

MIDLAND BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Title I – School Wide Policy

Mission Statement

“The mission of Midland Borough School District is to provide an academic environment in which our children may reflect upon their heritage and prepare themselves for both the challenges of the 21st Century and their future success. “

The Midland Borough School District’s school wide program is aligned with the district and state essential learning requirements to include academic standards. It is designed with the belief that all students have an equal intrinsic worth, and must have the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential. This program is in place to show a commitment by the district and its staff that fosters the belief that life long learning is shared responsibility of individuals, families, schools, and community.

Setting and Demographics

The Midland Borough School District is located in Midland, PA covering approximately 5.2 miles. Prior to 1984, the main source of employment and family income was steel production, heavy metals manufacturing and jobs related to these industries. The decline of these businesses, including its major employer, the Crucible Steel/Colt Industries, resulted in plunging family incomes and a mass exodus of residents from the community. The loss of individual and family income, coupled with a drastic reduction in tax revenue, has had a major impact on the district and the community.

The Midland Borough School District recognizes that when a community fosters a high unemployment rate, low economic stability, and a large number of single parent households, it is often labeled for its deficiencies and needs rather than its strengths and potential. The Midland community has focused to create strategies and opportunities to re-employ workers in an effort to reduce unemployment. The 2000 Census Data reported the median household income was \$23,117.00 from a population of 3, 137. Census data obtained in 2002 ranked midland children 5th in percent of students ages 5-17 in poverty at a rate of 32 percent. Even with the these economic barriers present, since the implementation of NCLB Midland School District continues to make AYP at all grade levels PSSA tested. **Midland Elementary Middle School was proudly awarded the 2007 National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education.**

The Midland Elementary – Middle School is the districts only school and has a student body with extreme socio-economic needs. Based on October 1, 2009 enrollment data there are 352 students enrolled PreK-8, 65 percent of the students qualify for free or reduced lunches, placing the poverty level more than 2 times the states average of about 32 percent. The student to teacher ratio is approximately 17:1.

Needs Assessment

Teaching all children to read by the end of grade three is a major priority in the Midland Borough School District and a requirement of the No Child Left Behind Legislation. The district utilizes a standards based curriculum with an instructional emphasis on performance tasks. The effective teaching of this curriculum takes

significant time and effort. This time and effort must be focused on basic decoding skills with attention also given to important meaning based aspects of reading. Teachers are more easily able to identify students needing additional remediation because a student's work is maintained and monitored not only by classroom teacher but also by intervention teachers in the area of Reading. For most students, intense, direct, systematic teaching is essential. Midland School District's application of DIBELS assessment ensures instructional time allotted to the teaching of the five core elements of reading: phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension and vocabulary.

The Midland Math Program is designed to teach the value of math, have students become confident in their ability to do math, become mathematical problem solvers, learn to communicate math and learn to reason mathematically. The district has adopted and implemented a new math series for the 2009-10 school year. The new series provides online resources for the students, parents and teachers.

The Midland Elementary-Middle School instructional needs focus to increase reading and math proficiency at all grade levels. Teachers identify students needing additional remediation and these students are provided additional tutoring during the school day. After-school tutoring is provided in all subject areas two days per week for grade levels 5-8 as well as homework helper four days per week. After-school tutoring for grades 1-4 is provided four days per week. In addition all students are invited to participate in summer school tutoring programs for grades 1-8, focusing on reading and math, this program last approximately six weeks. Needs for tutoring are based on classroom grades, local assessments, standardized tests, teacher and parent recommendation.

Based on assessment surveys, staff development opportunities are one of the major concerns throughout the district. The district encourages all staff development activities to be done after school or during the summer so normal classroom instruction will not be disrupted. During the 2005 2006 school year the district implemented full inclusion grades K-8 in reading and added all other subject areas during the 2007-2008 school year.. Staff attended conferences and workshops hosted by Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit and PA Department of Education. District provided opportunities for staff to attend on-site visits to school districts modeling this framework of instruction. The district focus's for 2009-2010 continues to support professional development in the area of inclusion, autism and response to intervention. As well as increased training in technology with the use of smart boards and software training to include i-station, and wireless generation (DIBELS).

Goals

The school district is striving for continued improvement in reading, writing and mathematics on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and the TerraNova. Students in grades K5, 1, 2, TerraNova while students in grades 3- 8 take the PSSA. The district's major goal will be to identify educational gaps and provide additional remediation and tutoring to improve student performance. Our District is proud to recognize for the eighth straight year we have attained Annual Yearly Progress.

Goal 1 – To coordinate programs

The district will continue to coordinate professional development activities to build a seamless system between all programs and initiatives and to address the need of improving the academic achievement of all students. Implementation of inclusion grades K-8 in reading and adding other academic areas in the ensuing school years.

Goal 2 – To improve performance on high-stakes tests such as PSSA

Since NCLB proficiency levels that were mandated in 2001; Midland school district has continued to make AYP. Districts current focus is to reach needs of all children especially those not at the proficient level. Research and resources will assist in more effective use of assessments for quick interventions, including methodology in building familiarity with test formatting.

Goal 3 – To develop a research based assessment and monitoring process

Using assessment to drive instruction is a critical element of improving reading and mathematics achievement. Ample research evidence demonstrates that children with deficiencies in reading readiness skills continue to experience reading difficulties beyond grade three. Those deficiencies must be identified quickly so immediate interventions can be made.

Goal 4 – To improve professional development

Significant strides in teaching and learning for all students and teachers are not possible unless a systematic approach to staff development is taken. A systematic approach is in place and new strategies to address the needs of students and methods for teaching staff to develop new learning tools is an ongoing process. In addition to required professional development staff members are encourage to attend workshops and conferences that reflect upon teaching strategies that will have immediate impact on student learning. A reading series was adopted for the 2005-2006 school year; teachers will receive necessary professional development to assist with this transition. Focus during the 2009-10 includes updates and reviews to Trophies reading series as well as familiarizing district staff, parents and students with the new Harcourt Math Series. The math series was purchased for the 2009-10 school year. Near the end of spring term 2009 the district began technology integration on an increased level across the district. Throughout that time and during the summer staff was provided professional development in the areas of technology to include smart boards. The district has formed an inclusion team K-8 to effectively support the transition of IEP students into the classroom. Effective literacy instruction across the curriculum requires all teachers to understand that many factors impact student learning. All educators need quality training throughout their careers, delivered in a comprehensive continuum of diverse professional development programs. All professional development is based on research about teaching, and will focus on helping teachers become deeply immersed in subject matter and teaching methods

Goal 5 – To increase parental and community involvement

There is increasing evidence that community support, along with parental beliefs and attitudes about reading and the opportunities parents provide their children in reading can greatly influence children's reading development. Parents and community should be provided with selective pieces of the knowledge base in reading that support research findings. Methods to promote parental and community involvement include:

- Parent/teacher conferences held monthly October through April
- Progress reports and Report Card grades mailed.
- District newsletter is sent home to all parents

- Parents Assisting Parents to Succeed (PALS) monthly meetings.
- Title I Parent meeting held in Conjunction with PALS meetings.
- PSSA/NCLB updates mailed as released policies
- Student book fair
- Various school committees (Title I, Safety, Curriculum Adoption, Discipline, Student Assistant)
- Field trips

All efforts will be made to involve the parents of students who are not meeting academic standards. Parent/teacher conferences, open house, literacy night, and the student compact will all be avenues used to involve such parents.

II. Instructional Program

Reading

Effective 2005-2006 the district implemented new reading series K- 6; and IEP students have being fully transitioned into regular classroom for reading. All efforts and changes are targeted to meet No Child Left Behind's goal of every child will be on grade level at the end of third grade. Our reading program accomplishes this through the use of one-on-one tutoring for low achieving students, innovative approaches in PK-3 reading and writing, frequent assessment of student progress and family support programs. District provides an extension of reading programs to include a fall story night and spring story walk which invites parents and community to participate in group reading activities.

Mathematics

The district adopted in the 2009-2010 school year new math series for students grades K5-8. With the new reading series being implemented in 2005-2006 and transition of IEP students into the regular education classroom it was recommended to wait another year for the implementation of new math series. With high levels of proficiency in math attained at grades 3, 5, and 8 our current math series and intervention strategies are working. The focus of the math program is to improve PSSA and Terra Nova scores and have students proficient in mathematics by the year 2014. The district is working on the development of a curriculum map aligned with the PA standards that outlines the essential standards for both elementary school students and students at the middle school. These standards are aligned with the PA standards and consist of measurement, problem solving, statistics, probability, algebra and geometry.

Science

The ASSET science program is used in grades K-8, supplemented by the McGraw Hill 2003 edition basal. ASSET is a hands-on approach to science that is aligned with the PA Science, technology, environment and ecology standards. The 6th and 8th grades participate in the Pittsburgh Voyager program. This science program is aligned with the Pennsylvania Academic Standards focusing on the Science Standards. This is a hands-on field trip where students study rivers, streams and the life around these bodies of water. The district will be reviewing assessments results of the 2008-2009 science PSSA and making necessary curriculum adjustments in

order to meet assessment benchmarks as established in the PA Science Anchor Standards. The district anticipates making all necessary changes to existing curriculum that may arise as the result of the Science Assessment. Students in grades four and eight will take the PA Science Assessment.

Social Studies

The elementary school social studies program emphasizes the integration of social, political, economic and cultural perspectives. Because reading, writing, and math are our major focuses, cross-curricular integration is encouraged. As a supplement to the PA standards, social studies is taught with the 2002 edition of Harcourt Brace. The middle school social studies program emphasizes the integration of social, political, economic and cultural perspectives. The 5th grade studies United States history, the 6th grade studies Central/Latin and South America, the 7th grade studies world cultures and the 8th grade studies civics and Pennsylvania history. Maps, globes, graphic organizers and higher order thinking skills are used in the instruction.

Technology

The district upgraded all student computer labs, purchased a mobile cart and over the past two years purchased 14 smart boards for teaching and learning. Students in grades PK-8 are afforded the opportunity for individual hands on experience in each building's computer labs. All students, using educational computer software, study the areas of: Reading, Language Arts, Math and Science. Students are also allotted World Wide Web (www.) capabilities through the Internet. Software packages such as I-station (Reading), Think-Central (Math), PassKey and Accelerated Reader support our efforts to enhance reading, writing and mathematics proficiency. Each district classroom has at least one computer with Internet access so teachers can track student attendance, progress reports and grades through the software programs. This allows teachers to easily identify those students that need additional remediation, support and tutoring.

III. Professional Development

Teacher Planning

Effective staff development must provide opportunities for **all** educators to be involved continuously and must be a natural component of **all** educators' roles and responsibilities.

A staff development survey is administered yearly to determine the needs of the professional staff necessary for the effective instruction in the five core elements of reading and best practices in mathematics.

The district is updating its current professional development plan in an effort to align all staff development activities more closely to the Pennsylvania Standards of teaching. The plan will offer a full range of intensive activities that are focused and of sufficient duration to achieve the purposes and goals of the training. Additional time will be provided for teachers to learn and implement scientific-based reading research along with time to study, observe, practice, apply and evaluate the effectiveness of the professional development. Professional development needs to be seen as a never-ending process that involves the entire school staff, not a one-time event.

Teachers have a common planning team, and meet weekly to discuss, and use data to drive instruction. Common preparation periods at each grade level ensure opportunity for instructional, curricular and assessment planning. Special education students use the same instructional resources provided to regular education students. Curricula are adapted to meet each child's Individualized Education Plan and mainstreaming is encouraged.

IV. School Climate and Safety

The Midland Borough School District has a climate of cooperation, professionalism and safety. We create a positive climate of respect for our cultures by celebrating our differences. Our efforts of establishing a climate of mutual respect and equity are bolstered by grade level teams, which help provide a strong sense of community within the school. The collaborative efforts among the teachers, students and parents in each grade, serve to reinforce the school's vision and mission.

Safety and discipline remains one of our top priorities. A district crisis plan is in place to maximize the safety and well being of staff and students during an emergency. There are security guards on site to assist in the daily operation of school. There is a police officer that teaches drug and alcohol awareness (DARE) classes and the student assistance team is available to assist with prevention and mediation of problems.

V. Parent and Community Involvement

The Midland Borough School District has a wide range of parent involvement activities to ensure that our parents are active participants in the students' education. These activities include the following:

PALS – Parents Assisting Leopards to Succeed. The team's mission is to provide for student activities, fundraiser and support school and community events. Involving parents in their children's education promotes the interaction of social services for families and children into the school setting.

Parent Workshops –

1. How to help you child with homework.
2. How to help you child succeed.
3. Teaching responsible behavior.
4. Self-esteem is the key.

Fall mailing of Parent Compact

Provide information to parents on parent workshops both Local and State

In addition to parent involvement, the Midland Borough School District maintains ongoing relationships with the following organizations:

- Midland Public Library
- Adult Literacy Action
- Head Start/Early Head Start

- Even Start
- The Prevention Project
- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Wee Care Day Care Center