Felicity Franklin High School

Felicity Franklin School District (Clermont)

School Profile 2003-2004	
2003-2004 School of Promise in Mathematics & Reading	
School Rating	Effective
Enrollment	340
Grade Levels	9-12
Percent Economically Disadvantaged	44.8%*
Percent Racial/Ethnic Minority	NC<10

*The percentage as reported in the CCIP system.

District Profile 2003-2004	
District Rating	Effective
District Enrollment	1,136

Lesson 1: Providing Rigorous Instruction Aligned to Standards

Mathematics Content: Teachers were making an effort to give all students an opportunity to succeed in academically challenging math classes. One way they accomplished this goal was by encouraging students in the general track to move onto Algebra after completing sequence of two integrated general mathematics courses – Integrated Math (typically taken in the ninth grade) and Applied Math (typically taken in the 10th grade). Some departure from this tradition may evolve because all of the mathematics teachers believe that algebra is a valuable part of the curriculum for all students (even if many do not take it.)

Moving Instruction toward Alignment: Part of the district's continuous improvement plan requires teachers to use differentiated instruction, inquiry-based methods, and varied questioning regimes. Unlike the elementary school that has moved further away from lecture and exercise formats, the high school's instructional changes are moving more slowly.

Alignment to Standards and Eye to Improvement: The district's continuous improvement plan requires all teachers to keep and turn in notebooks to the administration on a regular basis. Among other things, these notebooks include records of work that classes complete, activities through which the teacher connects and communicates with the community, and evidence of how required standards and benchmarks are addressed.

Lesson 2: Providing Leadership That Results in Continuous Improvement

Principal Leadership: The principal views his leadership style as more persuasive than directive. He realizes that in order for any common effort to be effective, the staff must "buy into it." Unless staff members have an incentive to make an instructional change work, they seem unlikely to endorse it fully and therefore to see it to fruition.

Leadership Team: The district expanded its district-wide administrative team to include a curriculum director and a dean of students to assist all three of the district's buildings. These two positions play a strategic role in fostering improvement efforts.

Curriculum Director: Staff views this position as one of the most critical for school improvement in this building and across the district. Students know the curriculum director because he is constantly in and out of the classrooms. Most staff meetings include the curriculum director discussing the data and helping teachers understand which way they should make changes in their daily instruction to better help the students. Staff cooperates with the curriculum director because he articulates a clear vision

of what work needs to be done. In addition, the director supports the work of the staff by providing resources, insights, and motivations for improvement.

Dean of Students: The middle and high school do not have assistant principals. Instead, the dean of students is responsible for discipline and for removing other "barriers" to education in these two buildings. As a result, the principals are free to focus on improving the quality of education. For example, the principal is able to focus on helping a "difficult" student learn, instead of simply "disciplining" that student.

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

Student-centered Instruction: The view of instruction as student-centered, active, and perhaps even interdisciplinary is a relatively new development in the high school. However, the students interviewed are aware of and like how the instruction is becoming more focused on their involvement.

Lesson 4: Engaging Parents and Community to Support Student Success

Community Support: Community involvement is a stipulation of the school's Continuous Improvement Plan. Teachers are required to contact parents a certain number of times over the course of a quarter, via newsletters, interim report cards, memos, and invitations to school events. This system keeps parents informed of their children's progress and activities, and it also helps teachers recognize that parent and community involvement has implications for curriculum and pedagogy. Teachers use an online system to post student grades and other indicators of progress for inspection by parents and students. Some teachers reach out to community members for participation in class projects (e.g., speakers, local government efforts), which links the school's curriculum to activities in the community.

School for Community Purposes: The school building and its location downtown makes it a central fixture in the community. The school opens up the facility after hours to students, parents, and community members (e.g., community group meetings, athletic events). By opening up the school, community members are likely to view the school as a resource and a symbol of the community.

Lesson 5: Creating a Culture Where Each Individual Feels Valued

Discipline: Everyone receives copies of explicit discipline policies, so students, teachers, and parents all know what behavior is expected. For most infractions, the school uses a "progressive" form of discipline with varying degrees of punishment. For more persistent problems, such as skipping school or major classroom disruption, students are temporarily assigned for one or two days into a within-school alternative program. This program is staffed by a full-time teacher whose job is to help these students catch up with overdue assignments, to stay on top of continuing class work, and to help these students return to regular classrooms.

Small School: The small size of the school contributes to the improved academic performance of economically disadvantaged students.