turnaround Principle 8: Increase academically focused family and community engagement.

8.2 What relationships has the school cultivated with community partners who offer services to families to assist in breaking down social, personal, and

academic barriers for learning? How are students identified who need this support system?

- Newsletter every Friday
- Emails
- Christmas time partners
- PTO meetings – poorly attended
- Phone calls to home – logged
- Should more often let parents know that kids have improved. I send notes (not a lot of emails). If parents don't communicate with me, I don't communicate with them very much.
- Outdoor classroom project in process

Other information:

- Zero teachers on Improvement Plans

II. Recommended Action Steps

- **Increase walkthroughs conducted by the principal.** This request was voiced during staff interviews. It was discussed with the principal that work will need to be done prior to the beginning of this practice. The principal will need to convey the purpose of the walkthrough – to gather information to drive discussions made for professional development and student achievement. This practice is should not be seen or used as an official teacher evaluation. It may be beneficial to use the Turnaround Principles document as a starting point for what data to gather in classrooms. Resources accompany this summary report – three documents.
- **Display transparency of learning expectations in classrooms through the use of “I can” statements or learning objectives posted for student use.** The expectation of the teacher is posted in the classroom and referred to often during a learning activity. Examples may be found at <http://www.nassauboces.org/Page/1940> and a pdf copy of *Learning Targets –Helping Students Aim for Understanding in Today’s Lesson* by Connie Moss and Susan Brookhart may be found at <http://www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/siteASCD/publications/books/learning-targets-sample-chapters.pdf>
- **Utilize varied strategies for checks for understanding and student engagement.** Checks for understanding were evidence in some classrooms while opportunities were missed in others. The Outreach Coordinator left two resources with the principal for future use. Addition resources for Checking for Understanding and Participation may include:
Total Participation Techniques – Making Every Student an Active Learner by Persida Himmele and William Himmele The Outreach Coordinator left a personal copy of this book with the principal until the May visit.
Transformative Assessment by W. James Popham
Checking for Understanding – Formative Assessment Techniques for Your Classroom by Douglas Fisher & Nancy Frey
Webpages and sites
 - The Teaching Channel – [Formative Assessment Video Clips](#)
 - [Engage NY](#)
 - Association for Middle Level Education - [Formative and Summative Assessments in the Classroom](#)
 - [Myelearning.org](#)
 - [Edutopia.org](#)

III. Evidence Still Needed

- Outreach Coordinator provided feedback on post-it notes in Turnaround Principle binders.
- The monitoring team would like to spend more time in teacher interviews during the May visit. This will be more easily accomplishes as two coordinators will be present for the May visit.

IV. Comments

Heltonville Elementary school was by far the most organized school to date in regards to displaying evidence of the Turnaround Principles. Evidence was presented in labeled binders for each principle. The Outreach Coordinator was greeted and welcomed by the principal and secretary. The secretary was particularly helpful in providing hospitable accommodations.

The principal was very honest during the interview with the leadership team and in private conversations. He shared that though the Student Achievement process has been stressful, it has also been helpful. With this being his first year in the leadership role, he stated he used the process as an opportunity to assess the state of the school. He was very open to discussion based on interviews and observations. The principal was an integral piece in planning the next steps for the school, namely, increasing walkthroughs and posting learning objectives. He is interested in the accountability of the school in the coming years. This demonstrates that he is not interested in just improving for the sake of the removal of priority status but rather the future of teaching and learning.