

Peebles High School

Adams County/Ohio Valley School District (Adams County)



School Profile 2003-2004	
2003-2004 School of Promise in Mathematics & Reading	
School Rating	Effective
Enrollment	541
Grade Levels	7-12
Percent Economically Disadvantaged	41%*
Percent Racial/Ethnic Minority	NC <10

*The percentage as reported in the CCIP system.

District Profile 2003-2004	
District Rating	Continuous Improvement
District Enrollment	4,830

Lesson 1: Providing Rigorous Instruction Aligned to Standards

Attention to Standards: Educators see emphasizing the content standards as a first step in fostering improvement. Teachers at Peebles High School, along with teachers throughout the district, have created curriculum maps and identified “power indicators” in the five core subject areas. The result is a uniform, districtwide curriculum that is aligned both within and across grade levels. Teachers are currently developing “short cycle assessments” that are keyed to the standards, which will provide them with ongoing feedback about students’ progress in meeting grade-level indicators.

Standards are Highly Visible: Posters listing the standards hang in every classroom; every teacher is required to document in lesson plans which standards and indicators each lesson covers. Teachers also believe it is important for students to be aware of the standards, and daily classroom routines involve posting the standards addressed by each lesson or, at least, telling students which standards will be addressed. From the perspective of many teachers, the standards provide a rationale for teaching particular content and thereby lend credibility to the school’s curriculum.

Lesson 2: Providing Leadership That Results in Continuous Improvement

High Expectations and Shared Responsibility: Teachers feel the most important change instituted by the former principal was to increase the consistency with which discipline problems were handled. Once student behavior was under control, the former principal began to motivate students to learn and staff to focus on instruction. As an administrator, he took the school’s performance personally and cultivated responsibility for performance among all teachers and students. Whereas in many schools proficiency tests scores are shared with teachers, at Peebles the test scores were then shared with students as well.

Supportive Atmosphere: The current principal goes over test results with the teachers, not to criticize, but to help them base their decisions on data. In turn, teachers readily assume leadership roles on curriculum work and other school activities, such as after-school tutoring. Teachers and administrators view themselves as role models for student improvement.

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

Instructional Design and Delivery: Although content standards drive *what* they teach, teachers have free reign in deciding *how* to teach. Some teachers use traditional methods of direct instruction, which include providing students with explanations and directions, setting practice activities for students, offering feedback and support, reviewing major concepts with students prior to a test, and administering tests. Other teachers use a more inductive or inquiry-based methods of instruction, which include small-group activities in which students work together to “brainstorm,” to solve unstructured problems, and to help one another learn new concepts.

On-going Intervention: When students need more than classroom instruction, the teachers provide individual tutoring throughout the entire school year. Such tutoring is provided at the students' convenience, which sometimes means tutoring before or after school or during homeroom period. Students know that the door is “always open” for them to request additional help from their teachers.

Collaboration: Teachers within departments plan collaboratively and coordinate lessons to produce a coherent instructional sequence across grade levels.

Lesson 4: Engaging Parents and Community to Support Student Success

Possible Split in District: Deconsolidation is a sensitive issue in the community, and the educators are trying hard to keep it from influencing the daily life of the school.

Lesson 5: Creating a Culture Where Each Individual Feels Valued

Respect through Discipline: The purpose and focus of the discipline policies and procedures is mutual respect between and among students and teachers. As one teacher stated, “If you don't have discipline, I don't care what kind of content standards you have, I don't care what kind of benchmarks you have.....you're not going to be successful.” Teachers and administrators are consistent in their enforcement of the rules. As another teacher commented, “You can have all the rules in the world, but if you don't adhere to them and follow up on them, it is not going to matter.”