



**Indiana  
Department of Education**

**Glenda Ritz, NBCT**  
Indiana Superintendent of Public Instruction

# **School Quality Review Report:**

## **Westside Leadership Academy**

**Review Date:** May 18-20, 2014

**Address:** 9<sup>th</sup> and Gerry Street, Gary, IN 46406

**Principal:** Terrance Little 9-12; Charlotte Wright 7-8

**Review Team:** Lindsey Brown, Teresa Brown, Daniel Bundridge, Robert Guffin, Maggie Paino, Tom Wisch, John Wolf

## School Quality Review First Priorities

### Westside Leadership Academy

The following First Priorities should be addressed in school improvement planning and be included in your Student Achievement Plan with appropriate interventions aligned to the Turnaround Principles cited:

#### **Turnaround Principle 1: School Leadership**

The information gathered leads to the conclusion that Mr. Little is viewed as a manager and not an instructional leader. His style has been perceived as top down and controlling. There are multiple areas he must change if this perception is to turn around. He inherited an immensely challenging situation however the assistant principals are viewed as the instructional leaders of the building and this must change. The following areas must be intentionally addressed in your SIP and more importantly in the principal's actions:

1. Visibility – Mr. Little must be visible in the hallways, classrooms, cafeteria, and in grade level collaboration meetings. Discipline is something that can and must be shared among his administrative team to allow this to occur.
2. Stakeholder Input – Staff, parents, and students do not feel as if they have a voice in the school's mission, vision, or direction. Improvement on communication and opportunities for input must occur.
3. Professional Learning Communities – Mr. Little must work with his staff to set up Professional Learning Communities around the areas of greatest need. Collaboration currently does not seem focused or effective to create positive change.
4. Professional development aligned to data and feedback – Data must be analyzed purposefully to inform instruction and needed areas for professional development. Assistant principals or staff members conducted professional development from the direction of the principal, although there was little evidence that there was intent and purpose at these attempts. There was no professional development plan in place. Professional development effectiveness is not evaluated and a future PD plan must be created that reflects data analysis to identify the school's greatest needs.
5. Ensuring standards are directly taught – Teacher lesson plans were non-existent. The school district provided no curriculum guides or timelines and some staff was utilizing old blue prints that were based on standards that are not current.
6. Developing Formative Assessments – While Acuity has been utilized to a degree there

are few if any formative assessments being utilized. Little evidence exists that assessments have changed or informed instruction.

7. Interventions – The majority of students are performing below or well below grade level standards. There are no formal meetings, organization, or structure to address their needs. Students are not identified as being in Tier II or III while the majority of students are performing and have performed below grade level. Currently they seem to have a district RTI person but no specific interventions, remediation or enrichment classes, exist to meet student needs.

### **Turnaround Principle 3: Effective Instruction**

1. Principal to adjust priorities and become the instructional leader in the building.
2. District to provide a curriculum guide for all subject areas PRIOR to the 2014-15 school year.
3. Develop a Professional Development plan to include data analysis training for all staff, specific expectations for teacher delivery of instruction, classroom visitation and feedback process, intervention plans for students who are below grade level in Reading and Math, and specific protocol for all data and PD meetings. This plan is to be included in the School Improvement Plan and Student Achievement Plan.

### **Turnaround Principle 6: Use of Data**

1. Administer climate and culture surveys multiple times a year to collect data.
2. Develop teacher Acuity binders.
3. Disaggregate assessment data and communicate to all stakeholders.
4. Develop a school wide data team.
5. Systematic processes need to be put into place to analyze data, including academic and behavior, in order to make instructional decisions to increase student achievement.
6. Formative Assessment needs to be intentionally utilized to improve instruction and respond to student learning needs.
7. Use data to drive instruction.
8. Use data to determine student intervention, improving discipline, and to drive professional development.

## Information about the School Quality Review

In 1999, the Indiana General Assembly enacted Public Law 221 (P.L. 221) which serves as Indiana's accountability model for schools and districts. In response to the accountability process, the State Board of Education developed a requirement that schools in year four of probationary or "F" status participate in the School Quality Review process to assist with identifying priorities for school improvement.

The goal of the School Quality Review is to identify the school's strengths and areas needing immediate improvement. Reviewers examined school data and survey information, observed every classroom, interviewed stakeholder groups and interviewed every staff member with standardized questions to identify areas for reinforcement or correction. Additionally, reviewers worked collaboratively before, during, and after the on-site visit to review and prepare findings. Schools were directed to include first priorities in their School Improvement Plans.

To provide reliable and high-quality feedback to the schools, a rigorous training process was followed for all review team members. Additionally, all reviewers were trained in the Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (ELEOT) from AdvancED and were able to identify best instructional practices. Reviewers reviewed survey and school data information before the on-site visit. Interview questions were also selected before the visit and were revised as necessary throughout the visit to allow the reviewers to obtain reliable and verifiable feedback.

In preparing the School Quality Review Report, the reviewers used the Quality School Review Rubric Indicators and Rubric to indicate progress on the 8 Federal Turnaround Principles for Priority Schools. The Turnaround Principles have been identified by the US Department of Education (USED) as being critical to the success of turning around a struggling school. The reviewers examined evidence provided by the school leadership team as well as school data to make determinations of highly effective, effective, improvement necessary or ineffective for each of the indicators for the turnaround principles. After reviewing the rubric ratings, the review team designated, "First Priorities" based on the areas needing to be addressed first in school improvement planning. While many ineffective areas may be discussed in the report, the team wanted to prioritize improvement areas and assist the school in identifying next steps for immediate action.

Indiana Department of Education Outreach staff will continue to monitor and support educators with implementing first priorities in School Improvement and Student Achievement Plans in all year four schools to ensure the review team's findings and recommendations are implemented with fidelity.

## Quality School Review Rubric Indicators

### SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

**TURNAROUND PRINCIPLE 1: Ensure that the principal has the ability to lead the turnaround effort.** Under the definition of “turnaround principles” in the document titled ESEA flexibility, an LEA that has reviewed the performance of the current principal in a priority school and determined that it would like to retain that principal to lead the turnaround effort must “demonstrate to the SEA that the current principal has a track record in improving achievement and has the ability to lead the turnaround effort” The SEA has the responsibility of ensuring that an LEA has either made this demonstration or replaced the principal for each priority school that is implementing interventions aligned with the turnaround principles. The principal review that is required to meet the turnaround principle regarding providing strong leadership in a priority school is fairly narrow and is conducted for the specific purpose of determining whether the principal has the ability to lead the turnaround effort.

### INDICATORS

1.1	The principal uses data to establish a coherent vision that is understood and supported by the entire school community
1.2	The principal develops and promotes a coherent strategy and plan for implementing the school vision, which includes clear measurable goals, aligned strategies and a plan for monitoring progress and driving continuous improvement.
1.3	The principal uses data to work collaboratively with staff to maintain a safe, orderly and equitable learning environment.
1.4	The principal communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and supports students to achieve them.
1.5	The principal ensures that a rigorous and coherent standards-based curriculum and aligned assessment system are implemented with fidelity.
1.6	The principal ensures that classroom level instruction is adjusted based on formative and summative results from aligned assessments.
1.7	The principal uses informal and formal observation data and on-going student learning outcome data to monitor and improve school-wide instructional practices and ensure the achievement of learning goals for all students (including SWD and ELLs).
1.8	The principal ensures that the schedule is intentionally aligned with the school improvement plan in order to meet the agreed upon school level learning goals.
1.9	The principal effectively employs staffing practices (recruitment and selection, assignment, shared leadership, job-embedded professional development, observations with meaningful instructional feedback, evaluation, tenure review) in order to continuously improve instructional and meet student learning goals.
1.10	The principal uses data and research-based best practices to work with staff to increase academically-focused family and community engagement.

## SCHOOL CLIMATE & CULTURE

**TURNAROUND PRINCIPLE 2: Establish a school environment that supports the social, emotional, and learning needs of all students.** To determine which non-academic services or activities will be appropriate and useful under this principle, an LEA should examine the needs of students in a priority school. Based on the results of that examination, an LEA might choose to carry out a number of activities to address emotional, and health needs; implementing approaches that improve school climate and discipline such as implementing a system of positive behavioral interventions and supports or taking steps to eliminate bullying and student harassment; or initiating a community stability program to reduce the mobility rate of students in the school.

### INDICATOR

2.1	The school community supports a safe, orderly and equitable learning environment.
2.2	The school community maintains a culture that values learning and promotes the academic and personal growth of students and staff.
2.3	High expectations* are communicated to staff, students and families; students are supported to achieve them.  <i>*Expectations of professionalism, instruction, communication and other elements of the school's common teaching framework to staff; Expectations of attendance, academic performance, behavior, postsecondary attainment, etc. to families</i>

## EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION

**TURNAROUND PRINCIPLE 3: Ensure that teachers utilize research-based, rigorous and effective instruction to meet the needs of all students and aligned with State Standards.** As part of meeting the turnaround principle regarding strengthening the school's instructional program based on student needs, and LEA may choose to improve the school's kindergarten or preschool program so that it is research-based, rigorous, and aligned with State Standards.

### INDICATORS

3.1	Teachers ensure that student-learning objectives are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely, and are aligned to the standards-based curriculum.
3.2	Teachers use multiple instructional strategies and multiple response strategies that actively engage and meet student learning needs.
3.3	Teachers use frequent checks for understanding throughout each lesson to gauge student learning, and to inform, monitor and adjust instruction.
3.4	Teachers demonstrate necessary content knowledge.
3.5	Teachers demonstrate the necessary skills to use multiple measures of data, including the use of diagnostic, formative and summative assessment data, to differentiate instruction to improve student achievement.
3.6	Teachers hold high expectations for all students academically and behaviorally as evidenced in their practice.

**CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT, AND INTERVENTION SYSTEM**

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

**INDICATORS**

4.1	The district or school curriculum is aligned with the Common Core Ready State Standards (CCRSS).
4.2	Teachers and school leaders collect classroom level data to verify that the adopted and aligned CCSS curriculum is the “taught” curriculum.
4.3	The district provides formative assessments in literacy and math to enable teachers to effectively gauge student progress and inform instructional decisions at the classroom and team levels.
4.4	Instructional materials and resources are aligned to the standards-based curriculum documents.
4.5	An intervention plan designed to meet the learning needs of students who are two or more years behind in ELA and Mathematics is planned, monitored and evaluated for effectiveness based on defined student learning goals.

**EFFECTIVE STAFFING PRACTICES**

**TURNAROUND PRINCIPLE 5: Develop skills to better recruit, retain and develop effective teachers.**

**INDICATORS**

5.1	Hiring timelines and processes allow the school to competitively recruit effective teachers.
5.2	School leadership uses teacher evaluation to provide feedback for improving classroom practices, informing professional development and increasing learning outcomes
5.3	Teachers are provided professional development that enables them to continuously reflect, revise, and evaluate their classroom practices to improve learning outcomes in both a structured collaborative setting and individually.
5.4	Staff assignment is intentional to maximize the opportunities for all students to have access to the staff’s instructional strengths.

**ENABLING the EFFECTIVE USE of DATA**

**TURNAROUND PRINCIPLE 6: Ensure the school-wide use of data focused on improving teaching and learning.** Examples of data that an LEA may consider include: student outcome data, such as student achievement data, graduation rates, dropout rates, student attendance rates, percentage of students completing advanced coursework, discipline incidents, truants, distribution of teachers by performance level on the LEA's teacher evaluation and support system, and teacher attendance rate. An LEA may also wish to examine the results of formative or interim assessments to help improve classroom instruction.

**INDICATORS**

6.1	Multiple forms of data are presented in user-friendly formats and in a timely manner to drive all decisions for improving climate and culture.
6.2	Multiple forms of data are presented in user-friendly formats in a timely manner to drive all decisions for improving student achievement.
6.3	A specific schedule and process for the analysis of on-going formative assessment data tied to the CCRSS aligned curriculum that includes the specific goals for improvement, defined strategies, progress monitoring and evaluation.

**EFFECTIVE USE of TIME**

**TURNAROUND PRINCIPLE 7: Redesign time to better meet student and teacher learning needs and increase teacher collaboration focusing on improving teaching and learning.** An LEA has flexibility in determining how to meet the turnaround principle regarding redesigning the school day, week, or year in a priority school. An LEA should examine the current use of time in the school and redesign the school day, week, or year based on the particular needs of the school. For example, an LEA may choose to add time to the school day or add days to the school year. However, an LEA is not required to add time; it may also redesign the school day by for example, moving to block scheduling to reduce transition time between classes and increase instructional time.

**INDICATORS**

7.1	The master schedule is clearly designed and structured to meet the needs of all students.
7.2	The master schedule is clearly designed to meet the intervention needs of all students who are two or more years behind in ELA or Mathematics.
7.3	The master schedule is clearly structured and designed to meet the professional development needs of staff.

**EFFECTIVE FAMILY and COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

**TURNAROUND PRINCIPLE 8: Increase academically focused family and community engagement.** An LEA might conduct a community-wide assessment to identify the major factors that significantly affect the academic achievement of students in the school, including an inventory of the resources in the community and the school that could be aligned, integrated, and coordinated to address these challenges. An LEA might choose to establish organized parent groups, hold public meetings involving parents and community members to review school performance and help develop school improvement plans, use surveys to gauge parent and community satisfaction and support, implement complaint procedures for families, coordinate with local social and health service providers to help meet student and family needs, provide wraparound services for students, or provide parent education classes (including GED, adult literacy, and EL programs).

**INDICATORS**

8.1	Families are engaged in academically related activities, school decision-making, and an open exchange of information regarding students' progress in order to increase student learning for all students.
8.2	Community groups and families of students who are struggling academically and/or socially are active partners in the educational process and work together to reduce barriers and accelerate the academic and personal growth of students.

## Turnaround Principle # 1 Title: School Leadership

Circle the Overall Rating: **1 Ineffective** 2 Improvement Necessary 3 Effective 4 Highly Effective

### Description of Improvement Necessary Areas:

1.10 The principal uses data and research-based practices to work with staff to increase academically-focused family and community engagement.

**Evidence from Data:** There are data rooms, with color codes, for 7-8, 9-10, and 11-12 posting the results from Acuity, attendance, behavior, and whether or not students had passed/DNP ISTEP/ECA's.

**Evidence from Interviews:** Teachers, administrators, and other staff referenced weekly collaboration meetings led by the assistant principal where assessment data was discussed.

### Description of Ineffective Areas:

1.1 The principal uses data to establish a coherent vision that is understood and supported by the entire school community; 1.2 The principal develops and promotes a coherent strategy and plan for implementing the school vision, which includes clear measurable goals, aligned strategies and a plan for monitoring progress and driving continuous improvement; 1.3 The principal uses data to work collaboratively with staff and maintain a safe, orderly and equitable learning environment; 1.4 The principal communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and supports students to achieve them; 1.5 The principal ensures that a rigorous and coherent standards-based curriculum and aligned assessment system are implemented with fidelity; 1.6 The principal ensures that classroom level instruction is adjusted based on formative and summative assessments; 1.7 The principal uses informal and formal observations data and on-going student learning outcome data to monitor and improve school-wide instructional practices and ensure the achievement of learning goals for all students (including Students with Disabilities and English Learners); 1.8 The principal ensures that the schedule is intentionally aligned with the school improvement plan in order to meet the agreed upon school level learning goals; 1.9 The principal effectively employs staffing practices (recruitment and selection, assignment, shared leadership, job embedded professional development, observations with meaningful instructional feedback, evaluation) in order to continuously improve instructional and meet student learning goals.

**Evidence from Data:** It is obvious that staff have spent time with data. However the level of application strongly suggests that data review is an event and not a meaningful process to modify instruction. There has been some improvement within their Acuity Predictive scores but the majority of students are still not predicted to pass either Math or ELA overall.

**Evidence from Observations:** While there were a few teacher observations that were positive the vast majority of them were overwhelmingly ineffective to needs improvement. Many students were wandering the hallways during instructional time without a pass and very few staff members ever questioned them, sent them to class, or sent them to the office.

**Evidence from Interviews:** Statements from the majority of interviews support low scores across the board in Turnaround Principle 1. The general consensus was that the principal was not

visible during the instructional day in classrooms, hallways, or lunchroom. Communication seems mainly done through email which some staff members do not choose to read. There is a strong perception of a top down managerial style that conveys a lack of trust to the staff. A small sampling of interviews shared a perception that the principal handles discipline well and that he and his family are at all extra-curricular events.

### **Summary of First Priorities that need to be intentionally addressed in your School Improvement Plan:**

The information gathered leads to the conclusion that Mr. Little is viewed as a manager and not an instructional leader. His style has been perceived as top down and controlling. There are multiple areas he must change if this perception is to turn around. He inherited an immensely challenging situation however the assistant principals are viewed as the instructional leaders of the building and this must change. The following areas must be intentionally addressed in your SIP and more importantly in the principal's actions:

- Visibility – Mr. Little must be visible in the hallways, classrooms, cafeteria, and in grade level collaboration meetings. Discipline is something that can and must be shared among his administrative team to allow this to occur.
- Stakeholder Input – Staff, parents, and students do not feel as if they have a voice in the school's mission, vision, or direction. Improvement on communication and opportunities for input must occur.
- Professional Learning Communities – Mr. Little must work with his staff to set up Professional Learning Communities around the areas of greatest need. Collaboration currently does not seem focused or effective to create positive change.
- Professional development aligned to data and feedback – Data must be analyzed purposefully to inform instruction and needed areas for professional development. Assistant principals or staff members conducted professional development from the direction of the principal, although there was little evidence that there was intent and purpose at these attempts. There was no professional development plan in place. Professional development effectiveness is not evaluated and a future PD plan must be created that reflects data analysis to identify the school's greatest needs.
- Ensuring standards are directly taught – Teacher lesson plans were non-existent. The school district provided no curriculum guides or timelines and some staff were utilizing old blue prints that were based on standards that are not current.
- Developing Formative Assessments – While Acuity has been utilized to a degree there are few if any formative assessments being utilized. Little evidence exists that assessments changed or informed instruction.
- Interventions – The majority of students are performing below or well below grade level standards. There are no formal meetings, organization, or structure to address their needs. Students are not identified as being in Tier II or III while the majority of students are performing and have performed below grade level. Currently they seem to have a district RTI person but no specific interventions, remediation or enrichment classes, exist to meet student needs.

**Turnaround Principle # 2****Title: School Climate and Culture**

Circle the Overall Rating: **1 Ineffective** 2 Improvement Necessary 3 Effective 4 Highly Effective

**Description of Ineffective Areas:**

2.1: The school community supports a safe, orderly and equitable learning environment

- The school building has many areas of disrepair, including missing and moldy ceiling tiles, water leaks and areas of the building that cannot be utilized. Additionally, the bathrooms are not stocked with staples such as soap, toilet paper and paper towel. Trophy cases are broken into and left with trophies knocked over or broken. Pictures of star athletes from the school's past are covered in scum from ceiling leaks that dripped down the walls. Students throw trash on the ground rather than utilizing trash cans. Vending machines are flipped over and unusable. Bathroom walls are covered in graffiti.
- There is no clear security system in the school. None of the security cameras work, no one monitors the doorways and metal detectors, and security guards are ineffective. Students and members of the community are able to enter and exit the building as they please because many doors are unlocked and unmonitored.
- There is no clear and consistent policy for behavior throughout the school. Students are allowed to freely wander the halls; many students are seen in the hall all day and never go to class. On multiple occasions, adults (teachers and administrators) walk right by students that are skipping class without addressing the situation. Very few teachers have any sort of disciplinary structure or classroom expectations. Students are not engaged and teachers are not making an effort to control the classroom and provide an equitable learning environment for students. Some staff believes that they are not allowed to discipline special education students, and if these students are disciplined then the administration or district will overturn the teacher's action. Teachers do not monitor the halls during passing periods. Students are unaware of consequences that may be enforced for certain infractions.

**Actionable Statement:**

- Allow only one access point to the school and lock all other doors during the school day; fix all broken security cameras throughout the building; train security guards so that they are effective, and ensure that they are not "friends" of the students; Monitor the main entrance and the metal detector at all hours of the school day
- Deep clean the building and fix areas of disarray; bring in maintenance to address leaks in the building and remedy any mold; replace broken or missing ceiling tiles; ensure that there are plenty of trash cans in the building; stock bathrooms with staples
- Develop a school-wide discipline policy and ensure that staff and students are aware of infractions and consequences, and enforce it consistently; provide professional development on classroom management and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

2.2: The school community maintains a culture that values learning and promotes the academic and personal growth of students and staff.

- Academic learning time is not bell-to-bell. Students roam the halls well after any bell has rung, and many stay in the halls for entire class periods. Many students skipping class said that they don't go to class because their teachers don't teach.
- Teachers have low expectations of students, and say that the students do not want to learn, and that the students are one of the biggest "weaknesses" or "challenges" of the school. Teachers are not providing instruction bell-to-bell. Many teachers can be observed sitting at their desks, not providing instruction while students are on Facebook or some other non-academic activity; some teachers only taught while being observed by someone with the Indiana Department of Education. Students say that many of their teachers are absent frequently, and don't teach them when they are there.
- There is no common classroom routine across the school. Some teachers have a "bell ringer" written on the board, but did not utilize it in the classroom. Students come into the class without any guidance or structure. Instruction was teacher-led and not differentiated to support students in need. Teachers do not have a way of identifying which students need additional interventions, and little effort is made to give students extra assistance or differentiated instruction.

**Actionable Statement:**

- Have teachers in the hallways during passing periods to ensure students get to class; have effective security personnel monitor problem areas of the building (ie, "the surge") and conduct hall sweeps; communicate the roles and responsibilities to security regarding assistance in the halls and classrooms, and hold security to these standards
- Provide professional development on effective classroom instruction strategies and classroom management; communicate classroom expectations to staff and students; review lesson plans to ensure that teachers are teaching bell-to-bell and incorporating differentiated opportunities to address students with additional instructional needs.

2.3: High expectations are communicated to staff, students and families; students are supported to achieve them. (Expectations of professionalism, instruction, communication and other elements of the school's common teacher framework to staff; Expectations of attendance, academic performance, behavior, postsecondary attainment, etc. to families.

- There are no expectations for instructional practices, due to the "academic freedom" clause in the teacher's collective bargaining agreement. Instructional strategies and data are not used to drive instruction.
- Classroom instruction is not monitored and expectations are not communicated.
- There is no communication or system of support in place to meet students' academic, social/emotional and behavioral needs.

### **Actionable Statement:**

- Communicate with the district to determine its stance regarding the interpretation of “academic freedom”, and what flexibility the school administration has with “academic freedom” until the collective bargaining agreement expires.
- Provide professional development opportunities on how to analyze and utilize data to drive and inform instruction
- Conduct more informal observations to ensure that classrooms are aligned to expectations, and provide informal feedback to teachers regarding areas of concern.

### **Evidence from Data, Observations & Interviews:**

- Teacher interviews
  - Teachers were not knowledgeable of different classroom instructional strategies, standards-based curriculum, use of data, classroom management techniques
  - Teachers were not able to communicate any shared mission or vision for the school
  - Teachers expressed low expectations of students
- Classroom observations
  - Instruction was mostly teacher-led
  - No identified systems in place in regard to expectations, discipline, classroom management, and instructional time
  - In some cases, instruction only occurred while the teacher was being observed
- Student interviews
  - Students were eager to learn but did not feel like the school was providing them any opportunities to learn
  - Students were concerned about the safety in the building
- Informal conversations with students and students approaching IDOE staff members with their concerns
  - Students stated that they did not go to class because they were not learning anything/their teachers didn’t teach them anything
  - Students came up to multiple IDOE staff members and said, “Please close this school.”
  - Students went to the surge because they didn’t want to go to class or their teacher didn’t teach them anything
- Building walk-through observations
  - Building disarray
  - Safety issues with security, building access, lack of student monitoring and discipline

### **Summary of First Priorities that need to be intentionally addressed in your School Improvement Plan:**

The School Quality Review Team had some **serious concerns** about student safety and the need to secure the classrooms, hallways, and entrances of Westside. A culture for learning is not in place at Westside. Additionally, many discipline problems could be prevented if adults were supervising and redirecting students consistently and requiring students to be in classrooms and follow procedures. Students were often in hallways unattended and adults would walk by them misbehaving and ignore the behavior. This needs to be addressed immediately.

## Turnaround Principle # 3

## Title: Effective Instruction

Circle the Overall Rating: **1 Ineffective** 2 Improvement Necessary 3 Effective 4 Highly Effective

### Description of Improvement Necessary Areas:

3.4 Teachers demonstrate necessary content knowledge

**Evidence from Data and Observations:** Teachers rely on textbooks to deliver lessons (observation). Teachers stated that the objectives they use are taken from the textbooks. Lesson plans were merely agenda items (observation) and no evidence was submitted, nor observed, indicating that strategies were designed to address different learning styles. Several students were observed to be not engaged, although they were not loudly disruptive. Some students had heads down on desk as the lesson was being delivered.

**Actionable Statement:** Administrative team to clarify expectations of the components they expect to see when observing teachers delivering the lesson. Example: Delivery of the lesson to include the following components: I show (model), I guide,(we do together), You do (individual practice).

### Description of Ineffective Areas:

3.1 Teachers ensure that student learning objectives are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely and aligned to the standards-based curriculum.

**Evidence from Data: and Observations:** During individual conversations with the Principal and the teachers, no 2013-2014 curriculum guide was available. The Principal stated the plan was the Acuity Blueprint but little evidence of this was found, or stated by teachers when asked about the curriculum used. Students were unable to articulate the learning objectives in most classrooms observed by the review team. Teachers were unable to articulate how the objectives were measured. One teacher mentioned an exit ticket.

**Actionable Statement:** District to provide a current curriculum guide (based on new Indiana standards for 2014-15) providing teacher guidance for all content areas. Principal to build the expectations that all student objectives clearly state what students are expected to know and be able to do by the end of each lesson. Professional Development for writing smart objectives and measuring the learning objectives must be included in PD activities PRIOR to the beginning of the 2014-15 school year.

3.2 Teachers use multiple instructional strategies and multiple response strategies that actively engage and meet student learning needs.

**Evidence from Data and Observations:** The Principal discussed Think, Pair, Share as an instructional strategy for which Professional Development Session was held. No evidence of use of this strategy was found in either teacher discussion or observation. Additionally, the selection of the Think, Pair, Strategy does not seem to be based on student needs. Very little variation was found, during observations. Most classroom observations found traditional “sit, get, and complete worksheets” as the favored strategy.

**Actionable Statement:** Analyze data to inform student learning deficiencies and needs. Involve teachers in data talks weekly—led by **the principal**.

3.3 Teachers use frequent checks for understanding throughout each lesson to gauge student learning, and to inform, monitor and adjust instruction

**Evidence from Data and Observations:** During observations teachers rarely, or never, checked for student understanding. Student mastery of standards was not mentioned in teacher interviews and the review team did not witness interventions for students who failed to master concepts. In most instances, checks for understanding were not witnessed. There is not a building culture in place that addresses all students mastering all standards.

There is a lack of urgency on the part of administration and teachers to create a culture of high expectations concerning student learning. Although the Principal's passion is evident, there is no coherent strategy to build that expectation throughout the staff.

**Actionable Statement:** Professional development activities with follow up administration classroom visits to observe and provide feedback re: checks for understanding. This PD would be a part of a year-long PD instructional improvement plan as a part of SIP/SAP.

3.5 Teachers demonstrate the necessary skills to use multiple sources of data, including the use of diagnostic, formative, and summative data to improve student achievement.

The Principal pointed out the data room to the review team. The room does have green, yellow, and red dots posted to indicate pass or DNP on Acuity indicators. Grade level teams meet weekly in the data rooms to discuss the data. No agenda books, or ongoing plan was presented to verify that these meetings are data discussions. Teachers were unable to articulate the purpose of, and benefit of, the data meetings during the interview process. Several described discussions of student behavioral issues and the SILS system but were unable to explain the data analysis process. Targeted interventions for students not mastering content, as discovered during data analysis, do not happen. There is no evidence of pre-teaching content, nor is there evidence of re-teaching content, as a result of formative assessment. Many staff indicated, as a way of explaining the lack of interventions, "there are no funds available for after school tutoring or re-teaching.

**Actionable Statement:** Include the process of data analysis in the school-wide professional development, and SIP/SAP, plan for 2014-15. It is encouraged that teams of teachers looking at data, guided by the **principal** and a district instructional coach, develop plans to address student deficiencies.

3.6 Teachers hold high expectations for all students academically and behaviorally as evidenced in their practice.

Teachers were unable to define effective classroom practices and indicated the only improvement strategy they knew was think, pair, share. Expectations for student academic performance is at a very low level. Behavioral expectations are also low as evidenced by large numbers of students in the hallways, several students in inappropriate school dress, disruptive

classroom environments (Middle School), and lack of presence of adults in the hallways. Very few adults addressed students who were in the hallways.

**Actionable Statement:** Incorporate into the SIP/SAP school wide behavior plan and expectations for procedure for addressing students who do not go to class.

**Summary of First Priorities that need to be intentionally addressed in your School Improvement Plan:**

1. Principal to adjust priorities and become the instructional leader in the building.
2. District to provide a curriculum guide for all subject areas PRIOR to the 2014-15 school year.
3. Develop a Professional Development plan to include data analysis training for all staff, specific expectations for teacher delivery of instruction, classroom visitation and feedback process, intervention plans for students who are below grade level in reading and math, and specific protocol for all data and PD meetings. This plan is to be included in School Improvement Plan and Student Achievement Plan.

## Turnaround Principle # 4 Title: Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention System

Circle the Overall Rating: **1 Ineffective** 2 Improvement Necessary 3 Effective 4 Highly Effective

### Description of Ineffective Areas:

4.1 The district or school curriculum is aligned with College and Career Ready State Standards (CCRSS)

- The district curriculum is not aligned to the CCRSS
- Teachers cannot describe what each child should know or do for a given lesson

**Evidence from Interviews:** According to Mr. Little’s interview, the school utilizes “old” curriculum maps that were provided by the district. The curriculum maps were not provided for the current school year and were not closely followed. In addition, teachers were not able to share any curriculum maps that they use. It is the norm for teachers to indicate that they utilize the “curriculum” taught by the textbook and the objectives that those textbooks reference.

4.2 Teachers and school leaders collect classroom level data to verify that the adopted and aligned CCRSS curriculum is the “taught” curriculum.

- Classroom observations are infrequent and not focused on ensuring the adopted curriculum is the taught curriculum
- Teachers develop lessons that are not systematically linked to the CCRSS
- The district does not have a consistent curriculum and teachers largely develop their independent lessons that use teacher developed assessments
- There is no system to collect and review lesson plans

**Evidence from Data:** Lesson plans that teachers provided (when associated with an observation) do not specify standards; the rating tool utilized by evaluators only refers to “appropriate standards”, but does not expound on what those standards are; multiple examples indicate that lesson plans do not refer to CCRSS.

**Evidence from Observations:** Standards are very rarely posted or referenced in classrooms  
Evidence from Interviews: Teachers consistently report that assistant principals observe their classroom “a couple of times” per year and that the head principal does not observe their classroom; the administrative team agrees that they only collect lesson plans when associated with an observation.

4.3 The district provides formative assessments in literacy and math to enable teachers to effectively gauge student progress and inform instructional decision at the classroom and team levels.

- The district may have formative assessment in Literacy and Math, but using teacher-developed assessments is the norm.
- A formative assessment schedule is not in use.

- There are not systems in place to collect and analyze formative assessment data.

**Evidence from Data:** A primitive data collection system is available for diagnostic Acuity for grades 7 and 8 as well as predictive Acuity for Algebra I. However, there is no indication that this data is utilized, except when adjusting groupings for specific classes. This process is very vague and appears to have taken place after the 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester only (this was indicated by teachers in interviews).

**Evidence from Observations:**

Evidence from Interviews: The district uses Acuity diagnostic tests at the middle school level and Acuity predictive tests at the high school level. However, teachers are not utilizing this data to inform their instruction as evidenced from multiple teacher interviews. There is no evidence that teachers are utilizing diagnostic data to teach, reteach, or enrich skills. Teachers indicate that teacher-created or textbook assessments are utilized on a regular basis.

4.4 Instructional materials and resources are aligned to the standards-based curriculum documents.

- Instructional curriculum and materials are not aligned to the CCRSS or the school goals
- Instructional materials and resources are outdated

**Evidence from Observations:** Multiple classroom observations noted outdated textbooks and materials. An example of this includes an Indiana Graduation Qualification Exam (GQE) workbook. This appeared to be the primary resource for an Algebra I class. The standards associated with this resource are over a decade old.

**Evidence from Interviews:** Teachers are not able to articulate any specific or measurable goals for the school in any interview. When the administration spoke of goals, they indicated the focus was Math this year, and that next year the focus would be writing. However, no measurable goal was ever articulated.

4.5 An intervention plan designed to meet the learning needs of students who are two or more years behind in ELA and Mathematics is planned, monitored, and evaluated for effectiveness based on defined student learning goals.

- There is no systematic means to determine if students are two or more grade levels behind.
- Interventions in ELA and Math are not research-based.
- Inadequate time modifications, if any, were made to accelerate the learning of students two or more grade levels behind.
- Whole group is the primary means of instruction, with few exceptions.

**Evidence from Observations:** When analyzing the master schedule, programmatically, the course master list is completely lacking of any remedial or enrichment courses. With the extremely rare exception, all teachers primarily utilize whole group instruction – this is the norm.

**Evidence form Interviews:** Counselors and administration indicate that students who fail a core content course are ineligible to retake that course. The only options to earn a credit for failed classes that are required for graduation are to take an online PLATO recovery course or a credit recovery course with an outside agency. In addition, students who fail a course, are moved into the next level course regardless of their mastery of the prerequisite course. For example, students who fail Algebra I and/or the Algebra I ECA, are automatically enrolled in Algebra II. No remedial classes are available at any level, let alone for students who are two or more grade levels behind. When questioned about interventions, administrators indicate that they enroll students in “precourses” for Math and English to determine skill levels based on qualitative teacher feedback and Acuity. After one trimester of the precourse class, student groupings are adjusted based on Acuity performance and skill level. “Precourses” are not state recognized courses. In fact, the lowest level math course recognized by the state is Algebra Enrichment (which must be taken in conjunction with Algebra I) or the grade appropriate English course. This is clearly not an appropriate or effective method of intervention for struggling students. There appears to be no legitimate academic interventions in place at Westside Leadership Academy.

**Summary of First Priorities that need to be intentionally addressed in your School**

**Improvement Plan:**

N/A

## Turnaround Principle # 5

Circle the Overall Rating:

**1 Ineffective**

## Title: Effective Staffing Practices

2 Improvement Necessary

3 Effective

4 Highly Effective

### Description of Improvement Necessary Areas:

5.2 School leadership uses teacher evaluation to provide feedback for improving classroom practices, informing professional development and increasing learning outcomes.

### **Evidence from Data:**

- Principal survey indicates that administrators are conducting daily observations and providing teachers with feedback within 72 hours.
- Principal survey indicates that follow up observations and feedback sessions are scheduled.
- Principal survey indicates that weekly feedback is provided during weekly meetings.

### Description of Ineffective Areas:

5.1 Hiring timelines and processes allow the school to competitively recruit effective teachers.,  
5.3 Teachers are provided professional development that enables them to continuously reflect, revise, and evaluate their classroom practices to improve learning outcomes in both a structured collaborative setting and individually; 5.4 Staff assignments are intentional to maximize the opportunities for all students to have access to the staff's instructional strengths. and 5.5 Teachers are provided professional development that promotes independent, collaborative, and shared reflection opportunities for professional growth.

### **Evidence from Data:**

- Principal survey indicates that he has little influence on hiring decisions and teacher placement.
- Principal survey ranked Turnaround Principal 1: Hiring timelines and processes allow the school to competitively recruit effective teachers as a #1 Ineffective
- Principal survey indicates that administrators can only schedule one hour of professional development per month due to union contract.
- Master schedule was developed for the school year and not for specific needs of teachers and students.
- Teacher survey indicates that faculty works together, continually and naturally to help each other improve their professional practices. 37 % Agree Somewhat
- Teacher survey indicates that the principal uses classroom observation, analysis of student data and research to provide teachers with continual and constructive feedback. 52% Agree Somewhat
- Teacher survey indicates that their professional development is beneficial and directly linked to their changing instructional practice in order to improve student achievement. 26%Disagree Somewhat and 41% Agree Somewhat
- Teacher survey indicates that they clearly understand what is expected of them when it comes to student achievement. 44% Agree Somewhat
- Teacher survey indicates that the school provides them with the instructional resources necessary to ensure high quality instruction. 41% Agree Somewhat

- Teacher survey indicates that the school provides a mentor for new teachers. 22% Disagree Somewhat
- Parent surveys indicate that Westside hires effective teachers. 44% Disagree Strongly.
- Parent survey indicates that they are informed if their child is struggling and given suggestions to help them at home. 44% Disagree Strongly
- 16.4% students passed the E/LA portion of ISTEP 2013.
- 26.1 %students passed the math portion of ISTEP 2013.
- 19.4% students passed the social studies portion of ISTEP 2013
- 24% students passed English 10 2013.
- 5.7% students passed Algebra 1 2013.

**Evidence from Observations:**

Professional development strategies provided for teachers are not regularly implemented in the classroom.

**Evidence from Interviews:**

- Principal interview and survey indicates that teachers have been working in the district for years or even decades regardless of performance due to union contract.
- Principal interview indicates that professional development is not tailored to teacher specific needs. Middle and high school teachers receive the same training.
- Principal interview and survey indicates that new hires are dictated through union contract.
- Principal interview and survey indicates staff is hired based on seniority.
- Teacher interviews indicate that professional development is not tailored to their specific needs. All PD is scheduled for all staff members to attend and is not differentiated.
- Administrators indicate that the school's professional culture has seen some improvement.

**Summary of First Priorities that need to be intentionally addressed in your School Improvement Plan:**

1. Staff professional development needs should be based on student data and the teacher's specific needs based on observation.
2. Be intentional to offer professional development that is differentiated for all teachers.
3. Provide a clear understanding for classroom observations and follow-up.

## Turnaround Principle # 6

## Title: Use of Data

Circle the Overall Rating: **1 Ineffective** 2 Improvement Necessary 3 Effective 4 Highly Effective

### Description of Ineffective Areas:

6.1 School wide data on attendance, tardies and referrals are collected through a data management system, yet this data is not analyzed and communicated to inform stakeholders and make instructional decisions. Systems need to be in place to disaggregate, analyze and communicate discipline data with all stakeholders on a regular basis. Post data in hallways and outside classrooms to start a data culture. Develop and utilize surveys to collect multiple sets of climate and culture data.

6.2 Systems are not in place that enables the leadership team and staff to review data frequently to help them inform instructional decisions. A data management system needs to be in place that allows staff to collect and analyze multiple sets of data points. Assessment data has to be used to form student groupings and provide interventions from the data. Develop a data collection system for teachers/principals from Acuity, ISTEP, ECA and other assessments, ie. classroom acuity binders, that have reports and disaggregated data down to the student level. This data must be used to develop research-based interventions to address weaknesses from the data.

6.3 Although there is a weekly schedule of grade level meetings, these meetings are not data driven, professional development is not intentionally linked to teacher needs and walk throughs are not systematic or scheduled. Continue to build on PLC/grade level meetings with norms set in place to utilize assessment data during meetings and reporting all notes back to leadership team to keep open lines of communication. Also, this data can be used to drive PD for staff. Teachers must have to have regularly scheduled meeting times to analyze assessment data. Professional development must be centered on multiple forms of data to inform instructional decisions. Walk through evaluative data must be used to drive improvements in instruction through coaching and professional development.

### Evidence from Data: Evidence from Observations: Evidence from Interviews:

9-10 data room

11-12 data room

Master schedule

Interviews

Walk Through Observations

Monitoring binder

**Summary of First Priorities that need to be intentionally addressed in your School Improvement Plan:**

1. Administer climate and culture surveys multiple times a year to collect data
2. Develop teacher Acuity binders.
3. Disaggregate assessment data and communicate to all stakeholders
4. Develop a school wide data team
5. Systematic processes need to be put into place to analyze data, including academic and behavior, in order to make instructional decisions to increase student achievement.
6. Formative Assessment needs to be intentionally utilized to improve instruction and respond to student learning needs.
7. Use data to drive instruction
8. Use data to determine student intervention, improving discipline, and to drive professional development

**Turnaround Principle # 7****Title: Effective use of Time**

Circle the Overall Rating:

**1 Ineffective**

2 Improvement Necessary

3 Effective

4 Highly Effective

**Description of Ineffective Areas:**

7.1 The Master Schedule is clearly designed and structured to meet the needs of all students;

Counselors and administration indicate that students who fail a core content course are ineligible to retake that course. The only options to earn a credit for failed classes that are required for graduation are to take an online PLATO recovery course or a credit recovery course with an outside agency. In addition, students who fail a course, are moved into the next level course regardless of their mastery of the prerequisite course. For example, students who fail Algebra I and/or the Algebra I ECA, are automatically enrolled in Algebra II. No remedial classes are available at any level including for students who are two or more grade levels behind. When questioned about interventions, administrators indicate that they enroll students in “precourses” for Math and English to determine skill levels based on qualitative teacher feedback and Acuity. After one trimester of the precourse class, student groupings are adjusted based on Acuity performance and skill level. “Precourses” are not state recognized courses. In fact, the lowest level Math course recognized by the state is Algebra Enrichment (which must be taken in conjunction with Algebra I) or the grade appropriate English course. This is clearly not an appropriate or effective method of intervention for struggling students. There appears to be no legitimate academic interventions in place at Westside Leadership Academy.

7.2 The Master Schedule is clearly designed to meet the intervention needs of all students who are two or more years behind in ELA or Mathematics.

- There is no systematic means to determine if students are two or more grade levels behind.
- Interventions in ELA and Math are not research-based.
- Inadequate time modifications, if any, were made to accelerate the learning of students two or more grade levels behind.
- Whole group is the primary means of instruction, with few exceptions.

7.3 The Master Schedule is clearly structured and designed to meet the professional development needs of staff.

**Evidence from Observations:** When analyzing the master schedule, programmatically, the course master list is completely lacking of any remedial or enrichment courses. With the extremely rare exception, all teachers primarily utilize whole group instruction – this is the norm.

**Evidence from Interviews:**

- The master schedule dictates the instructional time students receive, rather than student needs dictating the master schedule.
- Instructional time for interventions does not account for research-based practices. (Teacher interview)
- Tier III intervention is not intentionally scheduled. (Teacher interview, Administration interview)

## **Turnaround Principle 8: Effective Family and Community Engagement:**

**Circle Overall Rating: 1 Ineffective 2 Improvement Necessary 3 Effective 4 Highly Effective**

**Description of Improvement Necessary Areas:** 8.1 Families are engaged in academically related activities, school decision-making, and an open exchange of information regarding students' progress in order to increase student learning for all students; 8.2 Community groups and families of students who are struggling academically and/or socially are active partners in the educational process and work together to reduce barriers and accelerate the academic and personal growth of students.

### **Evidence from Data:**

- Minimal evidence available for review to support parent and community involvement.
- Sixteen parents returned the surveys made available by the Indiana Department of Education.
- Approximately 50% of the parents feel that the adults at the school do not know and understand students' personal and academic needs.
- Fifty-seven percent feel that the school does not address the needs of families so they can support children's learning.
- A majority of the parents (63%) that responded do not feel that the school works with parents to build positive relationships and engage them as partners in their children's learning.
- Some parents (44%) feel that the principal is approachable and only 31% feel that they would approach their child's teacher if they needed support.
- None of parents selected the parent liaison as someone with whom they would communicate.
- The Parent Survey comments included a need for the physical environment to improve.
- It was acknowledged that discipline is a major problem at the West Side Leadership Academy.

**Evidence from Observations:** No parent or community volunteers were observed in the classrooms. The administrators and staff have noted this as a major concern. There is a Parent Room at the school. However, during this review period no parent or staff member was ever in the Parent Room. The door was unlocked by the security guard and there was no evidence of sign-in sheets or agendas visible. The room had very little literature that would be beneficial to the parents.

**Evidence from Interviews:** Some teachers indicated that they have made several efforts to engage parents in academic activities. They feel that parents will attend athletic events and performing arts productions activities. The teachers are discouraged because it appears that most of the parent participation during the day is in relation to discipline. Most of the teachers indicated that information is mailed home to parents. Messages go out through the automatic phone system. The support staff, as well as the teachers, feel that they do the best that they can with students who often have a lot of issues. Some feel that the students that come from Chicago are major trouble makers.

Only one parent came to the school for the parent interview session. She spoke highly of the administrators and the teachers. She indicated that she volunteers on a regular basis. She assists in the office or wherever she is needed. She works with the PTA but admitted that she has experienced some difficulty getting more parents to commit to helping at the school. She really has no help now but hopes to encourage more parents to get involved. The parent admitted that she gets along well with everyone but some parents do not feel welcome. The parent shared that a lot of parents don't feel that the school is safe because of all the fighting but she acknowledged that the principal is working hard to get the school under control. The school does send information home and she also goes on the web site frequently. The parent indicated that the principal is approachable and responsive. The principal attends school events and interacts well with the students and parents. She concluded that the school needed more communication and they should use the local newspapers, radio and social media more. She stressed that they needed sanitary bathrooms with hot water, soap tissue and paper towels. Cleanliness is seen as a major concern. She feels that the school needs to do a better job of meeting the needs of special students like her son. Most importantly, she feels that all of the staff should be mentored on how to talk to and help the students. It is important to include janitors, coaches, security, office staff and all teachers.

**Actionable Statement:**

There is definitely a need to devise strategies that will increase parent involvement. It was suggested that the staff find ways to go into the community. For example, they can hold meetings at the libraries near the students' homes or at the community centers in the housing projects. They should develop relationships with businesses that will provide incentives for students and parents. Staff should be encouraged to reach out and do more to involve parents. They should make more personal phone calls and share the good things that students are doing. If students are motivated to bring parents they will be the catalyst to get the parents to the school. Teachers should use technology to support their efforts. They can text and email parents. Parents should be taught to use the portals available to review students' attendance, grades, etc.

There is a need to broaden the community relationships so the school can receive more support for students that are struggling academically. There is a need for more dual credit classes, advanced placement classes and after school opportunities to help the students who are struggling.