

Brickell Elementary School

Defiance Public Schools (Defiance County)



2004-2005 School of Promise in Reading & Mathematics	
School Rating	Excellent
Enrollment	209
Grade Levels	K-5
Percent Economically Disadvantaged	50.4%
Percent Racial/Ethnic Minority	35.4%

District Profile 2004-2005	
District Rating	Effective
District Enrollment	2,376

Lesson 1: Providing Rigorous Instruction Aligned to Standards

Reaching Beyond the Standards: As teachers at Brickell Elementary have become more comfortable with the Ohio achievement standards, they have aligned their instruction to the standards for better results. The change in attitude evolved over several years as teachers throughout the district realized they could go beyond the standards, rather than merely meeting them. District administrators have continued to advocate that all teachers are encouraged to raise expectations for student achievement beyond the state standards.

Emphasis on Reading and Phonics: Reading and phonics are seen as the core of the curriculum and the core of the school day. A strong foundation in phonics and literacy beginning in the primary grades is seen as a key to better performance in the third and fourth grades. Brickell uses web-based computer programs which provide individualized instruction aligned specifically to acquaint students with standardized tests and the content standards.

Lesson 2: Providing Leadership That Results in Continuous Improvement

Collaborative Environment: At Brickell, teachers collaborate informally and formally. The administration created time during the day for teachers to collaborate. Former Brickell teachers are brought in once a week to create a 90-minute planning time for teachers. Substitutes teach at one grade level while the teachers at that level meet to talk about the curriculum, discuss what they are doing and make plans for future activities. The substitutes progress from one grade level to the next so all teachers have an opportunity to work with their grade-level colleagues. Teachers also share a common lunchtime for informal collaboration.

Leaders in the Ranks: Teacher leaders are an important part of Brickell's sustained success. Through their leadership, Brickell has adopted its most successful programs such as the Accelerated Reader program. These teacher leaders are also active promoting best practice throughout the district.

Lesson 3: Designing Instruction to Ensure Every Student's Success

Intervention Program: Classroom teachers, along with two substitute teachers who are hired for intervention purposes, design and run the intervention program. The focus is to provide instruction to smaller groups of students. Two days per week of small group instruction are provided in language arts and mathematics, focusing on academic content standards students have difficulty mastering. The school's two Title I intervention specialists also work with students and teachers individually.

Individualized Instruction: In all of the reading classes, students were given opportunities to work individually and at their own pace. The teacher assigns students to work on a web-based program depending on the students' needs. While students are working at their own pace on the computer programs, the teacher works with a different small group of students. Despite the small amount of direct teacher supervision, the students know what they need to be doing, freeing the teacher up to focus on struggling readers.

Lesson 4: Engaging Parents and Community to Support Student Success

Encouraging Involvement: Brickell actively promotes parental involvement. For example, the school uses flexible scheduling for parent teacher conferences, to ensure all parents the opportunity to meet with their child's teacher. The Families and Schools Together program empowers families to be fully involved in their child's lives, both at home and in school. The program provides mentors and social services for low-income families.

Lesson 5: Creating a Culture Where Each Individual Feels Valued

Support for the Individual: A mentoring program called Adopt-a-Student is one of Brickell's means of support and a way to connect students with role models. Teachers and even the principal meet with students individually to talk with them and offer support. The program may offer the only opportunity for some students to talk to an adult about goals. This may help students to become more confident and more willing to take educational risks.