

18th Annual Sterling Conference

FLORIDA'S EDUCATION SUMMIT

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Best Practices



Florida Department of
Education



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www.etsfi.com

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

I. Focus Area and Applicability

1. Applicable Segment: Enrolled Students in School District

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All | <input type="checkbox"/> 25,001 – 50,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 5,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> 50,001 – 100,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5,001 – 10,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> 100,001 – 200,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10,001 – 25,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Over 200,000 |

2. Applicable Segment Type: School Level / Grade (May apply to more than one)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All | <input type="checkbox"/> Post Secondary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PreK | <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elementary | <input type="checkbox"/> Choice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Middle | <input type="checkbox"/> Private |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

3. Applicable Topic Area: School District Process and Functional Areas

1. Student Achievement & Progression

- Accountability, Analysis, Reporting, & Testing
- Curriculum
- Educational Technology
- Instruction
- Mentoring
- Monitoring
- Response to Intervention
- Teacher Development
- Testing
- Other _____

2. Administrative & Support

- Budgeting
- Facilities
- Finance
- Food & Nutrition
- Human Resources
- Recognizing and Rewarding High Performing Educators
- Transportation
- Other _____

3. Leadership & Oversight

- Board
- Communication
- Community & Parent Engagement (Includes Volunteer Management)
- Information Technology
- Leadership Processes
- Security and Safety
- School Improvement Planning
- Strategic Planning
- Succession Planning
- Other _____

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Title of Practice

Goal Team Analysis / Planning Process

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

The Goal Team Analysis/Planning Process is a collaborative, data-driven approach for developing strategic plan (SIP) goals, strategies, and measures, and monitoring progress towards those goals. Goal Teams are formed for each SIP goal, with membership from each grade level and special area. During preschool in-service week, each goal team is charged with looking at a variety of data and information, including our own trend data and comparative data from other schools. Based upon this data and information, the goal teams develop proposed SIP goals, strategies to accomplish the goals, and formative measures to monitor progress toward the goals. Each goal team then presents their proposal to the entire faculty, where revisions are made and consensus is reached.

Goal teams continue meeting regularly throughout the school year, collecting and analyzing the data from the previously selected formative assessments. Based upon this ongoing analysis, they report back to the entire faculty on a quarterly basis, and indicate whether we are or are not on track to meet our SIP goals. They also make recommendations about which of the previously selected strategies seem to be the most effective, as well as any strategies that should be added or deleted.

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

Prior to the implementation of the Goal Team Analysis/Planning Process, our strategic plan (SIP) was written by a small group of staff members. It was written on the standard DOE template, and did not provide for ongoing analysis and monitoring of progress toward the goals. It included summative measures, but did not include formative measures to monitor progress, and know if we were on track to meet the goals.

2. Situation After

After implementation of the Goal Team Analysis/Planning Process, 100% of our certified instructional staff members are actively involved in our strategic planning (SIP) process. Because of our selection and monitoring of formative measures, we are able to predict if we are on track to meet our goals; if we are not on track to meet the goals, we are able to adjust our strategies to improve our progress toward the goals.

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3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, satisfaction as you describe benefits and results achieved.

Increased participation/ownership in our strategic planning process, and ongoing monitoring of progress toward our goals. The Goal Team Analysis/Planning Process has made our strategic (SIP) plan a living document, rather than simply a required form that is written, approved, and then put on the shelf.

The percent of certified Instructional staff members involved in the Strategic Planning Process has increased from 12% to 100%. The percent of summative measures achieving target has increased from 64% to 92%. The percent of projects with 80% or more milestones completed on schedule has increased from 48% to 88%. The percent of SIPs with an "A" rating for alignment to district Strategic Plan Objective measures has increased from 65% to 100%.

4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

Participation of all instructional staff members in the strategic planning process increases ownership and responsibility for reaching the goals. Also, selecting and regularly monitoring formative measures makes us aware of the need to modify our instructional strategies in a timely fashion in order to meet our goals.

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Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

5. Contributing Community/School District (required)

School District of Lee County

6. Submission Date (required)

October 23, 2009

Submit a best practice c/o:
info@bestpracticesonline.org

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

I. Focus Area and Applicability

1. Applicable Segment: Enrolled Students in School District

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All | <input type="checkbox"/> 25,001 – 50,000 |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Elementary | <input type="checkbox"/> Choice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Middle | <input type="checkbox"/> Private |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

3. Applicable Topic Area: School District Process and Functional Areas

1. Student Achievement & Progression

- Accountability, Analysis, Reporting, & Testing
- Curriculum
- Educational Technology
- Instruction
- Mentoring
- Monitoring
- Response to Intervention
- Teacher Development
- Testing
- Other _____

2. Administrative & Support

- Budgeting
- Facilities
- Finance
- Food & Nutrition
- Human Resources
- Recognizing and Rewarding High Performing Educators
- Transportation
- Other _____

3. Leadership & Oversight

- Board
- Communication
- Community & Parent Engagement (Includes Volunteer Management)
- Information Technology
- Leadership Processes
- Security and Safety
- School Improvement Planning
- Strategic Planning
- Succession Planning
- Other _____

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Title of Practice

Organizational Improvement and Sustainability – Integrating Instruction and Operations Processes

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

Tying all aspects of school district operations, from transportation, to food services, to human resources, to curriculum and instruction, with a focus on how the operations of the district overlay and support the operations of the schools, is a critical component of organizational improvement and ultimate sustainability. In order to assure the organization continues to grow and innovate, it is essential that a framework is provided for all stakeholders to understand the connection between district processes and student achievement. Additionally, providing an understanding of how the application of process management tools provides the “golden thread” that links the district, schools, employees, students, and other stakeholders and how this linkage contributes to organizational sustainability is vital for continuous improvement.

Through a series of presentations, the linkage between and among the various aspects of district operations was presented to district and school leadership, with an emphasis on the connection between process management techniques and instructional leadership, organizational improvement, and organizational sustainability. The purpose of the presentation was to continue the process of ensuring each individual involved in the school system, whether custodian, parent, bus driver, teacher, or principal, internalizes his/her role in ensuring the success of each individual student and how every aspect of district operations contributes to student achievement.

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

There existed a disconnect prior to best practice implementation among stakeholders in the school district regarding a clear understanding of their roles in ensuring the success of each and every student in the system. The interrelationship of district operations and school operations was not clearly understood or articulated to stakeholders.

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2. Situation After

A better understanding of the interrelated roles of the district, the schools, and the community in individual student achievement has been observed, although the data are not quantifiable at this time. Through refinements to the School Improvement and Strategic Planning processes, the linkages between and among the various stakeholder groups has been articulated.

Workforce satisfaction with communication increased from 82% in 2007/2008 to 92% in 2008/2009, and the percent of staff that strong agree that they understand their measurable impact on district and student success has increased form 76% to 92%.

3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, satisfaction as you describe benefits and results achieved.

Providing a clear communication plan detailing the relationship between district and school operations and process management as a tool for ensuring organizational improvement and sustainability has resulted in a more cohesive approach among the various divisions of the district.

4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

The continuous involvement of all stakeholders is necessary to ensure the needs of all groups are being addressed. Providing a method for ensuring the linkage between the district strategic plan and the individual school improvement plans is essential to focused improvement.

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Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

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5. Contributing Community/School District (required)

Brevard Public Schools

6. Submission Date (required)

December 8, 2009

Submit a best practice c/o:
info@bestpracticesonline.org

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

I. Focus Area and Applicability

1. Applicable Segment: Enrolled Students in School District

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All | <input type="checkbox"/> 25,001 – 50,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 5,000 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 50,001 – 100,000 |
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2. Applicable Segment Type: School Level / Grade (May apply to more than one)

- | | |
|---|--|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> PreK | <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elementary | <input type="checkbox"/> Choice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Middle | <input type="checkbox"/> Private |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

3. Applicable Topic Area: School District Process and Functional Areas

1. Student Achievement & Progression

- Accountability, Analysis, Reporting, & Testing
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3. Leadership & Oversight

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- Communication
- Community & Parent Engagement (Includes Volunteer Management)
- Information Technology
- Leadership Processes
- Security and Safety
- School Improvement Planning
- Strategic Planning
- Succession Planning
- Other _____

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Title of Practice

Engaging the Community in Education – The Whole Child Connection™

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

The Whole Child Connection™ (WCC) is designed to enable parents to determine areas of need through a web-based survey instrument, and then connect directly to those services and providers in the community. The WCC also aggregates all survey information and sorts it by school and other risk and demographic factors. School principals use the data to focus volunteers, parents, and business partners on quantified need areas. Data from the survey has helped improve the effectiveness of outreach, funding drives and donations initiatives because needs are quantified, and the impact of contributions on results can be demonstrated. In addition to the number of parent hours tracked in the SIP, we now also track the number of volunteer hours charged to areas of need which enables us to better determine the effectiveness of those hours. By encouraging all children to have a Whole Child Plan, risk factors for each child can be proactively addressed, thus enabling each child to be prepared to learn.

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

Prior to the implementation of the Whole Child Connection™, the management of parent and volunteer hours was ad hoc, with the volunteers often deciding how they wanted to spend their time. The only measure used was the number of parent and volunteer hours. Although we always achieved our goal, we were not able to determine the quality or effectiveness of those hours. In addition, many children came to school each day with their basic needs unmet, thereby making it more difficult for them to learn once in school.

2. Situation After

The Whole Child Connection™ produces aggregated reports for children in each school. Results are shown by residential zip code, risk factor, demographic, and other factors. The principal reviews the reports and prioritizes the need areas based on fact. Parents, volunteers, and project teams identify which priority areas they want to work in. Information is also aggregated at the district level so that the superintendent and leadership team can more effectively engage community partners, such as the Sheriff, Health Department, and County Government, in areas of quantified need.

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3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, satisfaction as you describe benefits and results achieved.

Overall parent hours per school have increased by 23% from 2008/2009 to 2009/2010 year to date. Parent satisfaction with volunteer activities has increased from 52% Very Satisfied and 88% Very Satisfied + Satisfied to 78% Very Satisfied and 95% Very Satisfied + Satisfied. 23 new Neighborhood Watch Groups have been created in our 86 school communities in 2009/2010 vs. 3 in 2008/2009. The percent of children with a Whole Child Connection™ Service Plan is 28% and targeted for 50% by the end of the 2009/2010 school year. 10,160 WCC users have connected to 27,296 community services thus helping meet the needs of school children outside the classroom.

4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

Increasing the quantity of parent and volunteer hours does not necessarily mean those hours will be used most effectively. To engage partners, parents, and volunteers with focus and enthusiasm, it is important to have data on where the needs are so results can be measured. Educators can effectively engage the community by using research-based data from the Whole Child Connection™.

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4. Phone Number of Submitter (optional)

(321) 633-1000 x 796

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

5. Contributing Community/School District (required)

Brevard Public Schools

6. Submission Date (required)

December 7, 2009

Submit a best practice c/o:
info@bestpracticesonline.org

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

I. Focus Area and Applicability

1. Applicable Segment: Enrolled Students in School District

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All | <input type="checkbox"/> 25,001 – 50,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 5,000 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 50,001 – 100,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5,001 – 10,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> 100,001 – 200,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10,001 – 25,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Over 200,000 |

2. Applicable Segment Type: School Level / Grade (May apply to more than one)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All | <input type="checkbox"/> Post Secondary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PreK | <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elementary | <input type="checkbox"/> Choice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Middle | <input type="checkbox"/> Private |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

3. Applicable Topic Area: School District Process and Functional Areas

1. Student Achievement & Progression

- Accountability, Analysis, Reporting, & Testing
- Curriculum
- Educational Technology
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- Mentoring
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- Other _____

2. Administrative & Support

- Budgeting
- Facilities
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- Other _____

3. Leadership & Oversight

- Board
- Communication
- Community & Parent Engagement (Includes Volunteer Management)
- Information Technology
- Leadership Processes
- Security and Safety
- School Improvement Planning
- Strategic Planning
- Succession Planning
- Other _____

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Title of Practice

Ensuring Leadership Sustainability through Effective Succession Planning

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

Brevard Public Schools has developed and implemented a formal succession planning process to ensure leadership sustainability. This process includes conducting participant self-assessments and modified 360° feedback, developing leadership assessment plans, providing job-embedded and cross-functional opportunities and experiences, and making leadership development opportunities available to program participants.

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

Prior to developing and implementing our succession planning process, we had no proactive, formal, replicable process to replace our leaders.

2. Situation After

After developing and implementing our succession planning process, we have been able to identify individuals who are ready to replace leaders who are leaving the system or changing positions.

3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, satisfaction as you describe benefits and results achieved.

Benefits that BPS have identified are improved quality of the process used to fill leadership positions. Since implementing our succession planning pilot and phase II programs, we have seen the number of interested participants increase by 43%. The percent of available personnel for the leadership pool has increased by 100%. 100% of the pilot program participants have leadership development plans targeting their identified developmental areas. We also have a listing of qualified candidates for leadership positions. Costs to fill positions have been reduced by 50% because we use the same process each time - we do not just reactively fill positions like we did prior to implementing our plan. The overall quality of choices/options for key leadership positions has improved according to those who have had to use the plan. In a recent survey of pilot program participants, 66% of the respondents rated their experience with the succession planning initiative as a professional learning opportunity as good or outstanding. The Sterling and Baldrige feedback reports identified our succession planning process as a strength. Participation rates in our leadership development programs and the number of leadership development

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

programs offered have increased significantly as a result of our succession planning program.

4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

There are many benefits to school systems using formal succession planning processes:

- allows districts to identify potential leaders*
- provides a structured, replicable process and personnel to fill vacancies*
- helps districts focus on leadership development and professional development opportunities*
- keeps districts prepared and focused on their future employment needs*
- saves resources - time, money, personnel*
- focuses on developing sustainable leadership vs. focusing on replacing individual leaders*
- process is strategic*
- process is systemic*
- provides a positive focus, not a negative one*
- provides peace of mind*

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4. Phone Number of Submitter (optional)

321.633.1000 X240

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

5. Contributing Community/School District (required)

BREVARD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

6. Submission Date (required)

December 16, 2009

Submit a best practice c/o:
info@bestpracticesonline.org

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

I. Focus Area and Applicability

1. Applicable Segment: Enrolled Students in School District

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 25,001 – 50,000 |
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2. Applicable Segment Type: School Level / Grade (May apply to more than one)

- | | |
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3. Applicable Topic Area: School District Process and Functional Areas

1. Student Achievement & Progression

- Accountability, Analysis, Reporting, & Testing
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Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Title of Practice

Building Science Capacity Through the Elementary Science Cadre

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

In an effort to build a presence for science in Brevard, funding was used to support an infrastructure of partners who advocate and support effective science teaching and learning. The district identified key teacher leaders in science and asked that each principal identify a school expert for standards-based science teaching and learning. As a result, Brevard took the following steps to build capacity among elementary science teachers.

The district established an Elementary Science Cadre consisting of five exemplary science teachers who received special training and assisted district staff with planning and implementing professional development based on district needs and strategic plan goals.

Teaching science in the primary grades (K-2). Train one primary teacher per school with a focus on standards-based inquiry science and integrating with other content areas. Goal for each participant to meet with and be a resource to other primary teachers at their school.

The Science Cadre worked with the district Elementary Science Resource Teacher to create Space Week activity guides for teachers and families to support field experience curriculum and the grade 6 Kennedy Space Center field trip.

The Science Cadre conducted a 4-day "New" Science Teacher summer workshop to assist new and beginning teachers with understanding the Sunshine State Standard, the assessed benchmarks, Best Practices, integrating Science, cooperative learning, Lab Safety, spiraling lessons, accessing and management of materials.

Schools transitioned from science contacts to elementary Science Points of Contact (new title with added responsibilities) through administrative nominations. The district Elementary Science Resource Teacher and the Science Cadre established a network to share resources and opportunities via the Internet. The Cadre developed Point of Contact Institutes to train these teacher leaders on the National Science Education Standards, Best Practices, standards-based instruction, and inquiry. Additionally, the Cadre developed and delivered FCAT Workshops focused on "What we know about FCAT Science, SSS and the assessed benchmarks, Best Practices, Integrating Science, Physical Science, Reading in the Science content area, and Item Specifications.

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

Prior to creating the Science Cadre and Science Points of Contact, the district had only one Science Resource Teacher to provide training and support to teachers in 57 elementary schools.

2. Situation After

The district now has a team of exemplary science teacher leaders to help build capacity across the district. The Cadre work with district personnel to develop curriculum, communicate, provide training, and support teachers across the district.

3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, satisfaction as you describe benefits and results achieved.

Providing high quality science-based workshops delivered by expert practitioners has increased science capacity across the district as evidenced by fifth grade FCAT scores. Brevard has been ranked first in Florida in FCAT Science and the district has increased by 21 scale score points since implementing the cadre model.

4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

Use of the Science Cadre has provided real opportunities for teachers to affect educational change without leaving the classroom. Teacher cadre members are developing curriculum, serving as advisor-mentors to new teachers, and facilitating professional development activities as exemplary science teachers. Providing an avenue to engage teachers in leadership opportunities, having a highly trained personnel, such as the Science Resource Teacher, to facilitate the process, and giving the cadre members important work are critical to the success of this model.

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Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Phone Number of Submitter (optional)

321-633-1000 EXT. 330

5. Contributing Community/School District (required)

BREVARD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

6. Submission Date (required)

December 11, 2009

Submit a best practice c/o:
info@bestpracticesonline.org

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

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Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Title of Practice

Linking District Planning to School Results

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

Translating organizational performance into priorities for continuous and breakthrough improvements is conducted as part of the organization's Ten Step Strategic Planning process. Each year, the superintendent hosts "charge sessions" with all district and school site administrators to review and discuss pertinent SWOT data that support the outcome of strategic plan objectives. These sessions culminate in the revision and creation of outcome measures that assess progress toward each objective. These measures are prioritized and formed into Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) - high level indicators that quantifiably define what Brevard Public Schools considers excellence. The KPIs are then cascaded into multi-year targets which can be deployed, or cascaded to each employee. The cascading of the indicators ensures that all stakeholders take ownership of the KPI and stay focused on the district's vision and mission. It also assists in ascertaining that district goals are attained through the collaboration of all. For deployment at the feeder chain and school level, the Resource teacher for School Improvement under the Office of Accountability, Testing and Evaluation, works collaboratively with members of the Strategic Planning Committees throughout the year in order to remain abreast of the information and revisions of the Strategic Plan. Resource materials are created to assist schools as they develop their annual School Improvement Plans. The School Improvement Plan, in order to meet state and federal requirements as well as align to the vision and mission of BPS, requires all school sites to address ten goals; Reading, Math, Writing, Science, Attendance, Parental Involvement, Technology and Small Learning Communities, Rigor and Relevance, and Individualized Program of Study. The action steps and resources for how the schools will attain their goals are delineated in the strategies section of the plan with outcome measures and progress monitoring statements in the evaluation sections. The financial portion of the plan is addressed in the SIP under the budget sections. This requires schools to identify the resource allocations required to support the strategies of each goal. Planning to School Results

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

In 2007, in order to ensure that the SIP was reflective of the goals, objectives and appropriate targets, and correlated to the Strategic Plan, an alignment checklist was created by the Office of Testing and Accountability in conjunction with the Office of Strategic Planning. This checklist required the signature of the principal and SAC chairperson and was submitted to the district along with a copy of their School Improvement Plan. A critical hindrance of this process was the requirement of the schools to utilize the DOE template which lent little opportunity for district alignment. While at the time it served the purpose of ensuring the ownership of all stakeholders in the implementation of the goals of the district, there still existed a disconnect in the

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

delivery of alignment. A more embedded alignment was needed in the template.

2. Situation After

Through the performance management process in 2009, BPS derived a more advanced and innovative approach to this critical alignment. This alignment entailed the development of an on-line district template that identifies all of the applicable Strategic Plan objectives under each goal section of the plan. The template also includes a link to the BPS scorecard, providing data unique to each school as they pertain to each strategic plan objective. Additionally, the five year KPI targets developed for each school as referenced above are included in the template, so as schools develop measurable goals, the targets to those goals are provided for them. The section following the delineation of Strategic Plan goals requires the schools to analyze the data, find gaps where further academic attention is warranted, and through the examination of best practices, define what the instructional team at the school will do to impact student achievement. These are defined in the form of objectives, performance indicators and strategies that also identify the person responsible, timeframe, process measure and budget cost of the identified strategies.

3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, satisfaction as you describe benefits and results achieved.

The implementation of the newly created SIP template highlighted many benefits to the district that were identified in a variety of ways. First, by having the template on the district server and the format that was used for the development of the template, it serves to provide district staff with reports relevant to the needs of the schools. An example is the compilation of professional development requests. A report summarizing all of the professional development requests was provided to all Resource teachers and the Office of Professional Development. This report will allow district staff to better coordinate their training sessions in order to meet the needs of the schools as well as support the implementation of the SIP. Another report allows the district to review the budgetary needs of the school and the funding sources utilized to support the SIP. This information is key in ensuring that limited financial resources are being directed to support the goals of the District Strategic Plan.

In order to evaluate the satisfaction of this process, a mini questionnaire was provided to each participant after the trainings. In 2008, the overall satisfaction of the training and process was 8.42 on a scale of 1-10 with 10 being "highly satisfied". In 2009, the overall satisfaction was rated at 8.95 with the highest ratings coming from principals (8.87) and assistant principals (9.02).

Lastly, School Improvement Plans are reviewed by the Resource Teacher for School Improvement and rated on a 0-2 scale on seven areas yielding the highest possible rating of 14 points. These areas include objectives, strategies, evaluation, performance indicators and other compliance areas required by the Department of Education. The average score of the district plans for 2008 was 8.4 and in 2009 the score increased to 11.54 indicating a better end product to the SIP.

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

1. *The district does not meet strategic goals and objectives for student achievement, schools do through their work with teachers and students.*
2. *Improving organizational performance is dependent upon all stakeholders knowing what they are supposed to be working on and what their contribution to the effort must be.*
3. *The School Improvement process is a key element in linking district level strategic goals and objectives to school expectations.*
4. *Creating the School Improvement Plan must be more than a perfunctory process; it requires the involvement of all stakeholders and their commitment to implementing it.*
5. *The School Improvement Plan must be a living, breathing document that drives curriculum and instruction at the school, and must be known to teachers, administrators, and parents as decisions are made to improve student outcomes.*

III. For more information, contact:

1. First Name of Submitter (required)

Karen

2. Last Name of Submitter (optional)

Schafer

3. Email of Submitter (required)

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4. Phone Number of Submitter (optional)

(321) 633-1000 x 370

5. Contributing Community/School District (required)

BREVARD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

6. Submission Date (required)

12/12/09

Submit a best practice c/o:
info@bestpracticesonline.org

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

I. Focus Area and Applicability

1. Applicable Segment: Enrolled Students in School District

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All | <input type="checkbox"/> 25,001 – 50,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 5,000 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 50,001 – 100,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5,001 – 10,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> 100,001 – 200,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10,001 – 25,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Over 200,000 |

2. Applicable Segment Type: School Level / Grade (May apply to more than one)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All | <input type="checkbox"/> Post Secondary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PreK | <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elementary | <input type="checkbox"/> Choice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Middle | <input type="checkbox"/> Private |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

3. Applicable Topic Area: School District Process and Functional Areas

1. Student Achievement & Progression

- Accountability, Analysis, Reporting, & Testing
- Curriculum
- Educational Technology
- Instruction
- Mentoring
- Monitoring
- Response to Intervention
- Teacher Development
- Testing
- Other _____

2. Administrative & Support

- Budgeting
- Facilities
- Finance
- Food & Nutrition
- Human Resources
- Recognizing and Rewarding High Performing Educators
- Transportation
- Other Technology Support Services _____

3. Leadership & Oversight

- Board
- Communication
- Community & Parent Engagement (Includes Volunteer Management)
- Information Technology
- Leadership Processes
- Security and Safety
- School Improvement Planning
- Strategic Planning
- Succession Planning
- Other _____

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Title of Practice

Reutilization of Surplus Computer Hardware

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

Implementation for the reutilization of Brevard Public Schools technology hardware earmarked for sale, salvage or destruction. This hardware was purchased from BPS funds or donated from local companies. This methodology has allowed the Technology Support Services department to continue in an outstanding operational support capacity without degradation to customer support or expectations during lean budgetary constraints.

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

The reutilization of computer hardware previously was non-existent. It was an expenditure of operational funds to replace hardware components.

When hard drives were sold to the public or managed through a local vendor for salvage; there was no guarantee/record that data on the hard drives was destroyed.

There was no consideration of the impact which hardware being placed in landfill had on the environment.

Technology Support Services Technicians were not fully cross utilized to recognize and maintain surplus hardware.

Not utilizing surplus hardware didn't allow for the maximum use of available technology to be instituted in classroom environments such as student computer labs to assist with the PC to student ratio.

2. Situation After

Technology Support Services scrutinizes all computer hardware turned into the district warehouse. All useable hardware is redistributed to schools and/or functional areas that have a requirement.

Operational funds saved by reutilizing surplus hardware allowed Technology Support Services to purchase technology (Ninja disk duplicator) and helped to reduce the time to wipe data from hard drives and reimage hard drives that occur on a daily basis.

Assisted elementary schools shortfalls in updating student labs computers that assist with the new state mandates for Computer Based Training.

Hard data can be provided to School Board members in the steps Technology

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

Support Services has taken to help reduce budget deficit.

3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, satisfaction as you describe benefits and results achieved.

70% of the Technology Support Technicians completed cross utilization training to support the reutilization of surplus hardware.

Operational support not impacted by the 20% reduction in the operational budget for 2009/2010 and the anticipated 25% reduction for 2010/2011 school year.

Technology Support Services has redistributed \$102,000 in computer assets for the first 6 months of the current school year 2009/2010.

4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

A Technology Support team that is engaged in process improvement methodology. The ability to have a positive working relationship with cross-functional departments. Understanding the importance of ensuring all available technology.

III. For more information, contact:

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Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

5. Contributing Community/School District (required)

BREVARD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

6. Submission Date (required)

1/11/2010

Submit a best practice c/o:
info@bestpracticesonline.org

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

I. Focus Area and Applicability

1. Applicable Segment: Enrolled Students in School District

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All | <input type="checkbox"/> 25,001 – 50,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 5,000 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 50,001 – 100,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5,001 – 10,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> 100,001 – 200,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10,001 – 25,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Over 200,000 |

2. Applicable Segment Type: School Level / Grade (May apply to more than one)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All | <input type="checkbox"/> Post Secondary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PreK | <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elementary | <input type="checkbox"/> Choice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Middle | <input type="checkbox"/> Private |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

3. Applicable Topic Area: School District Process and Functional Areas

1. Student Achievement & Progression

- Accountability, Analysis, Reporting, & Testing
- Curriculum
- Educational Technology
- Instruction
- Mentoring
- Monitoring
- Response to Intervention
- Teacher Development
- Testing
- Other _____

2. Administrative & Support

- Budgeting
- Facilities
- Finance
- Food & Nutrition
- Human Resources
- Recognizing and Rewarding High Performing Educators
- Transportation
- Other Printing Services _____

3. Leadership & Oversight

- Board
- Communication
- Community & Parent Engagement (Includes Volunteer Management)
- Information Technology
- Leadership Processes
- Security and Safety
- School Improvement Planning
- Strategic Planning
- Succession Planning
- Other _____

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Title of Practice

CD/DVD Duplicating

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

CD/DVD Duplicating has provided a more cost effective alternative to producing Curriculum Guides and Training Manuals. This option saves the cost of printing the materials. Now teachers can use the CD/DVD for reviewing curriculum and training materials and only print what is needed.

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

Before we had the capability to produce CD's and DVD's the only option was printing.

2. Situation After

Now, CD/DVD Duplicating has provided schools and departments a more cost effective alternative to producing Curriculum Guides and Training Manuals. This option saves the cost of printing the materials. Now teachers can use the CD/DVD for reviewing curriculum and training materials and only print what is needed.

3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, satisfaction as you describe benefits and results achieved.

There are several benefits to producing materials on a DVD or CD. Saves time and labor producing a CD/DVD verses printing and binding a hard copy. The duplicator requires little or no labor where as a printed and bound book can require up to three people to produce. Saves paper and plastic binders making it a greener option which is good for the enviroment. Requires less space to store or transport. Example; the cost to produce a P.A.I.N.T.Resource Guide is \$3.75 for a hard copy verses \$1.00 for a CD.

4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

The key is to always inform the customers of their option. When possible encourage them to provide CD's or DVD's instead of a hard copy. It's not always the best option but when used it is a tremendous cost savings.

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

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BREVARD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

6. Submission Date (required)

12/16/09

Submit a best practice c/o:
info@bestpracticesonline.org

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

I. Focus Area and Applicability

1. Applicable Segment: Enrolled Students in School District (check only one)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All	<input type="checkbox"/> 25,001 – 50,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Under 5,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 50,001 – 100,000
<input type="checkbox"/> 5,001 – 10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 100,001 – 200,000
<input type="checkbox"/> 10,001 – 25,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 200,000

2. Applicable Segment Type: School Level / Grade (check all that apply)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All	<input type="checkbox"/> Post Secondary
<input type="checkbox"/> PreK	<input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary	<input type="checkbox"/> Choice
<input type="checkbox"/> Middle	<input type="checkbox"/> Private
<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

3. Applicable Topic Area: School District Process and Functional Areas (check all that apply)
 1. Student Achievement & Progression

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accountability, Analysis, Reporting, & Testing
<input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Technology
<input type="checkbox"/> Instruction
<input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring
<input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring
<input type="checkbox"/> Response to Intervention
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Development
<input type="checkbox"/> Testing
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

 2. Administrative & Support

<input type="checkbox"/> Budgeting
<input type="checkbox"/> Facilities
<input type="checkbox"/> Finance
<input type="checkbox"/> Food & Nutrition
<input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources
<input type="checkbox"/> Recognizing and Rewarding High Performing Educators
<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

 3. Leadership & Oversight

<input type="checkbox"/> Board
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication
<input type="checkbox"/> Community & Parent Engagement (Includes Volunteer Management)
<input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology
<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership Processes
<input type="checkbox"/> Security and Safety
<input type="checkbox"/> School Improvement Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Succession Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Title of Practice

Interactive Data Evaluation and Assessment System

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

Teachers and administrators in Polk County Schools can make instructional decisions 24/7 based on multiple sources of student formative and summative assessment data accessible through IDEAS, a data warehouse and an interactive reporting tool developed in-house and accessible via the web. Individual student demographic and discipline data as well as trend data can be displayed, exported and aggregated in multiple ways, such as subgroups. Subject area reports include charts for learning gains by teacher, grade and school. Data analysis and interpretation are key to the instructional decision making processes for increasing student achievement and reducing the achievement gap.

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

Prior to the development and implementation of IDEAS, by-student or by-group data was in hard copy and not easily accessible or manageable. Data analysis was sporadic and based on partial information.

2. Situation After

After implementation of IDEAS, instruction adjustments and decisions are based on current and complete multiple sources of student data, including discipline; accessible 24/7 via the web. Also, prior to the beginning of the school year, administrators and teachers examine student data and plan professional development for the coming year based on their needs.

3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, and satisfaction as you describe the benefits and results achieved.

The district saved over a million dollars yearly for the past five years by developing IDEAS. The greatest benefit is to teachers and administrators, who have become data conscious. It has opened up the conversation about data at multiple levels and allows them to analyze student and trend data for specific needs with the stroke of a key. It provides a method for linking the Strategic Plan and the School Improvement Plan.

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

- *Using easily accessible and meaningful data is integral to more effective instructional planning, increased student performance and closing the achievement gap.*
- *Data-centered conversations put the focus on instruction and the goals and emphasize involvement of all stakeholders.*
- *Professional development is a natural progression in the process.*

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863.534.0688

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POLK COUNTY SCHOOLS

6. Submission Date (required)

2/25/10

Submit a best practice to:

info@bestpracticesonline.org

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

I. Focus Area and Applicability

1. Applicable Segment: Enrolled Students in School District (check only one)

<input type="checkbox"/> All	<input type="checkbox"/> 25,001 – 50,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Under 5,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 50,001 – 100,000
<input type="checkbox"/> 5,001 – 10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 100,001 – 200,000
<input type="checkbox"/> 10,001 – 25,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 200,000

2. Applicable Segment Type: School Level / Grade (check all that apply)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All	<input type="checkbox"/> Post Secondary
<input type="checkbox"/> PreK	<input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary	<input type="checkbox"/> Choice
<input type="checkbox"/> Middle	<input type="checkbox"/> Private
<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

3. Applicable Topic Area: School District Process and Functional Areas (check all that apply)
 1. Student Achievement & Progression

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accountability, Analysis, Reporting, & Testing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Technology
<input type="checkbox"/> Instruction
<input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Response to Intervention
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teacher Development
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Testing
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

 2. Administrative & Support

<input type="checkbox"/> Budgeting
<input type="checkbox"/> Facilities
<input type="checkbox"/> Finance
<input type="checkbox"/> Food & Nutrition
<input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources
<input type="checkbox"/> Recognizing and Rewarding High Performing Educators
<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <u>Performance Measurement</u> _____

 3. Leadership & Oversight

<input type="checkbox"/> Board
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication
<input type="checkbox"/> Community & Parent Engagement (Includes Volunteer Management)
<input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leadership Processes
<input type="checkbox"/> Security and Safety
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School Improvement Planning
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategic Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Succession Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Title of Practice

Volusia Strategic Data Focus / School Improvement Planning Model

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

The Volusia Strategic Data Focus is a process that helps to shape the school district's strong focus on academic achievement. The Volusia County School District employs a number of tools to assist with data analysis for the improvement of system and school effectiveness, such as trend analysis, fixed target proficiency data, systems analysis, subject area analysis, grade level analysis, and school-level analysis. Growth Documents are prepared for district and school staff to review year-to-year and longitudinal growth. Included in these documents are School grade performance factors, all curriculum groups FCAT reading and mathematics trends, science and writing achievement, achievement by demographic groups, and for high schools: retake bonus points, graduation and drop-out rates, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, SAT, and ACT are reported.

Areas of Focus documents are provided for each school to track academic focus areas from prior years, and to provide strategic guidance for school improvement planning. Adequate Yearly Progress status is described and strongly emphasized on the Areas of Focus. Areas of Focus and Growth Documents are provided to school leadership for direct use in school-based collaborative planning sessions focusing on data analysis, finding instructional solutions, and developing follow-up plans.

Using data for the school improvement process continues with annual Adequate Appraisal trainings. Each year, small school leadership teams come together and analyze FCAT and School Grade data and plan for school-wide responses. The outcome of this meeting provides the framework for each school to write its annual School Improvement Plan.

The School Improvement Plan requires schools to reflect on student progress and to set new achievement targets each year based on FCAT and School Grade data. A site-based analysis of reading, mathematics, writing and science achievement is conducted by each school to make adjustments and set the new learning targets. The schools are responsible for setting their own targets based on information provided by the Accountability/Testing office. Because each school has its own context, it is also important that each school set its own appropriate targets that match school-based quantitative and qualitative data. This fosters a triangulation of data toward themes and patterns, shaping each school's real needs and hopeful outcomes.

The Volusia County School District engages in a continuous cycle of rigorous data analysis and reporting, measuring achievement and implemented practices against system goals, aligning changes in achievement to district support and school improvement planning, and monitoring the progress of programs and instructional effectiveness.

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

Prior to the implementation of Volusia Strategic Data Focus and the newer approach to the School Improvement Model, the data analysis and school planning/improvement process was highly fragmented. The processes of data analysis and school improvement planning were held as two separate events. Strategic analysis of data was not provided for the schools with as much detail or alignment with achievement and accountability measures, which changed with the implementation of the Areas of Focus and Growth Documents. Schools could not see the bigger picture of where to align their targets.

2. Situation After

Now, a seamless process is in place to build on for future years, in which district data analysis, site-based data analysis and collaboration, and School Improvement Planning are inextricably linked together, so that the School Improvement Plan is an active, usable document for use in driving instructional leadership. The Volusia Strategic Data Focus and School Improvement Model have focused the district and schools on strategy using a cohesive, systems approach toward increasing student achievement in all schools.

3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, and satisfaction as you describe the benefits and results achieved.

Having the tools of Areas of Focus and Growth Analysis helps each school increase student achievement by providing focus areas to draw on as targets. These tools aligned with a focused, goal-oriented school improvement process have assisted the schools and the district with developing strategy based on multiple threads of achievement data. The school district has been rated a high-performing district by the Florida Department of Education for 2007-08 and 2008-09, two years in a row.

In sum, 100 % of Volusia schools participate in this process, strengthening the engagement of teachers and school leadership in the school improvement process. Prior to the implementation of this process, less than 60% percent of the schools focused on AYP in their School Improvement Plans. Now, over 90% have aligned AYP goals outlined in their plans.

Because the district accountability and testing office provides Areas of Focus and Growth Analysis for the schools, school-based staff now spend fewer hours scrambling for data reports and conducting analyses that a district office can provide faster and more accurately. In this way, schools can spend more time studying the existing context of their schools and using formative assessments to assess learning progress for students.

4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

A distributed model of data analysis has had to be in place for this process to work. The Growth Documents and Areas of Focus encourage school leadership, department and grade level heads, and teachers to dig deeper into the data, using the Volusia County Schools Data Warehouse. Many of our teachers use the Scantron system-wide assessment management system to monitor results from formative assessments, and thereby make curricular and instructional adjustments. The process will continue to improve as we work to develop milestones into the school improvement process and foster alignment with the Volusia Proficiency Model, which focuses on learning mastery for all students.

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386-843-9322

5. Contributing Community/School District (required)

VOLUSIA COUNTY SCHOOLS

6. Submission Date (required)

Unknown

Submit a best practice to:
info@bestpracticesonline.org

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

I. Focus Area and Applicability

1. Applicable Segment: Enrolled Students in School District (check only one)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All	<input type="checkbox"/> 25,001 – 50,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Under 5,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 50,001 – 100,000
<input type="checkbox"/> 5,001 – 10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 100,001 – 200,000
<input type="checkbox"/> 10,001 – 25,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 200,000

2. Applicable Segment Type: School Level / Grade (check all that apply)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All	<input type="checkbox"/> Post Secondary
<input type="checkbox"/> PreK	<input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary	<input type="checkbox"/> Choice
<input type="checkbox"/> Middle	<input type="checkbox"/> Private
<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

3. Applicable Topic Area: School District Process and Functional Areas (check all that apply)
 1. Student Achievement & Progression

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Accountability, Analysis, Reporting, & Testing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Curriculum
<input type="checkbox"/>	Educational Technology
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Instruction
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mentoring
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Monitoring
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Response to Intervention
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Teacher Development
<input type="checkbox"/>	Testing
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____

 2. Administrative & Support

<input type="checkbox"/>	Budgeting
<input type="checkbox"/>	Facilities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Finance
<input type="checkbox"/>	Food & Nutrition
<input type="checkbox"/>	Human Resources
<input type="checkbox"/>	Recognizing and Rewarding High Performing Educators
<input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____

 3. Leadership & Oversight

<input type="checkbox"/>	Board
<input type="checkbox"/>	Communication
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community & Parent Engagement (Includes Volunteer Management)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Information Technology
<input type="checkbox"/>	Leadership Processes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Security and Safety
<input type="checkbox"/>	School Improvement Planning
<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategic Planning
<input type="checkbox"/>	Succession Planning
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Title of Practice

Volusia Proficiency Model

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

The Volusia Proficiency Model was developed as a vehicle for implementing Response to Intervention throughout our district. The model centers around the philosophy of “proficiency for all” and the progress monitoring/problem solving/response to intervention guidelines. By coordinating the efforts of general curriculum, exceptional student education, federal programs, behavioral initiatives and staff development, the model focuses resources where they are most needed.

The structure of the model is based on a tiered system of leadership teams. The district Proficiency Model team focuses its efforts on policies, guidelines and procedures that support the implementation of the model’s progress monitoring/problem solving/response to intervention initiatives in the schools. The area Proficiency Model teams serve as the liaison between the school leadership teams and the district team. The area teams are easily accessible through the Request for VPM Assistance Form or by contacting one of the co-chairs.

A progress monitoring tool for the Volusia Proficiency Model has been developed as a rubric with key components and indicators. There is also a listing of Best Practices Indicators with descriptors to give more detailed direction for implementation. This is not an evaluation tool but rather a guidance tool for moving us in the right direction.

There is no “one right way” for implementing the Volusia Proficiency Model. The model depends on the input of teacher teams and therefore must be flexible enough to meet the needs of the unique culture of each school. The first step in implementation is an awareness campaign to help teachers understand the need for change and reflect on their own instructional practices.

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

Response to Intervention was an initiative of the ESE department. Monitoring of interventions was only occurring when a student was being considered for ESE placement.

2. Situation After

Response to Intervention is a district-wide initiative. The VPM structure is providing the support to all schools and classrooms. District departments are working as a team. The district and area teams are receiving multi-disciplinary training and are

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

supporting each other as well as the schools. There is less duplication of services and resources are focused where needed.

3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, and satisfaction as you describe the benefits and results achieved.

The implementation of RtI has become an initiative of the entire curriculum department, not just Exceptional Student Education. Departments are better able to support each other with joint trainings and combining resources. The move to a proficiency model is a paradigm shift for teachers and school leaders. It is a process that takes time and continued effort. We are starting to see a change from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning. Our schools are exploring a standards-based grading system. Excitement is building.

4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

In order for this best practice to be effective you must have committed leaders who are willing to stay the course. It takes time to build awareness and buy-in. There is much training needed to build capacity for the three key elements – collaborative teams, common formative/summative assessments, and pyramid response to interventions.

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Dupont

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4. Phone Number of Submitter (optional)

386-734-7190 EXT. 20657

5. Contributing Community/School District (required)

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

VOLUSIA COUNTY SCHOOLS

6. Submission Date (required)

2/12/2010

Submit a best practice to:
info@bestpracticesonline.org

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

I. Focus Area and Applicability

1. Applicable Segment: Enrolled Students in School District (check only one)

<input type="checkbox"/> All	<input type="checkbox"/> 25,001 – 50,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Under 5,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 50,001 – 100,000
<input type="checkbox"/> 5,001 – 10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 100,001 – 200,000
<input type="checkbox"/> 10,001 – 25,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 200,000

2. Applicable Segment Type: School Level / Grade (check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> All	<input type="checkbox"/> Post Secondary
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PreK	<input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Education
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elementary	<input type="checkbox"/> Choice
<input type="checkbox"/> Middle	<input type="checkbox"/> Private
<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <u>Charter Pre-K Program</u>

3. Applicable Topic Area: School District Process and Functional Areas (check all that apply)
 1. Student Achievement & Progression

<input type="checkbox"/> Accountability, Analysis, Reporting, & Testing
<input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Technology
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Instruction
<input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring
<input type="checkbox"/> Response to Intervention
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teacher Development
<input type="checkbox"/> Testing
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

 2. Administrative & Support

<input type="checkbox"/> Budgeting
<input type="checkbox"/> Facilities
<input type="checkbox"/> Finance
<input type="checkbox"/> Food & Nutrition
<input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources
<input type="checkbox"/> Recognizing and Rewarding High Performing Educators
<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

 3. Leadership & Oversight

<input type="checkbox"/> Board
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community & Parent Engagement (Includes Volunteer Management)
<input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology
<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership Processes
<input type="checkbox"/> Security and Safety
<input type="checkbox"/> School Improvement Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Succession Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Title of Practice

Implementation of the SCERTS Model

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

The SCERTS Model is a framework for classroom and home-based assessment and intervention for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) that considers the social communication (SC) skills, the emotional regulation (ER) needs of the student, and the transactional support (TS) requirements in the school and home environments. A core component of the model is a commitment to collaborate with families in assessment, program development, and implementation. Successful collaboration ultimately results in maximizing the potential for the most positive outcomes for a child with ASD. In the summer of 2006, Dr. Amy Wetherby, a co-author of the model, was invited to present a two-day workshop open to all district ESE staff. Beginning in the 2006-2007 school year, school-based teams, including parents, were selected to participate in three workshops across the school year. The focus of the workshops was the use of assessment components of the SCERTS Model to identify student needs, target instructional goals, and implement transactional supports needed to increase student success in natural environments.

As of January 2010, training has been provided to 44 support teams from 18 schools. These teams included the following:

- 87 teachers, speech-language pathologists, and occupational therapists;*
- 19 parents, and*
- 20 district program specialists.*

In addition, general SCERTS training was provided to 48 school psychologists, school social workers, and behavior specialists, and 82 speech-language pathologists (some of whom also participated in team training).

District Program Specialists supported teams by assisting with videotaping of the targeted students, and implementing strategies that increased communication skills and/or optimized emotional regulation necessary for learning to occur. Checklists are completed quarterly to monitor progress and make effective instructional decisions. This training approach created an opportunity for ongoing support/dialogue between home and school which fostered skill development and generalization across multiple settings. Such collaboration is important because the success in one environment is often integral to success in the other, as well as to the student's quality of life. The training has continued through the 2009-2010 school year. Forty-four teams across eighteen schools have participated to date.

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

A variety of strategies and research-based practices were used throughout the school district, but there was no ONE framework that everyone, professionals and parents, could follow. School staff and parents had limited or no understanding of the core deficits experienced by students with ASD or the methods necessary to address them in a manner to improve student functioning at home, at school, and in the community. Collaborative relationships between school staff and parents either did not exist or may have been cordial, but lacked a systematic means to work together to address core deficits leading to improved student outcomes across settings. Without addressing core deficits, behavior of many students with ASD escalated, disrupting learning of the student and others, as well as the environments in which the student successfully participated. Positive long term outcomes for children with ASD are strongly correlated with the achievement of communicative competence. Targeted students had limited social communication skills needed to advocate for themselves or to interact in a positive manner with adults and peers. A number of Program Specialists may have been involved with students in the same classroom but there was no way to quantify the supports and maintain cohesive direction to the school-based teams.

2. Situation After

Following the implementation of the SCERTS Model, staff and parents increased their knowledge and understanding of ASD and instructional supports and strategies. A systematic means for staff and families to work together to address the core deficits of students with ASD was established. Teams are supported using the SCERTS Model which allows several district staff to provide cohesive direction and suggestions to each team. Progress monitoring is enhanced through the use of the checklists so that progress can be visualized using the SCERTS Summary Form/Graph. The team-structured workshops require videotaping in the classroom, and this facilitates discussion with families and provides a video portfolio for progress monitoring. It also provides a library of teaching clips to be able to continue to train personnel in the SCERTS Model. The development of relationships in children with and without disabilities requires emotional regulation as a core process underlying attention and social engagement. The SCERTS Model addressed the self and mutual regulation supports that a child needs in the school environment in order to succeed. Families and schools develop mutually supportive relationships. Families have an opportunity to gain and apply knowledge that will improve the quality of their child's life which ultimately leads to an improvement in the quality of life for the family. Through this process, professionals and families gain a sense of trust and partnership working toward shared priorities and goals. This training helped parents build capacity to more actively participate in their child's education as an IEP team member and to provide meaningful support to their child at home and in the community.

3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, and satisfaction as you describe the benefits and results achieved.

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

Fewer support assistants are required, as the need for this high level of assistance (one-to-one) has decreased.

This quality program helps the district maintain research-based integrity and build capacity to support students with ASD.

The development of positive relationships between home and school has resulted in increased family involvement.

Parents' ability to support the needs of their child at home and in the community has improved.

4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

Financial resources for the trainer/consultant (SCERTS Model co-author), substitutes for teachers and paraprofessionals for workshops throughout the school year, the SCERTS Model textbooks, and equipment and supplies for videotaping in the classrooms

Buy-in from school building administration to facilitate team meetings, provide release time for workshop attendance, and support the teachers in the extra work and time they are contributing to the SCERTS project outcomes

Commitment by the district program specialists supporting school-based teams to the intensity and frequency of on-site support that is necessary to support teams and continue school building implementation at various levels

Commitment from all team members to collaborate with families in all aspects of SCERTS

III. For more information, contact:

1. First Name of Submitter (required)

Barbara

2. Last Name of Submitter (optional)

Bush

3. Email of Submitter (required)

Blbush@volusia.k12.fl.us

4. Phone Number of Submitter (optional)

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

386-734-7190 EXT. 20443

5. Contributing Community/School District (required)

VOLUSIA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

6. Submission Date (required)

2/12/2010

Submit a best practice c/o:
[*info@bestpracticesonline.org*](mailto:info@bestpracticesonline.org)

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

I. Focus Area and Applicability

1. Applicable Segment: Enrolled Students in School District (check only one)

<input type="checkbox"/> All	<input type="checkbox"/> 25,001 – 50,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Under 5,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 50,001 – 100,000
<input type="checkbox"/> 5,001 – 10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 100,001 – 200,000
<input type="checkbox"/> 10,001 – 25,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 200,000

2. Applicable Segment Type: School Level / Grade (check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> All	<input type="checkbox"/> Post Secondary
<input type="checkbox"/> PreK	<input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Education
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elementary	<input type="checkbox"/> Choice
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Middle	<input type="checkbox"/> Private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

3. Applicable Topic Area: School District Process and Functional Areas (check all that apply)
 1. Student Achievement & Progression

<input type="checkbox"/> Accountability, Analysis, Reporting, & Testing
<input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Technology
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Instruction
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mentoring
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring
<input type="checkbox"/> Response to Intervention
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teacher Development
<input type="checkbox"/> Testing
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

 2. Administrative & Support

<input type="checkbox"/> Budgeting
<input type="checkbox"/> Facilities
<input type="checkbox"/> Finance
<input type="checkbox"/> Food & Nutrition
<input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources
<input type="checkbox"/> Recognizing and Rewarding High Performing Educators
<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

 3. Leadership & Oversight

<input type="checkbox"/> Board
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication
<input type="checkbox"/> Community & Parent Engagement (Includes Volunteer Management)
<input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology
<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership Processes
<input type="checkbox"/> Security and Safety
<input type="checkbox"/> School Improvement Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Succession Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Title of Practice

Many Coaches, One Voice: A Collaborative Instructional Coaching Initiative

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

Volusia County's coaching initiative is based on a district-wide vision for implementing a school-based coaching system that focuses on teachers as leaders whose work is solely to help teachers improve their classroom practice and student learning. Coaches receive continuous specialized professional development that builds their capacity to serve in roles that have clearly defined expectations and responsibilities. District leaders provide side-by-side coaching that engages reflective conversations and allows for monitoring coaches' work to assess needs for additional training and development.

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

Prior to implementation, a common district-wide vision for training, supporting, and monitoring coaches did not exist. Additionally, the district lacked a set of expectations for evaluating individual coach performance as well as the coaching program as a whole.

2. Situation After

Volusia County's coaching initiative has created the following structures to ensure the success of this coaching initiative:

- *established policies and procedures regarding performance expectations*
- *initial and ongoing professional learning*
- *district leaders who assist, intervene and provide personal support*
- *online tools for measuring quantity and quality of coaching activities as they relate to teacher satisfaction, teach performance and student learning.*

3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, and satisfaction as you describe the benefits and results achieved.

Employment of school-based coaches holds the potential to address inequities in opportunities for teacher and student learning by providing differentiated, targeted supports. Providing ongoing professional development deeply embedded into teachers' classrooms and the work they do with children is one of the most compelling benefit of school-based coaching. The structures and culture that well implemented coaching programs promote can increase collective responsibility

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

throughout a school system for teachers, students and their learning.

4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

Prior to this coaching initiative, there was little evidence that staff development was producing results for teachers or students. As research has proven, when presentation of theory is combined with coaching and other sources of follow-up teachers' use of the new instructional strategies increases dramatically. By establishing the primary purpose of coaching is to facilitate teacher development at the site where teachers are applying new learning, we anticipate these dramatic results.

III. For more information, contact:

1. First Name of Submitter (required)

Barbara

2. Last Name of Submitter (optional)

Bush

3. Email of Submitter (required)

blbush@volusia.k12.fl.us

4. Phone Number of Submitter (optional)

386-734-7190

5. Contributing Community/School District (required)

VOLUSIA

6. Submission Date (required)

2/12/10

Submit a best practice to:

info@bestpracticesonline.org

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

I. Focus Area and Applicability

1. Applicable Segment: Enrolled Students in School District (check only one)

<input type="checkbox"/> All	<input type="checkbox"/> 25,001 – 50,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Under 5,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 50,001 – 100,000
<input type="checkbox"/> 5,001 – 10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 100,001 – 200,000
<input type="checkbox"/> 10,001 – 25,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 200,000

2. Applicable Segment Type: School Level / Grade (check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> All	<input type="checkbox"/> Post Secondary
<input type="checkbox"/> PreK	<input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Education
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elementary	<input type="checkbox"/> Choice
<input type="checkbox"/> Middle	<input type="checkbox"/> Private
<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

3. Applicable Topic Area: School District Process and Functional Areas (check all that apply)
 1. Student Achievement & Progression

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accountability, Analysis, Reporting, & Testing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curriculum
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Technology
<input type="checkbox"/> Instruction
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mentoring
<input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring
<input type="checkbox"/> Response to Intervention
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Development
<input type="checkbox"/> Testing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <u>Home to School to Home Connection</u> _____

 2. Administrative & Support

<input type="checkbox"/> Budgeting
<input type="checkbox"/> Facilities
<input type="checkbox"/> Finance
<input type="checkbox"/> Food & Nutrition
<input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources
<input type="checkbox"/> Recognizing and Rewarding High Performing Educators
<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

 3. Leadership & Oversight

<input type="checkbox"/> Board
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community & Parent Engagement (Includes Volunteer Management)
<input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology
<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership Processes
<input type="checkbox"/> Security and Safety
<input type="checkbox"/> School Improvement Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Succession Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Title of Practice

Neighborhood Watch for Education "No Fail Zone"

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

A community-based effort to encourage neighborhood support for education by establishing a process/program for neighbors to help neighbors assure the students that live in the Neighborhood Watch for Education area are successful in school. This was accomplished by planning a Block Party to kick-off the program. Neighbors were invited by going door-to-door to explain the program.

The "No Fail Zone" provided the framework for residents in the neighborhood to come together to share information about the school with neighbors, motivate children to complete homework, create a safe neighborhood for the children, sign up as a partner to further implement the program, attend parenting workshops, attend multi-cultural dinners and develop "homework safe homes."

The entire program was backed by the school district, county, city and local businesses. Partners included Prosperity Bank whose employees volunteered their time and a grill; the Daytona International Speedway whose employees donated their time for planning, as well as food, t-shirts, prizes, etc.; Holly Hill Middle School (feeder school) which provided entertainment, and the Chief of Police who provided police officers to cordon the streets and help organize the block party (as well as mingle with students to show policemen are their friends).

Permanent signs were installed on the streets involved in the program. The street signs were paid for by the Daytona International Speedway and read "Neighborhood Watch for Education." These signs are similar to the signs for the Neighborhood Watch program.

The school's faculty and staff attended and helped with a "Get To Know Your Neighbor" scavenger hunt.

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

After school, many students went home to empty houses because their parents were still at work. Homework was not being completed and students' grades suffered.

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2. Situation After

Neighbors in the community signed up to become part of the "No Fail Zone" for students. They took on responsibility for latch-key students to insure their homework was completed. Students knew that everyone in their community/neighborhood was watching out for them and cared about their success in school.

3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, and satisfaction as you describe the benefits and results achieved.

Twenty-two students are enrolled in the Neighborhood Watch for Education program. In 2009, 82% of these students met higher standards in reading compared to 68% schoolwide and 81% had learning gains in reading compared to 69% schoolwide. The goal is to include more streets each year, eventually reaching all students to increase reading achievement schoolwide.

Other unmeasurable benefits include the intrinsic "good" feeling that comes from parents taking an active roll in their child's education and becoming more involved in the school.

4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

Parents and community must support the idea of going back to an "old fashioned" time when people looked out for all of the children in their neighborhood.

III. For more information, contact:

1. First Name of Submitter (required)

Nancy

2. Last Name of Submitter (optional)

Wait

3. Email of Submitter (required)

nhwait@volusia.k12.fl.us

4. Phone Number of Submitter (optional)

386-734-7190 EXTENSION 20230

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

5. Contributing Community/School District (required)

VOLUSIA COUNTY SCHOOLS

6. Submission Date (required)

2-9-2010

Submit a best practice to:

info@bestpracticesonline.org

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

I. Focus Area and Applicability

1. Applicable Segment: Enrolled Students in School District (check only one)

<input type="checkbox"/> All	<input type="checkbox"/> 25,001 – 50,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Under 5,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 50,001 – 100,000
<input type="checkbox"/> 5,001 – 10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 100,001 – 200,000
<input type="checkbox"/> 10,001 – 25,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 200,000

2. Applicable Segment Type: School Level / Grade (check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> All	<input type="checkbox"/> Post Secondary
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PreK	<input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Education
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elementary	<input type="checkbox"/> Choice
<input type="checkbox"/> Middle	<input type="checkbox"/> Private
<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

3. Applicable Topic Area: School District Process and Functional Areas (check all that apply)
 1. Student Achievement & Progression

<input type="checkbox"/> Accountability, Analysis, Reporting, & Testing
<input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Technology
<input type="checkbox"/> Instruction
<input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring
<input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring
<input type="checkbox"/> Response to Intervention
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Development
<input type="checkbox"/> Testing
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

 2. Administrative & Support

<input type="checkbox"/> Budgeting
<input type="checkbox"/> Facilities
<input type="checkbox"/> Finance
<input type="checkbox"/> Food & Nutrition
<input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources
<input type="checkbox"/> Recognizing and Rewarding High Performing Educators
<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

 3. Leadership & Oversight

<input type="checkbox"/> Board
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community & Parent Engagement (Includes Volunteer Management)
<input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology
<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership Processes
<input type="checkbox"/> Security and Safety
<input type="checkbox"/> School Improvement Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Succession Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Title of Practice

Putting the Pieces Together: Proactive Strategies for Parenting Young Children with Autism

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

Volusia County Schools has developed a comprehensive parent training program for parents of young children with autism. This program is designed to promote positive behavioral interventions within a family's natural routines and environments. Parents receive instruction in proactive strategies designed to promote desirable behaviors, build skills, and reduce undesirable behaviors. Additional components of the training include instruction on the basic characteristics of autism spectrum disorders, programs, and services available through Volusia County Schools and accessing community resources. A primary goal of the training is the generalization of skills initiated at school into home and community environments. To promote skill generalization, a follow-up meeting is held with each student's teacher and parent at the completion of the course. The program is divided into eight, 1 1/2 hour sessions. This format allows parents to receive ongoing support throughout the training. Parents receive instruction during the class, practice the strategies at home and in the community, and return to class to receive ongoing feedback and support from the trainers. This format helps reinforce the newly learned skills of students, while building parent confidence and capacity. The primary curriculum used is "Positive Parenting Practices for Young Children with Autism," 2003, LEAP Outreach Project. Targeted professionals and community partners participate in various components of the training. Additional resource materials are provided to each family. A lending library is available for parents to check out materials each night. The training was originally delivered to parents of prekindergarten students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). Due to increased need and parent requests, the program was expanded to include parents of students with ASD in Kindergarten through 5th grade.

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

Prior to this training, there were limited opportunities for parents to participate in a comprehensive, research-supported parent program in the area. Few, if any, included formats that provided feedback and support to parents as they attempted to implement strategies in the home and community.

2. Situation After

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After participation in the program, parents have a better understanding of how they should prepare for and respond to behavior. They use the skills learned during the training to set up environments for success, teach new skills, and redirect undesirable behaviors. In order to encourage skill generalization, strategies that are proven to be effective at home or at school are duplicated to occur in both environments. The format of this training allows for ongoing feedback and support.

3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, and satisfaction as you describe the benefits and results achieved.

As of 2/09/10, 125 parents and/or grandparents have participated in the training program. Based on parent feedback, parents learned new skills that had a positive impact on their child's behavior. Of the thirteen parents who responded to a survey, all report changes in their own behavior that had a positive effect on the entire family. Of those same respondents, 12 reported discussions from other families as one of their favorite aspects of the training. Changes parents made in their own behavior that benefited their child include: looking for and addressing the cause of their child's problematic behavior (rather than reacting), improving communication methods, and implementing visual supports. Several parents reported that their child's communication skills had improved.

For a minimal cost, we are able to deliver a meaningful program with significant benefits to students and their families. The approximate cost of materials per family is \$58.00. This covers the parent workbook and an additional text provided to each family. Childcare is provided by district paraprofessionals who are paid their hourly rate. Two childcare workers are hired for each class. Staff time required to develop the program for first time implementation was approximately 20 hours. Class facilitation is 1 1/2 hours per session. An additional 5 hours are required for trainers to complete follow up activities throughout each course .

4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

The knowledge gained through this program will have life long implications for those families who participate. This course helps parents to develop a foundation of knowledge that they will continue to build upon throughout their child's life. In many instances, parents and grandparents attend together on behalf of a child. This creates a wonderful opportunity to teach skills to all primary care providers involved in a child's life. By including community partners such as the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD) and Easter Seals, we communicate to parents the importance of a collaborative approach. Parents are afforded the opportunity to ask questions about the supports and services available to their family. Providing childcare was one of the key factors that contributed to the success of this program. Parents stated that they would not have been able to participate in this program if that accommodation had not been made. Due to the size of our county, we offer the course twice a year, once on the east side of our district and once on the west side. This accommodation makes it easier for parents of young children to attend night-

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

time meetings.

III. For more information, contact:

1. First Name of Submitter (required)

Barbara

2. Last Name of Submitter (optional)

Bush

3. Email of Submitter (required)

Blbush@volusia.k12.fl.us

4. Phone Number of Submitter (optional)

386-734-7190 EXTENSION 20443

5. Contributing Community/School District (required)

VOLUSIA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

6. Submission Date (required)

2/12/2010

Submit a best practice to:

info@bestpracticesonline.org

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

I. Focus Area and Applicability

1. Applicable Segment: Enrolled Students in School District (check only one)

<input type="checkbox"/> All	<input type="checkbox"/> 25,001 – 50,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Under 5,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 50,001 – 100,000
<input type="checkbox"/> 5,001 – 10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 100,001 – 200,000
<input type="checkbox"/> 10,001 – 25,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 200,000

2. Applicable Segment Type: School Level / Grade (check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> All	<input type="checkbox"/> Post Secondary
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PreK	<input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Education
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elementary	<input type="checkbox"/> Choice
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Middle	<input type="checkbox"/> Private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

3. Applicable Topic Area: School District Process and Functional Areas (check all that apply)
 1. Student Achievement & Progression

<input type="checkbox"/> Accountability, Analysis, Reporting, & Testing
<input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Technology
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Instruction
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mentoring
<input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring
<input type="checkbox"/> Response to Intervention
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teacher Development
<input type="checkbox"/> Testing
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

 2. Administrative & Support

<input type="checkbox"/> Budgeting
<input type="checkbox"/> Facilities
<input type="checkbox"/> Finance
<input type="checkbox"/> Food & Nutrition
<input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources
<input type="checkbox"/> Recognizing and Rewarding High Performing Educators
<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

 3. Leadership & Oversight

<input type="checkbox"/> Board
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication
<input type="checkbox"/> Community & Parent Engagement (Includes Volunteer Management)
<input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology
<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership Processes
<input type="checkbox"/> Security and Safety
<input type="checkbox"/> School Improvement Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Succession Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Title of Practice

STARTS - Skills, Tips and Routines for Teacher Success

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

STARTS is a comprehensive professional development program that includes 4 days of training and follow-up coaching for all new-to-exceptional education teachers in Volusia County Schools. Training is required and teachers are compensated their hourly rate of pay for attending one of three 4-day sessions offered throughout the year. Training content includes classroom management, differentiated instruction, instructional design, and curriculum specific to assigned area of exceptionality. Additionally, all teachers are provided in-classroom coaching throughout the school year. From 2001 to present, 916 exceptional education teachers have participated in STARTS.

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

During the three years prior to implementing STARTS, Volusia County was losing over 40% of its new exceptional education teachers annually. Exceptional education teachers were not receiving any specialized training or ongoing support. Since an estimated 30%-50% leave the profession within five years, such support was critical.

2. Situation After

Within 2 years after implementing STARTS, retention statistics for new exceptional education teachers jumped to 78%. Within 4 years, retention statistics jumped to 92.3%. Classroom observations and teacher feedback consistently show that the professional development provided through STARTS relates directly to what teachers are expected to do in their classrooms and focuses on helping them understand deeply the skills and strategies they are teaching.

3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, and satisfaction as you describe the benefits and results achieved.

Research suggests that high teacher turnover is detrimental to student learning, since teaching experience is an important component of teacher quality. By maintaining a high retention rate of exceptional education teachers we are improving educational results for students with disabilities.

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4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

By implementing and sustaining a systematic and comprehensive professional development program that trains, coaches and mentors new exceptional education teachers in targeted skills and instructional techniques, districts can make a difference in developing and retaining highly qualified teachers, a critical determinant of student achievement.

III. For more information, contact:

1. First Name of Submitter (required)

Barbara

2. Last Name of Submitter (optional)

Bush

3. Email of Submitter (required)

blbush@volusia.k12.fl.us

4. Phone Number of Submitter (optional)

386-734-7190

5. Contributing Community/School District (required)

VOLUSIA

6. Submission Date (required)

2/12/10

Submit a best practice to:

info@bestpracticesonline.org

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

I. Focus Area and Applicability

1. Applicable Segment: Enrolled Students in School District (check only one)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All | <input type="checkbox"/> 25,001 – 50,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 5,000 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 50,001 – 100,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5,001 – 10,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> 100,001 – 200,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10,001 – 25,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Over 200,000 |

2. Applicable Segment Type: School Level / Grade (check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All | <input type="checkbox"/> Post Secondary |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PreK | <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Education |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elementary | <input type="checkbox"/> Choice |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Middle | <input type="checkbox"/> Private |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

3. Applicable Topic Area: School District Process and Functional Areas (check all that apply)

1. Student Achievement & Progression

- Accountability, Analysis, Reporting, & Testing
- Curriculum
- Educational Technology
- Instruction
- Mentoring
- Monitoring
- Response to Intervention
- Teacher Development
- Testing
- Other _____

2. Administrative & Support

- Budgeting
- Facilities
- Finance
- Food & Nutrition
- Human Resources
- Recognizing and Rewarding High Performing Educators
- Transportation
- Other _____

3. Leadership & Oversight

- Board
- Communication
- Community & Parent Engagement (Includes Volunteer Management)
- Information Technology
- Leadership Processes
- Security and Safety
- School Improvement Planning
- Strategic Planning
- Succession Planning
- Other _____

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Title of Practice

Support Needs Screening Process

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

While there is a wide range of supplementary aids and services that enhance the development of independence and facilitate socialization of students with disabilities, on a national level there has been an overreliance on one-to-one support. When used unnecessarily or arbitrarily, the use of one-to-one support leads to learned helplessness, can reduce student interaction with teachers and other professional staff, and can create a barrier between a student and his peers, resulting in a highly restrictive environment. Substituting paraprofessional services for the services of professionals can be discriminatory and insufficient to meet the standards of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Brown, Farrington, Ross, & Zeigler, 1999; Linn-Mar Community School, 2004). The fiscal results of overreliance on one-to-one paraprofessionals can significantly reduce funding available for necessary professional services.

Recognizing these issues, Volusia County Schools implemented the Support Needs Screening (SNS) process in the 2004-2005 school year. The process is designed to assist Individual Education Plan (IEP) teams in systematically reviewing the full range of support options and to differentiate activities and environments in which a student does and does not need assistance. Using the environmental inventory and discrepancy analysis processes, specific needs of the student are determined by designated IEP team members. This information is then reviewed by the SNS Team, a group of professionals with expertise in key areas related to serving students with disabilities, to make recommendations regarding viable strategies for consideration by the student's IEP team.

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

As predicted by research related to the use of one-to-one assistants, detrimental effects were observed in numerous situations where this support strategy was utilized within the district. These included high degrees of segregation, reduction in development of independence, interference with teacher responsibility, and situations impeding opportunities for socialization (French, 2001; Giangreco & Broer, 2005; Wallace, Shin, Bartholomay, & Stahl, 2001).

Frequently, an assistant was assigned to a student due to a specific need; however, no related, less intrusive intervention had been attempted. For instance, in some cases, assignment of one-to-one paraprofessionals had supplanted conducting a functional behavioral assessment and implementing a behavioral intervention plan. Once assigned, one-to-one paraprofessionals were seldom faded.

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Further, the number of support assistants had grown from 80 in the 2001-2002 school year to an all time high of 101 in the 2003-2004 school year. The cost of these positions was \$1,969,500. The IDEA Budget office projected 155 support assistant positions by the end of the 2007-2008 school year at a cost of \$3,341,490 if practices utilized prior to the SNS process were continued.

2. Situation After

Following implementation of the SNS process, there was significant reduction in the use of one-to-one paraprofessionals mirrored by an increase in the use of less intrusive supports. Between the 2004-2005 and 2007-2008 school years, 101 Support Needs Screenings were conducted. Based on the recommendations from these screenings, IEP teams chose to use the following supports: 35 conducted functional behavioral assessments and developed behavior intervention plans; 22 implemented the use of technology, specialized equipment, or made facility changes; 32 provided specialized training to assist staff; and 17 resulted in one-to-one assistance from a support assistant. In 84 cases, IEP teams chose to use supports other than the one-to-one assistance so frequently used in the past. (Note: This data regarding types of supports will exceed the total number of screenings conducted, as some IEP teams chose multiple supports.)

Further indicative of the process' success, the actual number of support assistants decreased from 80 in 2002-2003 to 42 by the 2007-2008 school year. This decrease is even more significant when compared to the 155 projected prior to the district's implementation of the SNS process.

The cost of the 42 support assistants actually allocated in 2007-2008 was \$905,436 as opposed to the projected cost of \$3,341,490. The 2007-2008 cost also represents a decrease of \$1,064,064 from the actual cost incurred in 2003-2004 when the number of support assistants had reached an all time high.

*Actual vs. Projected Number of Support Assistants**

*Actual vs Projected Costs**

See attached graphs

3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, and satisfaction as you describe the benefits and results achieved.

Overreliance on one-to-one paraprofessionals was reduced, resulting in increased funds being made available to provide other needed services from professional staff.

IEP teams selected and implemented less intrusive supports, reducing the opportunity for students to experience detrimental effects associated with the provision of one-to-one support.

When one-to-one assistance was needed, it no longer supplanted implementation of instruction, a behavioral program, or other services for students screened through

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the process.

School and district staff improved skills in identification and implementation of accommodations and supports.

Parent understanding of the importance of using the least intrusive, viable support in building independence and/or increasing participation was improved.

4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

There are multiple obstacles which must be addressed to ensure successful implementation of the SNS process. These include administrative ease, lack of motivation to fade assistant support, and legal issues. Communication with key stakeholders, including parents, administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, and advocates, is essential when addressing these barriers.

Assign support assistants allocated for this purpose to the classroom rather than to the student. This allows flexibility in scheduling which ensures instruction by qualified professional staff, reduces social stigmatization, and increases opportunities for skill generalization.

Practices are necessary to address the needs of students who transfer into the district and have a one-to-one assistant identified on their IEP's.

To accommodate situations when a student needs only short term assistance, the allocation and training of a small number of paraprofessionals assigned to the district is helpful. These paraprofessionals can be rotated across schools as needs are identified throughout the year. This offers two major advantages. First, paraprofessionals providing services to students with the most significant needs have better training and skills. Also, resistance to fading support is reduced since the paraprofessional is not in jeopardy of losing his or her position.

III. For more information, contact:

1. First Name of Submitter (required)

Barbara

2. Last Name of Submitter (optional)

Bush

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

3. Email of Submitter (required)

blbush@volusia.k12.fl.us

4. Phone Number of Submitter (optional)

386-734-7190 EXT. 20443

5. Contributing Community/School District (required)

VOLUSIA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

6. Submission Date (required)

2/12/2001

Submit a best practice to:
[*info@bestpracticesonline.org*](mailto:info@bestpracticesonline.org)

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

I. Focus Area and Applicability

1. Applicable Segment: Enrolled Students in School District (check only one)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All	<input type="checkbox"/> 25,001 – 50,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Under 5,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 50,001 – 100,000
<input type="checkbox"/> 5,001 – 10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 100,001 – 200,000
<input type="checkbox"/> 10,001 – 25,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 200,000

2. Applicable Segment Type: School Level / Grade (check all that apply)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All	<input type="checkbox"/> Post Secondary
<input type="checkbox"/> PreK	<input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary	<input type="checkbox"/> Choice
<input type="checkbox"/> Middle	<input type="checkbox"/> Private
<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

3. Applicable Topic Area: School District Process and Functional Areas (check all that apply)
 1. Student Achievement & Progression

<input type="checkbox"/>	Accountability, Analysis, Reporting, & Testing
<input type="checkbox"/>	Curriculum
<input type="checkbox"/>	Educational Technology
<input type="checkbox"/>	Instruction
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mentoring
<input type="checkbox"/>	Monitoring
<input type="checkbox"/>	Response to Intervention
<input type="checkbox"/>	Teacher Development
<input type="checkbox"/>	Testing
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____

 2. Administrative & Support

<input type="checkbox"/>	Budgeting
<input type="checkbox"/>	Facilities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Finance
<input type="checkbox"/>	Food & Nutrition
<input type="checkbox"/>	Human Resources
<input type="checkbox"/>	Recognizing and Rewarding High Performing Educators
<input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____

 3. Leadership & Oversight

<input type="checkbox"/>	Board
<input type="checkbox"/>	Communication
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Community & Parent Engagement (Includes Volunteer Management)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Information Technology
<input type="checkbox"/>	Leadership Processes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Security and Safety
<input type="checkbox"/>	School Improvement Planning
<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategic Planning
<input type="checkbox"/>	Succession Planning
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Title of Practice

Recruitment Process for Volunteers and Partners

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

The recruitment and placement process for volunteers, mentors, tutors, businesses and community partners is one of the key functions of the Family and Community Relations Department. Each school in Pinellas County School District has been assigned a community liaison. Part of the liaison's job is getting parents, families and community members involve in the education process. The liaison recruits volunteers, mentors, tutors, and secures relationships with business partners for the purpose of helping in the classrooms, tutoring/mentoring students, chaperoning field trips, assisting with lunch duty and many more tasks. Another key role is to recruit corporate and business sponsors to assists with student learning programs; several corporations permit their employees to leave work and mentor students during their work day.

The District has identified several key practices that are successful for recruiting partners in education. During the pre-school in-service week, schools are asked to set up information tables to advertise all volunteer and parent programs in their schools. Newsletters, bulletin boards, parent and community meetings are communication tools used to recruit volunteers. There are phone calls made using the District's Parent Connect calling systems to encourage parents and family to get involve. For computer savvy parents, we have established a website for parent to fill out their volunteer forms and sign up for mentoring training. Another successful practice is providing babysitting services for parents so that they can attend various events. When recruiting business and corporate sponsors for student learning programs, an assessment rubric is used to determine district alignment, school/student need; student data, and program success. Once the program has been cleared by the district, a school is contacted for possible placement of program. The school officials and the district personnel meet to discuss the program objectives and requirements. Once the partnership is established, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is written. MOU is an interagency agreement between both parties outlining the duties and responsibilities of both partners. Once the MOU is approved by the Superintendent and Board members, the program is implemented.

Volunteer Program Data School Term 2008-2009

<i>Volunteers</i>	<i>22,500</i>
<i>Volunteer hours</i>	<i>1,025,382</i>
<i>School Partnerships</i>	<i>2,107</i>
<i>Classroom Partnerships</i>	<i>4,500</i>
<i>Five Star Schools</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>Tutors</i>	<i>7,166</i>
<i>Mentors</i>	<i>1,996</i>

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

Previously there was no defined process for recruiting volunteers and corporate sponsors. Volunteers were participating in schools without proper the completion of proper paperwork. There were school programs that were implemented in schools that were not aligned to district strategic plan or curriculum.

2. Situation After

All volunteer, mentor, and tutor programs, the parent and family involvement programs, business/corporate partnerships, community partnerships, and community-faith partnerships follow the same process. There is an accurate account of the various programs in the schools.

3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, and satisfaction as you describe the benefits and results achieved.

Parent, student, teacher, and community involvement increased. The accountability of volunteers, tutors, and mentors improved. Corporate partnerships increase, communication between the school district and the community improved and the monitor process was enhanced.

4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

Communication of all processes must be defined and communicated in a timely manner. Be sure to include all stakeholder in your decision-making process.

III. For more information, contact:

1. First Name of Submitter (required)

Mary Beth

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Corace

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

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CORACEM@PCSB.ORG

4. Phone Number of Submitter (optional)

(727) 669-1131 x 2135

5. Contributing Community/School District (required)

PINELLAS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

6. Submission Date (required)

1/7/2010

Submit a best practice to:
[*info@bestpracticesonline.org*](mailto:info@bestpracticesonline.org)

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

I. Focus Area and Applicability

1. Applicable Segment: Enrolled Students in School District

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All | <input type="checkbox"/> 25,001 – 50,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 5,000 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 50,001 – 100,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5,001 – 10,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> 100,001 – 200,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10,001 – 25,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Over 200,000 |

2. Applicable Segment Type: School Level / Grade (May apply to more than one)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All | <input type="checkbox"/> Post Secondary |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PreK | <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Education |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elementary | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Choice |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Middle | <input type="checkbox"/> Private |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

3. Applicable Topic Area: School District Process and Functional Areas

1. Student Achievement & Progression

- Accountability, Analysis, Reporting, & Testing
- Curriculum
- Educational Technology
- Instruction
- Mentoring
- Monitoring
- Response to Intervention
- Teacher Development
- Testing
- Other _____

2. Administrative & Support

- Budgeting
- Facilities
- Finance
- Food & Nutrition
- Human Resources
- Recognizing and Rewarding High Performing Educators
- Transportation
- Other Knowledge Management _____

3. Leadership & Oversight

- Board
- Communication
- Community & Parent Engagement (Includes Volunteer Management)
- Information Technology
- Leadership Processes
- Security and Safety
- School Improvement Planning
- Strategic Planning
- Succession Planning
- Other _____

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Title of Practice

Collaborative Workspace concepts

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

Collaborative workspaces are secure, virtual "rooms" designed to enhance the exchange of information among a group of workers.

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

Before the collaborative workspace, participants shared information through email and file share. Documents were typically stored on an individual PC and not readily available to all participants.

2. Situation After

Multiple collaborative workspaces or virtual "rooms" have been orchestrated to provide an inter-connected environment in which all the participants in dispersed locations can access.

3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, satisfaction as you describe benefits and results achieved.

We have seen an improvement in team productivity with the collaborative tools. These tools have also helped us to easily manage documents and help ensure integrity of content. The ability to deploy solutions tailored to our business processes is attainable. We have been able to build a collaboration environment quickly and easily and at the same time reduce the complexity of securing business information by providing sophisticated controls for securing district resources. With the robust storage capabilities of the collaborative workspace, we have been able to take file sharing to a new level.

4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

If the collaboration area is not designed correctly, there is potential to create further siloing of information within the District similar to current network drives. Also, the collaboration tools are best used with Office 2007, due to better integration. Using Office 2003 limits the implementation by having Outlook and Excel separated from the collaboration environment. The bidirectional synchronization of collaboration

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

data is difficult to achieve without Office 2007.

III. For more information, contact:

1. First Name of Submitter (required)

Andrea

2. Last Name of Submitter (optional)

Young

3. Email of Submitter (required)

young.andrea@brevardschools.org

(auto-generate email if selected)

4. Phone Number of Submitter (optional)

5. Contributing Community/School District (required)

BREVARD

6. Submission Date (required)

03/09/2010

Submit a best practice c/o:

rseemer@etsfl.com

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

I. Focus Area and Applicability

1. Applicable Segment: Enrolled Students in School District

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All | <input type="checkbox"/> 25,001 – 50,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 5,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> 50,001 – 100,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5,001 – 10,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> 100,001 – 200,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10,001 – 25,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Over 200,000 |

2. Applicable Segment Type: School Level / Grade (May apply to more than one)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All | <input type="checkbox"/> Post Secondary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PreK | <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elementary | <input type="checkbox"/> Choice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Middle | <input type="checkbox"/> Private |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

3. Applicable Topic Area: School District Process and Functional Areas

1. Student Achievement & Progression

- Accountability, Analysis, Reporting, & Testing
- Curriculum
- Educational Technology
- Instruction
- Mentoring
- Monitoring
- Response to Intervention
- Teacher Development
- Testing
- Other _____

2. Administrative & Support

- Budgeting
- Facilities
- Finance
- Food & Nutrition
- Human Resources
- Recognizing and Rewarding High Performing Educators
- Transportation
- Other _____

3. Leadership & Oversight

- Board
- Communication
- Community & Parent Engagement (Includes Volunteer Management)
- Information Technology
- Leadership Processes
- Security and Safety
- School Improvement Planning
- Strategic Planning
- Succession Planning
- Other _____

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Title of Practice

CSI: Lee (Continuous Systemic Improvement: Lee)

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

CSI: Lee is a Sterling-based collegial site visit process. A six-person team from the visiting school is trained in the Sterling categories and the site visit process, and then spends two days visiting a sister school under the guidance of one of the district's Sterling Examiners. The visiting team consists of administrators, teachers, support staff, and parents. Day One is spent interviewing administrators, teachers and other staff members, students, and parents. Day Two is spent consensing, scoring, preparing an outbrief presentation which is delivered at the end of that day, and indentifying best practices for district-wide sharing. Within 30 days of the site visit the host school principal, the site visit facilitator, and the district's Chief Academic Officer meet for the delivery of a detailed Final Feedback Report.

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

There was no systematic process for learning the Sterling criteria, identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement in schools, and identifying and sharing best practices district-wide.

2. Situation After

Since the inception of CSI: Lee, 17 schools have hosted site visits, and over 60 best practices have been identified for district-wide sharing.

3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, satisfaction as you describe benefits and results achieved.

CSI: Lee has been extremely beneficial for both the visiting school and the host site. Without exception, the visiting team becomes aware of several effective practices that they want to immediately take back to their school and implement. Also, the host site's strengths are recognized and reinforced, and opportunities for improvement are identified. The benefit to the District has been the identification of more than 60 best practices for district-wide sharing.

4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

This practice requires the ongoing support of district leadership, as well as the guidance of site visit facilitators who are trained in the Sterling criteria.

III. For more information, contact:

1. First Name of Submitter (required)

Don

2. Last Name of Submitter (optional)

Bryant

3. Email of Submitter (required)

DonaldLB@Leeschools.net

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4. Phone Number of Submitter (optional)

(239) 936-1759

5. Contributing Community/School District (required)

The School District of Lee County

6. Submission Date (required)

4/15/2010

Submit a best practice c/o:
info@bestpracticesonline.org

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

I. Focus Area and Applicability

1. Applicable Segment: Enrolled Students in School District (check only one)

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | All | <input type="checkbox"/> | 25,001 – 50,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Under 5,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 50,001 – 100,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 5,001 – 10,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 100,001 – 200,000 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 10,001 – 25,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Over 200,000 |

2. Applicable Segment Type: School Level / Grade (check all that apply)

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | All | <input type="checkbox"/> | Post Secondary |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | PreK | <input type="checkbox"/> | Workforce Education |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Elementary | <input type="checkbox"/> | Choice |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Middle | <input type="checkbox"/> | Private |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | High | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other _____ |

3. Applicable Topic Area: School District Process and Functional Areas (check all that apply)

1. Student Achievement & Progression

- Accountability, Analysis, Reporting, & Testing
- Curriculum
- Educational Technology
- Instruction
- Mentoring
- Monitoring
- Response to Intervention
- Teacher Development
- Testing
- Other _____

2. Administrative & Support

- Budgeting
- Facilities
- Finance
- Food & Nutrition
- Human Resources
- Recognizing and Rewarding High Performing Educators
- Transportation
- Other _____

3. Leadership & Oversight

- Board
- Communication
- Community & Parent Engagement (Includes Volunteer Management)
- Information Technology
- Leadership Processes
- Security and Safety
- School Improvement Planning
- Strategic Planning
- Succession Planning
- Other _____

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

4. Title of Practice

Charter Schools USA Site Visit Process: Monitoring Researched Based Instructional Practices

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

Using Marzano’s criteria for “What Works in Schools” (2003), the Charter Schools USA (CSUSA) Site Visit Process was first implemented during the 2007-2008 school year. This process was established to provide teachers with individual feedback on their utilization of the CSUSA Educational Model. This model is a continuous improvement process that is used to increase student learning and achievement. CSUSA’s six step Educational Model fused with a Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum (GVC) (Marzano, 2003) consists of baseline assessment, data-driven instruction, assessment, grading, reporting and evaluation. The CSUSA School Site Visit process focuses on School Level Factors, Teacher Level Factors, and Student Level Factors that incorporates leadership and oversight to sustain high student achievement and progression. The CSUSA School Site Visit observations occur between two to four times during the school year, depending on the need of each individual school. Each school site visit is a one-day in depth observation conducted by trained teachers, administrators, and members of the Education Team. The purpose of the school site visit observation process is to support schools with the implementation and monitoring of recommended factors outlined by Marzano in “What Works in Schools” and “The Art and Science of Teaching” (2007). Moreover, the school site visit process is an opportunity for the CSUSA Education Department to identify with each school’s programs and needs, in order to align our strategic support. At the conclusion of the day, school-wide data is assessed and presented to the faculty of each school. Teachers receive individualized feedback, while meeting with the observers to discuss areas of strength and opportunity. Commendations and recommendations are shared with faculty, and the school professional development calendar is revised based on site visit results.

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

Prior to implementation, the performance of CSUSA’s schools were based on test scores, student grades, and in-house teacher evaluations. The use of these tools alone was unable to capture teacher effectiveness or provide full visibility of what support each school needed. In order to allow teachers to demonstrate their ability to apply instructional best practices, the site visit process and performance improvement system was put into practice.

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2. Situation After

Since 2007, when formal site visits became a part of CSUSA culture, CSUSA schools showed improvements on FCAT scores, increased the amount of higher-level academic classes and programs offered, and established a set of nonnegotiable goals. These performance tools are used to monitor progress toward student achievement, the implementation of instructional goals, and the enhancement of professional development. As a follow-up, weekly administrator walk-throughs create continuous feedback between school administrators and teachers and ensure that achievement and instructional goals are in the forefront of classroom curriculum design. This process guarantees that the accountability of school and teacher level factors are at the helm—ensuring academic excellence, professional development, and continuous improvement focused on student achievement. The participation of school administrators is vital in communicating school level factors, teacher level factors, school improvement planning, and the appraisal of CSUSA’s Site Visit Tool. Administrators communicate the achievement goals to all staff members, to bring awareness and to develop an action plan to reach these achievement goals. Frequent feedback by school administrators continually improves the site visit process and strengthens the site visit tool.

3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, and satisfaction as you describe the benefits and results achieved.

Benefits include an increase in CSUSA’s Schools’ FCAT scores (2007-2009), as well as an increase of higher-level academic classes and programs offered in our schools. Due to the increase of accountability, data is analyzed to create student-engaged data driven instruction that is embedded with research-based instructional strategies. CSUSA’s Education Department uses data that is received from the site visits to provide teachers and principals with enhanced professional development opportunities, as well as to drive instructional support.

4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

Key Lessons Learned: Over the past few years the School Site Visit Process has been improved by the following:

- a. Visits are unannounced to ensure authenticity of research based instructional strategies.*
- b. The Preparedness section (review of lesson plans, grade books, parent logs, etc.) of the Site Visit form is completed prior to the visit to ensure the observers have more time to observe the teacher in action.*
- c. The length of the classroom observation was increased from 15 minutes to 30 minutes to allow more time for an in depth observation.*
- d. With increased time for observations the larger schools were split by grade level*

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into two visits.

e. Effort has been made to establish teams that are representative of the school being visited (high school teacher visiting high school teachers, etc.)

f. To be effective, the site visit process is not tied to teachers' performance evaluations.

g. After year one, a site visit review team was created in order to collect feedback on the site visit tool and process.

h. Each year this team convenes to review and improve the site visit tool and process.

III. For more information, contact:

1. First Name of Submitter (required)

Kristina

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Pace

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kpace@charterschoolsusa.com

4. Phone Number of Submitter (optional)

954-202-3500 EXT 1205

5. Contributing Community/School District (required)

CHARTER SCHOOLS USA

6. Submission Date (required)

May 4, 2010

Submit a best practice to:
info@bestpracticesonline.org

Standardized Template for Submitting a Best Practice

I. Focus Area and Applicability

1. Applicable Segment: Enrolled Students in School District (check only one)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All	<input type="checkbox"/> 25,001 – 50,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Under 5,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 50,001 – 100,000
<input type="checkbox"/> 5,001 – 10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 100,001 – 200,000
<input type="checkbox"/> 10,001 – 25,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 200,000

2. Applicable Segment Type: School Level / Grade (check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> All	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Post Secondary
<input type="checkbox"/> PreK	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Workforce Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Choice
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Middle	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <u>Home-schooled</u>

3. Applicable Topic Area: School District Process and Functional Areas (check all that apply)
 1. Student Achievement & Progression

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accountability, Analysis, Reporting, & Testing
<input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational Technology
<input type="checkbox"/> Instruction
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mentoring
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring
<input type="checkbox"/> Response to Intervention
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Development
<input type="checkbox"/> Testing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <u>Service Learnings/Community Service, Experiential Education, Civic Engagement</u>

 2. Administrative & Support

<input type="checkbox"/> Budgeting
<input type="checkbox"/> Facilities
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Finance
<input type="checkbox"/> Food & Nutrition
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Resources
<input type="checkbox"/> Recognizing and Rewarding High Performing Educators
<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <u>Data Management (of information related to students' community service hours, involvement, and impact)</u>

 3. Leadership & Oversight

<input type="checkbox"/> Board
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community & Parent Engagement (Includes Volunteer Management)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Technology
<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership Processes
<input type="checkbox"/> Security and Safety
<input type="checkbox"/> School Improvement Planning
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategic Planning

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- Succession Planning
 Other _____

4. Title of Practice

Using SweatMonkey.org® to help students, schools, and school districts foster service learning, track community involvement, and measure impact and change.

5. Description of Best Practice. Please briefly describe the most important process changes.

SweatMonkey.org® is designed to foster service learning, community service, and civic engagement by empowering students to enact change in their communities. Using dynamic social media tools to connect students with organizations, SweatMonkey® provides a searchable database of volunteer and intern opportunities. Students can track their hours online and have them verified by the organization, and journal about their volunteering experiences. SweatMonkey.org® then generates a “résumé” or “service-learning transcript” for students, showing all the hours they've served with various organizations. Instructors and administrators can create detailed reports of student involvement, providing schools and districts with robust data and statistics about students' community service experiences and the impact on local communities. Soon SweatMonkey® will be able to sync with school record systems to append service hours to students' academic transcripts. Through SweatMonkey.org®, students, schools, and community members are invited to identify needs, find opportunities for support, track their efforts, and measure impact and change.

In 2007-2008ⁱ, approximately 14.6 million K-12 students in the U.S. engaged in community service to fulfill requirements for high school graduation or to be eligible for merit-based scholarships. In Florida, each year almost 200,000 students complete 60-75 hours (or more) of community service in order to earn Bright Futures Scholarships or CAS hours for IB Diplomas. Over the past decade, especially within the past few years, the number of college students engaging in Community Service & Service Learning has increased dramaticallyⁱⁱ, as colleges and universities across the nation have implemented new offices and programs to foster student engagement in their communities. Some colleges now require community service involvement for graduation and are integrating this information on students' academic transcripts. In fact, recently proposed federal legislation has set a goal for all high school students to complete 50 hours of community service each yearⁱⁱⁱ, and for all students to complete 100 hours of service while in college^{iv}.

With literally millions of youth volunteers, and hundreds of thousands in Florida, it is surprising that there are few resources to help students, instructors, and administrators find service opportunities and, perhaps more important to the functioning of the school districts, track students' hours, monitor their progress, and measure their impact. SweatMonkey.org® was developed to meet this need.

Florida Learn & Serve created a guide^v outlining the eight “best practices” for Service Learning, developed through extensive research over the past two decades

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by the National Youth Leadership Council. Additionally, for the past ten years, Florida Learn & Serve has created a document that identifies, assembles, organizes, and composes examples of the ways that service-learning addresses education standards^{vi}.

This submission shows how the use of SweatMonkey.org® helps instructors and administrators meet and exceed these best practices. In short, the use of SweatMonkey.org® is a best practice for schools and school districts.

Best Practices for Service Learning (from the Florida Learn & Serve guide, <http://www.fsu.edu/~flserve/resources/SL%20Standards%20for%20SL%20in%20FL.pdf>)

1. Link to Curriculum

Service-learning is intentionally used as an instructional strategy to meet learning goals and/or content standards.

Indicators:

- 1. Service-learning has clearly articulated learning goals.*
- 2. Service-learning is aligned with the academic and/or programmatic curriculum.*
- 3. Service-learning helps participants learn how to transfer knowledge and skills from one setting to another.*
- 4. Service-learning that takes place in schools is formally recognized in school board policies and student records.*

Using SweatMonkey.org® meets or exceeds these Best Practices by:

-providing a platform where instructors create groups for their students, enabling them to post service-learning assignments, stating their learning goals

-offering partnerships with schools & school districts so that institutions who officially adopt SweatMonkey.org® as their community-service tracking software can provide their students with a portal branded to the school (or district)

-creating service-learning transcripts for students that can be synced with school records systems to be appended to students' academic transcripts

-using SweatMonkey.org® results in eliminating paperwork, reducing faculty busy work/filing/form management, saving money by eliminating the expenses of printing, and encouraging students to utilize newest Web2.0 online tools, which increases IT involvement, thereby making them more valuable to prospective employers

2. Meaningful Service

Service-learning actively engages participants in meaningful and personally relevant service activities.

Indicators:

- 1. Service-learning experiences are appropriate to participants' ages and developmental abilities.*
- 2. Service-learning addresses issues that are personally relevant to participants.*

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3. *Service-learning provides participants with interesting and engaging service activities.*

4. *Service-learning encourages participants to understand their service experiences in the context of the underlying societal issues being addressed.*

5. *Service-learning leads to attainable and visible outcomes that are valued by those being served.*

Using SweatMonkey.org® meets or exceeds these Best Practices by:

-providing an easily searchable or browsable database of community service opportunities, so students can volunteer with organizations and learn about issues that are of interest to them

-using the “Groups” feature allows instructors to post information, helping students to understand the issues they are learning about by volunteering in the community

-partnering with a web-conferencing portal, which enables students and representatives from organizations to communicate in real time so that students can hear first-hand about the importance of their work with and for the organization

-encouraging both volunteers and community organizations to use the “Community” section of SweatMonkey.org® to post videos and stories about their community service experiences and how they have positively impacted the local community.

3. Youth Voice

Service-learning provides youth with a strong voice in planning, implementing, and evaluating service-learning experiences.

Indicators:

1. *Service-learning engages youth in generating ideas during the planning, implementation, and evaluation process.*

2. *Service-learning involves youth in the decision-making process throughout the service-learning experiences.*

3. *Service-learning involves youth and adults in creating an environment that supports trust and open expression of ideas.*

4. *Service-learning promotes acquisition of knowledge and skills to enhance youth leadership and decision-making.*

5. *Service-learning involves youth in evaluating the quality and effectiveness of the service-learning experience.*

Using SweatMonkey.org® meets or exceeds these Best Practices by:

-providing an interactive platform for students (middle school, high school, and college) to engage in their communities; SweatMonkey.org® was created and designed by a teenager, and thus its design is tailored to a student audience.

-featuring sections of the site where students can dialogue with other students, as well as instructors and community members, about their service experiences.

-empowering students to take initiative in finding community service experiences that

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are of interest to them, by providing an easily searchable and browsable database of opportunities.

-entering students' volunteered hours into an easy-to-use time log, where they can add "Journal" comments reflecting on their experiences, and have the option to share these with their instructors/peers or keep them private; there is also space for students to provide feedback to instructors and community organization representatives about their experiences.

-generating a "service-learning résumé" or "transcript" where students' community experiences are tracked and recorded.

4. Reflection

Service-learning incorporates multiple challenging reflection activities that are ongoing and that prompt deep thinking and analysis about one's self and one's relationship to society.

Indicators:

1. Service-learning includes a variety of verbal, written, artistic, and nonverbal activities to demonstrate understanding and changes in participants' knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes.

2. Service-learning reflection occurs before, during, and after the service experience.

3. Service-learning reflection prompts participants to think deeply about complex community problems and alternative solutions.

4. Service-learning reflection encourages participants to examine their preconceptions and assumptions in order to explore and understand their roles and responsibilities as citizens.

5. Service-learning reflection encourages participants to examine a variety of social and civic issues related to their service-learning experiences so that participants understand connections to public policy and civic life.

Using SweatMonkey.org® meets or exceeds these Best Practices by:

-featuring sections of the site where students can dialogue with other students, instructors, and community members about their service experiences, and reflect on what they are learning and how their work is impacting them personally and their local community.

-giving students the opportunity to add additional reflections directly to their hours log as "Journal" comments, reflecting on their experiences, and have the option to share these with their instructors/peers or keep them private.

-providing a database of service opportunities that can be browsed based on a wide range of social issues and community needs, including: animals & wildlife; arts, media, culture; business & economy; children; crime, violence, victim-services; disabled; education; elderly & seniors; environmental; government; health & health-care; housing & homelessness; LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer); museums & historical societies; poverty & hunger; race & ethnicity; sports & recreation; women & girls; youth.

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5. Partnerships

Service-learning partnerships are collaborative, mutually beneficial, and address community needs.

Indicators:

- 1. Service-learning involves a variety of partners, including youth, educators, families, community members, community-based organizations, and/or businesses.*
- 2. Service-learning partnerships are characterized by frequent and regular communication to keep all partners well- informed about activities and progress.*
- 3. Service-learning partners collaborate to establish a shared vision and set common goals to address community needs.*
- 4. Service-learning partners collaboratively develop and implement action plans to meet specified goals.*
- 5. Service-learning partners share knowledge and understanding of school and community assets and needs, and view each other as valued resources.*

Using SweatMonkey.org® meets or exceeds these Best Practices by:

-fostering collaboration and partnership among students, instructors, schools, and local community organizations, SweatMonkey.org® provides a platform for community organizations to post their needs so that students can make a meaningful contribution to their communities.

-establishing a platform for efficient communication between partners, with technologies allowing students, instructors, and community organizations to interact in real time or by e-mail (all of which are faster than and use less resources than paper, phone, or meeting in person).

-recognizing students and schools that make the biggest impact on their communities (by volunteering the most hours) through awards and grants.

6. Diversity

Service-learning promotes understanding of diversity and mutual respect among all participants.

Indicators:

- 1. Service-learning helps participants identify and analyze different points of view to gain understanding of multiple perspectives.*
- 2. Service-learning helps participants develop interpersonal skills in conflict resolution and group decision-making.*
- 3. Service-learning helps participants actively seek to understand and value the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of those offering and receiving service.*
- 4. Service-learning encourages participants to recognize and overcome stereotypes.*

Using SweatMonkey.org® meets or exceeds these Best Practices by:

-giving voice to youth of all backgrounds, as the nature of the Internet fosters interaction regardless of race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, ability, appearance,

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etc.

-empowering students to create their own affinity “Groups” in SweatMonkey.org® and challenging their peers to service-learning competitions, the outcome of which is greater good done in the community.

-encouraging students to learn about issues of diversity in the community, providing a platform where all local nonprofits can post their needs—whether their issues deal with aging, poverty, homelessness, healthcare, etc. This gives students the opportunity to interact with people from diverse backgrounds and learn to respect and appreciate their differences, while valuing their commonalities, as they work together to create positive social & environmental change.

7. Progress Monitoring

Service-learning engages participants in an ongoing process to assess the quality of implementation and progress toward meeting specified goals, and uses results for improvement and sustainability.

Indicators:

1. Service-learning participants collect evidence of progress toward meeting specific service goals and learning outcomes from multiple sources throughout the service-learning experience.

2. Service-learning participants collect evidence of the quality of service-learning implementation from multiple sources throughout the service-learning experience.

3. Service-learning participants use evidence to improve service-learning experiences.

4. Service-learning participants communicate evidence of progress toward goals and outcomes with the broader community, including policymakers and education leaders, to deepen service-learning understanding and ensure that high quality practices are sustained.

Using SweatMonkey.org® meets or exceeds these Best Practices by:

-giving a platform for community organizations to rate students on their efforts and give them feedback for improvement

-enabling students to get feedback from faculty by posting their résumés for periodic review in the “Groups” feature of SweatMonkey.org®

-providing an opportunity for both volunteers and community organizations to use the “Community” section of SweatMonkey.org® to post videos and stories about their community service experiences and how they have positively impacted the local community. The “Community” section will also allow students to offer "best practices" of their own and to issue challenges to other students, thereby encouraging positive volunteer competitions between individual members, groups, and organizations. Each of the preceding may not only monitor but take an active role in their development and effectiveness.

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8. Duration and Intensity

Service-learning has sufficient duration and intensity to address community needs and meet specified outcomes.

Indicators:

- 1. Service-learning experiences include the processes of investigating community needs, preparing for service, action, reflection, demonstration of learning and impacts, and celebration.*
- 2. Service-learning is conducted during concentrated blocks of time across a period of several weeks or months.*
- 3. Service-learning experiences provide enough time to address identified community needs and achieve learning outcomes.*

Using SweatMonkey.org® meets or exceeds these Best Practices by:

-fostering ongoing relationships between students, instructors, schools, and local community organizations, SweatMonkey.org® provides a platform for community organizations to post their needs so that students can make a meaningful contribution to their communities and can choose to continue working with the organizations, beyond the limited scope of the class assignment (or school/scholarship requirement).

-encouraging ongoing involvement—while instructors choose actual duration, students can continue to use SweatMonkey.org® for as long as they would like, and after completing requirements for school, they may be empowered to initiate new service endeavors to positively impact their community.

-recognizing and awarding students who make positive impacts in their communities by creating ongoing competitions for students.

II. Why this is a Best Practice

1. Situation Before

Prior to the use of SweatMonkey.org®, the Polk County School District lost \$300,000 due to a state audit that found time cards tracking students' On-the-Job Training (OJT) hours to be in complete disarray.

2. Situation After

After an initial specification period, SweatMonkey.org® was able to draft and design a completely online system utilizing the latest Web2.0 technology, a robust platform that included creation of the first electronically encrypted digital signature time card endorsed by Florida Department of Education. A subsequent audit one year later revealed a new paradigm had begun. SweatMonkey.org® had completely streamlined and improved all aspects of the WorkForce Development Program.

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3. Benefits (Quantifiable if possible). Consider quality, cost, timeliness, and satisfaction as you describe the benefits and results achieved.

Since the 2008-2009 school year, there have been 900 active students tracking 320,000 OJT hours in Polk County. Detailed reports of this information are available to administrators 24 hours/day using SweatMonkey.org®.

4. Key Lessons Learned. Please note what conditions must be in place for the best practice to be effective.

The use of SweatMonkey.org® helps instructors and administrators meet and exceed the eight “best practices” for Service Learning, articulated by Florida Learn & Serve. In short, the use of SweatMonkey.org® is a best practice for schools and school districts.

III. For more information, contact:

1. First Name of Submitter (required)

Scott

2. Last Name of Submitter (optional)

Fore

3. Email of Submitter (required)

Scott@sweatmonkey.org

4. Phone Number of Submitter (optional)

863-860-0900

5. Contributing Community/School District (required)

POLK

6. Submission Date (required)

5/4/2010

Submit a best practice to:

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info@bestpracticesonline.org

ⁱ http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/08_1112_lsa_prevalence.pdf page 10

ⁱⁱ “College student volunteering increased by approximately 20 percent between 2002 and 2005, as students have become involved in helping their communities,”

http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/role_impact/performance_research.asp#COLLEGE

ⁱⁱⁱ “...set a goal that all middle school and high school students engage in 50 hours of community service a year,” <http://change.gov/americaserves/>

^{iv} “Require 100 Hours of Service in College: Establish a new American Opportunity Tax Credit worth \$4,000 a year in exchange for 100 hours of public service a year,”

http://change.gov/agenda/service_agenda/

^v <http://www.fsu.edu/~flserve/resources/SL%20Standards%20for%20SL%20in%20FL.pdf>

^{vi} <http://www.fsu.edu/~flserve/sl/standards.html>