

Title of Best Practice: East Tech Common Assessment Program

School: East Technical High School

District: Cleveland Metropolitan School District

Submitter Name: Paul Hoover

Position of the Submitter: Principal

Submitter Email Address: phoover@cwaeast.net; paul.hoover@cmsdnet.net

Submitter Phone: 216-881-1513

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My Superintendent/Principal is aware of and approved the submission of this "Evidence-Based Best Practice?" Yes No (Yes or No)

1. How many students did this Evidence-Based Best Practice impact? 600
2. Which component of the identified intervention model does this Evidence-Based Best Practice align? Check any that closely align.
 - Replaced the principal (all models)
 - New evaluation system using student growth as a significant factor (transformation)
 - Use locally-adopted competencies to rehire no more than 50% of staff (turnaround)
 - Identify and reward staff increasing student outcomes (all models)
 - Strategies to recruit, place, retain staff (all models)
 - Select and implement instructional model based on student needs (all models)
 - Job-embedded professional development (all models)
 - Continuous use of data (all models)
 - Increased learning time (all models)
 - Social-emotional and community-oriented services and supports for students (all models)
 - On-going mechanism for community and family engagement (transformation)
 - Operating flexibility (transformation)
 - New governance structure (turnaround)
3. Describe the situation before the Evidence-Based Best Practice was implemented. Explain why the improvement was needed. Provide summary of data to illustrate the need.

Three years ago, Cleveland closed two of its lower-performing high schools and moved those students over to East Tech, a school that had struggled on recent state report cards. The influx of

new students coincided with an overhaul of staff/administration at Tech, and produced disappointing test scores in 2010-2011 (the building PI declined from 67.7 to 61.7). The following year, the test scores stabilized (the PI essentially stayed level, dropping slightly from a 61.7 to a 61.2, with 11th-grade scores increasing by a similar margin), but our BLT was disappointed with the stubbornly-low scores being produced by our building.

The BLT met in July, and discussed strategies for improving our test scores. We outlined several priority areas for 2012-2013, and determined that we needed to do a better job of monitoring student progress throughout the year. Our district does administer the NWEA exam during September and January of each year, but the frequency of that data didn't allow us to make curricular adjustments that could impact student achievement. As a result, we decided to launch a building-wide, bi-quarterly common assessment program.

4. Describe the process of implementing the Evidence-Based Best Practice, including a basic timeline of events leading to full implementation, any troubleshooting or course corrections you made, and the evaluation of the Evidence-Based Best Practice.

June 2012 – Final SIG monitoring report for 2011-2012 indicates need for a building common assessment program.

June 2012 – BLT reviews report, makes recommendation for a bi-quarterly common assessment program.

August 2012 – Administration reviews common assessment program with staff. Staff given time to meet in vertical teams to develop common assessments using district's Schoolnet system (or released OGT exams).

September 18 – First campus-wide common assessment administered.

October 25 – Second campus-wide common assessment administered.

November 2012 – Vertical teams met to review common assessment data and to recommend strategies for improving scores. Teams also made some suggestions to administration for improving the system (biggest complaint: Schoolnet system didn't provide adequate number of questions in several subject areas).

November, January, February, March, May – Additional assessments given in all subject areas; results reviewed in vertical team meetings during PD days.

5. Share the data indicating that this Evidence-Based Best Practice has increased achievement, increased attendance, reduced discipline incidents, or increased graduation rate.

While we are still waiting for official OGT results to be released, the preliminary data indicates an increase in our building Performance Index.

Furthermore, our building has seen solid gains in our NWEA (OGT predictive exam) scores since the beginning of the year. In the 9th grade academy, the NWEA projected PI improved from 62.9 to 64.7. In the Engineering, Science and Technology Academy, the NWEA projected PI improved from 66.9 to 71.59. In the Community Wraparound Academy @ East Tech, the NWEA projected PI improved from 77.7 to 80.29. These gains can be attributed to instruction that is better attuned to student needs (as identified by the common assessments) and better student familiarity with the skills/concepts required for success on state exams (which is supported by the assessments).

6. Briefly explain how this Evidence-Based Best Practice will be sustained once SIG funding is no longer available.

This year created a foundation for the Common Assessment program. While the first few assessments will have to be amended, the latter exams are neatly aligned with the scope and sequence and closely mirror the concepts/skills being taught in the classroom. We also have time built into the day through our new contract for teachers to meet as vertical teams to create assessments and review data. Multiple teachers have also been trained (through SIG funding) in the Data Team process, which encourages teachers to develop common strategies for improving student performance.

7. Briefly share any lessons learned and/or advice to other schools wishing to implement this Evidence-Based Best Practice.

One piece of advice to share with other schools:

Take time at the beginning to outline expectations and to share examples of what the assessments should look like. If we had shared better exemplars at the start of the process, it may have saved administrators and teachers time in November (when we needed to make some adjustments).