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Final Vision

The K-8 school I am currently teaching at has had an excellent reputation in regards to climate, rigor, and test scores, despite its location in a high poverty and violent neighborhood. The school has been successful with scores and attendance because of teacher training, high expectations, consistency, and holding students and their families accountable. Within the past five years the violence has risen in the neighborhood, families are experiencing harsher poverty, and dropping funds to the district has caused an increase in transition within experienced faculty and teachers. Due to these factors, student scores have dropped annually, and have finally hit an all time low. The scores are even more alarming in Math. Students went from the 70th percentile to below the 35th percentile schoolwide. My vision is to increase student math scores through quality mathematical experiences, and empower students to be college and career ready. In order to achieve this vision and raise rigor and expectations within instruction to increase scores and create more successful students mean we need a multipronged approach. The strategies involved in achieving our vision consists of professional development and collaboration for staff, technology implementation within Math periods, a Math specialist to meet with grade level teachers for planning of lessons, online math assessments, and small and leveled groups.

In order to make thisour school vision a reality, students would be placed into small and leveled math groups to help the success of our students so lessons are more relevant and meaningful to them. These groups would be students of no more than three grouped together by levels using NWEA scores so teachers could work with them daily for a minimum of thirty minutes at their level. These leveled groups would be engaged through reteach and enrichment opportunities, partner and discussion work, and connections throughout the curriculum. We will assess the students, meet them where they are currently at, and build off of their background knowledge. Small groups will not eliminate all whole-group instruction, however it will give the children one on one time with the teacher daily, give more practice and experience with the daily objective, give opportunities for collaboration amongst students, and help kids who are struggling on the classwork. There will be reteach and enrichment opportunities for students based off of their pre assessment and knowledge of the daily objective.

Our school vision will become a reality through development of our stakeholders. These include teachers, teacher assistants, special teachers, the Special Education staff, the Academic Dean, and our Math specialist. These professional development opportunities would be consistent, monthly professional development for staff, which will give every child a knowledgeable and engaging educator. Teachers will have the opportunities to view new technology apps that they can implement in their classroom at the PDs, collaborate with other instructors, give abstract and concrete ways to teach the same objective, and help create more engaging and rigorous daily instruction for all ages.

Along with Professional Development, teachers will have the opportunity to meet with a Math specialist weekly to make hands on, weekly Math lessons. The specialist will have hands-on activities and concrete and abstract ways to teach the objective of the day. The specialist will not only be in charge of collaboration with grade level teachers on a daily basis, but will work daily with the bottom 4 students in each grade level in a small group, with the goal of getting the students back to grade level.

In order to achieve the vision students would be given more practice with online assessments, as the state assessment is online and many did not reach the state grade level goal because they had difficulties navigating through the assessment. Many students failed due to lack of knowledge on how to manage a computer system, not lack of knowledge with the Math objectives. With bi-weekly Math assessments, students will have the experience and opportunity to navigate through the computer, so when the state assessment comes in the spring, they will be more confident and time efficient on the computer. The online assessments will also give teachers immediate feedback of their students' knowledge and understanding of the concepts, which they will use in the Math pacing of the lesson plans.

Lastly, my vision to boost student Math grades would include technology strategies, implementing ipads and laptops in the classroom. Students will take more ownership, be held accountable for mastery of concepts, and will work independently on Math online programs. After a whole group and small group lesson, students have 30 minutes set aside daily to move at their own pace on ipads or laptops on Math programs. These programs include Mangahigh.com, frontrowed.com, NWEA common core standards, My Math curriculum games, and practice NWEA Math tests. Teachers will choose from the various Math programs or online apps that students will work with at least two times a week for reteach skills or enrichment programs. The technology piece gives teachers access to more resources than they had before. Students can work on their level and at their own pace until they reach mastery.

Using the previously stated strategies of professional development, collaboration with staff and Math specialists, technology implementation, and online math assessments we can achieve my vision to increase student math scores through quality mathematical experiences, and empower students to be college and career ready.