

## Centennial High School Restructuring Action Steps

According to the National High School Center, research on comprehensive school reform suggests that improvement strategies have the best opportunity for success and sustainability when they take into account the broad array of elements that make up the system being improved. The National High School Center in the research synthesis entitled the *Eight Elements of High School Improvement: A Mapping Framework*, identified key components of high school improvement that should be addressed to improve effectiveness of reform elements. In order to focus our attention and leverage our resources we have decided to identify Unit 4's "Major Tenets" for high school redesign. The categories identified by the high school restructuring team are:

- Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
- Student Services
- School Organization and Management Structure
- Community and Parent Engagement
- Personnel

These global categories are in alignment with the current research on high school redesign. Within in each School Redesign Tenet the Big "4" components were identified and action steps were created to address each component. The action steps are listed below, according to tenet. More detailed information including reasoning and timelines are later in the document according to the page number provided after each action step below.

### Action Steps

#### **Tenet 1: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment**

##### **Action Step 1:**

**Redesign the curriculum maps/scope and sequence in core-content courses (English, Math, Social Studies, Science) to align with College Readiness Standards.**

This must be done collaboratively with an emphasis on skills, objectives, and essential understandings as opposed to an emphasis on specific texts and/or projects. In addition to redesigning the curriculum maps/scope and sequence, an evaluative system will be put in place to monitor when and how standards are actually being taught.

##### **Reasoning/Rationale**

According to Andrew Porter, a researcher at Vanderbilt University, "What gets taught is the strongest single predictor of gains in achievement." Because of this obvious, but easily overlooked or ignored factor, it is important that we ensure that our curriculum maps/scope and sequence are developed collaboratively, are usable, and are implemented by every teacher in each of the core-content areas. This is particularly important because of the overwhelming inconsistencies in what is being taught within individual classrooms. Research tells us that Centennial High School is not alone in its inconsistent curriculum. According to Mike Schmoker, "In the buffered, hands-off management culture of the average school, teaching devolves into what Susan Rozenblatz calls 'a self-selected jumble' of standards, of isolated teachers' preferences—with no connection to any common curriculum." (38) This is, for the most part, the result of a lack of evaluative accountability for what is being taught. To this end, in addition to aligning curriculum maps/scope and sequence to the college readiness standards, it is imperative that an evaluative system is put in place to ensure adherence to the curriculum from every teacher.

## **Timeline for Implementation**

Spring 2010/Summer 2010: All teachers will begin and/or continue to develop/refine a time-bound skills, objective, essential understanding map that is tied explicitly to the College Readiness Standards. Each map will be course specific (i.e. College Algebra) and contain the following information:

- When (identified by a date range) each skill, objective, and essential understanding will be taught.
  - When (identified by a date range) each skill, objective, and essential understanding will be assessed. Each course will focus on the development of frequent, short-cycle common assessments.
  - Develop a common summative exam for each course that will be administered at the end of the first quarter, and each subsequent quarter.
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- Fall 2010: All classes will continue to collaboratively develop short cycle common assessments that are tied directly to curriculum maps/scope and sequence.
  - Fall 2010: Content Area Chairs will develop a data analysis plan for implementation in Fall 2010. This plan must include how data will be collected, when data will be discussed (specific dates and times), and how data will be used to improve instruction. This plan will also include a system of benchmarks for each course to monitor student progress.
  - 2010-11: Pre and Post summative assessments will be created for each course that reviews achievement each quarter. This data will be used to determine if mastery of identified standards/skills is occurring. Ongoing analysis will be conducted each quarter that includes a review of common assessment data and Curriculum writing funds will be allocated for a curriculum review and analysis team that will be responsible for evaluating/refining curriculum maps/scope and sequence/assessment plans. This time can also be spent refining common assessments.

## **Measurement**

Each core-content area course will submit the curriculum maps/scope and sequence/assessment plans to the building administration prior to the start of the 2010-11 school year. Plans will be reviewed by the building leadership team, curriculum coordinators, and Central Office administration. This review team will offer feedback and identify any areas in need of revision.

## **Party Responsible**

- Responsibility of PLCs: Develop plans in accordance with the aforementioned timeline.
- Responsibility of CACs: To ensure that PLCs are on pace to complete all tasks on time and to take part in the evaluative process of submitted plans.
- Responsibility of building level administration: To take part in the evaluative process of submitted plans; to take on an active role in Teacher Evaluation/Observation to ensure that submitted plans are being followed.
- Centennial faculty/staff

## **Action Step 2:**

**Organize a required Summer Curriculum and Instructional Capacity Building Institute for teachers and building leadership team to support the required work in curriculum identified in Action Step #1.**

Tenets learned in the institute will be embedded in the professional development plan throughout the school year. The institute will be supported by professional development provided by the District.

### **Timeline for Implementation:**

Dates for the Summer Institute will be provided to the Centennial High School faculty/staff members prior to March 19, 2010. Efforts will be made to hold the Institute on two separate occasions during the summer to accommodate faculty/staff summer schedules.

### **Responsible Party:**

- Director of Staff Development
- Centennial High School Leadership Team
- Curriculum Coordinators
- Centennial Faculty/Staff

### **Action Step 3:**

**Continue and expand upon the work of Centennial High School's Literacy Team to increase critical literacy skills in all of Centennial High School's classrooms.**

To this end, each Centennial High School teacher will plan for and document the use of critical reading, writing, and discussion on a bi-weekly basis. Professional Development to assist teachers in this process will include AVID Reading Strategies and the Touchstone Discussion Program, a nonprofit group that specializes in Socratic style discussion seminars and has a longstanding relationship with the AVID Program. Professional development is identified below\*

### **Reasoning/Rationale**

According to Richard Vacca, "Adolescents entering the adult world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will read and write more than at any other time in human history. They will need advanced levels of literacy to perform their jobs, run their households, act as citizens, and conduct their personal lives." To this end, Centennial High School must strive to make our students prepared to deal with the demands of a hyper-literate world. One promising technique to help in this endeavor is discussion based literacy programs such as the one provided by Touchstone. A study published in Education Week stated, "We found a significant effect for discussion-based approaches and high academic demands on spring performance, controlling for fall performance and other related background variables," Mr. Applebee said. "I think the interesting part [of this study] is the broad range of situations in which these approaches were effective—for students of widely varying abilities at both middle and high school, and urban and suburban school contexts," he said.

### **Timeline for Implementation**

Spring 2010 and ongoing: A maximum of 30 Centennial faculty members will attend a Touchstone workshop. A minimum of one department member will attend this workshop so that information can be disseminated to all teachers.

Spring 2010 and ongoing: AVID Reading Strategy Workshop

Fall 2010: Professional Development will be provided to all faculty members to aid in the implementation process. This professional development will be given by the faculty members that attended the Touchstone workshop.

Fall 2010: All classrooms will begin to plan for a document the weekly use of critical reading, writing, and discussion. Evidence of this will be collected on a bi-weekly basis.

### **Measurement**

Evidence of critical reading, writing, and discussion will be collected by the Centennial High School Literacy Team on a staggered bi-weekly basis (1/2 of the staff one week, 1/2 of the staff the next). The evidence will

include an explicit connection to the ACT College Readiness Standards. The goal of the literacy team will be to answer questions from and provide feedback to all Centennial staff members.

### **Party Responsible**

- Centennial High School Literacy Team

### **\*TOUCHSTONES DISCUSSION PROJECT EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES**

**Workshops:** Touchstones workshops provide teachers with a hands-on introduction to running seminar format discussions with students. In a workshop, teachers:

- Learn the Touchstones method and how and why it works through modeling and participation in discussion sessions;
- Explore the teacher's role as the discussion leader, the concept of shared leadership, and techniques for effective classroom management.
- Develop sample lesson plans to see how Touchstones is easily integrated into existing curricular activities;
- Learn how discussion evaluations reinforce and strengthen the Touchstones experience and learn how incorporating student evaluators can help to guide the group's progress and support the teacher's role;
- Work with each other and with Touchstones staff to develop and refine leadership skills, and to prepare for the challenges and rewards of guiding a group inquiry;
- Engage in a lively question and answer period.

Workshops are tailored to the groups' needs, and are offered as beginning, intermediate, or advanced levels depending on the group's experience with Touchstones. Touchstones also offers workshop options that specifically address the IB and AVID communities.

**Fee for one-day workshop (limited to 30 participants): \$1250**

**On-Site Presentation:** A presentation in your school introduces administrators, teachers, and curriculum coordinators to the Touchstones method and explains how discussion-based education improves classroom management and student achievement. In a practice discussion and evaluation, participants model the method and gain first-hand experience with this simple but revolutionary educational tool. Presentations run from 30 minutes to 3 hours, depending on the needs of the group. Every presentation ends with a question and answer period.

**On-Site Classroom Support:** With on-site support, one of our staff comes into the classroom to help you directly with implementing Touchstones with your class. Through modeling, discussion evaluation, and targeted feedback, you learn how to improve your approach and outcomes. You set the number of on-site support visits according to your budget and time, and needs.

**Remote Classroom Support:** Now through June 30, 2009, Touchstones offers FREE remote support by email, phone, and video-conferencing.

**On-Site Presentation:** A presentation in your school introduces administrators, teachers, and curriculum coordinators to the Touchstones method and shows how Touchstones can improve classroom management, student engagement, self-efficacy, and outcomes. Presentations run from 30 minutes to 3 hours, depending on your needs. Each presentation ends with a question and answer period.

#### **Action Step 4:**

**Teachers will know and be able to use a variety of effective instructional strategies to fully engage students.**

#### **Rationale:**

Supovitz, Senior Researcher at the Consortium for Policy Research in Education at the University of Pennsylvania: Substantial research and craft knowledge exists about what practices are more effective than others, and what practices can be advantageously used for students at particular developmental levels and in particular contextual situations. Educational leaders who do not use this knowledge to develop a clear vision of what instruction should look like – and then enact that vision in their schools-are virtually ensuring uneven quality and effectiveness.

#### **Timeline for Implementation:**

Faculty and staff will review the following three models this school year and select one for implementation in 2010-11. Ongoing professional development will be provided at the building level by district trained facilitators during the 2010-11 school year.

1. Fisher and Frey Model. A framework for the ‘the gradual release of responsibility’. Teachers move through a progression of instructional strategies that include focus lessons (‘I do it’), guided instruction (‘we do it’), collaborative learning (‘you do it together’), and independent tasks (‘you do it alone’). Focus of this model is creating independent learners.
2. Classroom Instruction that Works (Marzano). Marzano and associates have identified nine research based instructional practices that have a proven track record for increasing student achievement when used strategically by skilled teachers. This model works best when unfolded over a period of two to three years.
3. The New Framework for Teacher Leadership (Reeves). This model consists of seven elements that begin with the recognition of a challenge and proceeds through a continuous cycle that includes action research, reflection, reinforcement, and resilience.

#### **Measurement:**

- Through implementation of the walk-through protocol, iObservation (Marzano), student engagement in higher order learning will be measured.

#### **Party Responsible:**

- Staff Development Director/Facilitator
- Building Administration
- Centennial Faculty/Staff

#### **Action Step 5:**

**Students will enroll in and take at least one Advanced Placement course and/or one dual credit course prior to graduation.**

#### **Rationale:**

University of Texas researchers: Even for students who do not do well on the AP tests, students who took at least one AP course and test had higher college GPA’s and graduation rates than students who took at least one AP course but no tests. Indiana University Bloomington: Even if students do not score well on the test, they will be more successful in college than those who do not take the test, or take only ‘honors’ level courses. A recent New York Times article (1/10/10) highlights that dual credit courses have long been used in urban schools to provide some higher education to poor and minority students and encourage them to go to college.

Top suburban schools are now embracing dual enrollment as a way to challenge their brightest students and ward off senioritis once college applications are done. The courses are also attractive in the current economy because they award college credit for a fraction of the normal tuition cost.

**Timeline for Implementation:**

- Establish baseline for current enrollment in Advanced Placement courses and dual credit by ethnicity/race and income (Spring 2010) and set benchmark for 2010-11 registration and subsequent academic years.
- Provide summer enrichment program to support student enrollment in Advanced Placement courses with ongoing support provided during the academic year.
- Hold informational sessions for students and parents regarding Advanced Placement and Dual Credit courses.

**Measurement:**

- Enrollment, credits earned, and AP test-taking rates.

**Party Responsible:**

- Counselors
- Building Administration
- Centennial Faculty/Staff

**Action Step 6:**

**Embed social justice curriculum in all content areas.**

**Rationale:**

Teachers who want to construct more equitable, more meaningful, and more lively educational experiences for children must also concern themselves with issues beyond the classroom walls. Students should probe the ways their lives connect to the broader society, and are often limited by that society. The curriculum should equip the students to "talk back" to the world. Who makes decisions and who is left out? Who benefits and who suffers? What is required to make change? Through critiques of advertising, cartoons, literature, legislative decisions,...or school life, students should have opportunities to question social reality. Student work must move outside the classroom walls, so that scholastic learning is linked to real world problems. A social justice curriculum must strive to include the lives of all those in our society, especially the marginalized and dominated. This can take place through projects, role plays, simulations, mock trials, or experiments, students need to be mentally, and often physically, active. Our classrooms must provoke students to develop their democratic capacities: to question, to challenge, to make real decisions, to collectively solve problems. A social justice classroom equips children not only to change the world but also to maneuver in the one that exists. A social justice classroom offers more to students than do traditional classrooms and expects more from students. (Excerpted from "Creating Classrooms for Equity and Social Justice", pp 4-5, Bigelow, B., Christensen, L, Karp, S, Miner, B. & Peterson, B. (1994). Rethinking Our Classrooms: Teaching for Equity and Justice. Milwaukee, WI: Rethinking Schools, Ltd.)

**Timeline for Implementation:**

- Summer Writing, 2010. Representatives from all curricular areas will be provided the opportunity to examine current curriculum goals and develop units that support the study of social justice.

**Measurement:**

- Student performance on projects, etc
- Student focus group discussions

- Climate Surveys

**Party Responsible:**

- Content Area Chairs
- Student Service Staff
- Curriculum Coordinators
- Building Administration

**Action Step 7:**

**Ninth grade required elective course (Multi-departmental)**

**Rationale:**

Provide needed support for successful transition to high school. Course could include: AVID strategies, Reading/Writing Workshop, Career Cruising, Career Portfolio development and 6 year planning process initiated.

**Timeline for Implementation:**

- Summer Writing, 2010.

**Measurement:**

- Grade performance
- Student and parent surveys

**Party Responsible:**

Content Area Chairs, Student Service Department (Counselors, Social Worker, Psychologist), ECP Coordinator

**Action Step 8:**

**Review of grading policy to examine content mastery as a guiding principle.**

**Time line for Implementation:**

Begin discussions during 2010-11 school year with recommended changes to policy for 2011-12.

**Action Step 9:**

**Increase the use of AVID strategies in all classes.**

**Rationale:**

Research findings have indicated that AVID is an effective college preparatory intervention program and that AVID's combination of student-centered and school-centered reform can help point the way toward expanded efforts to assist low-performing schools. A variety of research findings also indicate that AVID has supported excellent college-enrollment rates for Latino, African-American, and low-income students.

**Timeline for Implementation:**

AVID Site Team will provide professional development training on targeted AVID strategies during monthly faculty/staff meetings.

**Responsible Party:**

- AVID Site Team
- AVID District Coordinator
- Building Administration

**Action Step 10:**

**Create a targeted Professional Development Plan that supports the initiatives outlined in the Restructuring Plan. The Principal will develop a plan that indicates how SIP/Institute, late start days, faculty/staff meetings will be used to support restructuring efforts.**

**Party Responsible:**

- Principal
- Centennial School Improvement Team

**Action Step 11:**

**Improve implementation of Professional Learning Communities through attendance at the Professional Learning Communities Conference sponsored by Solution Tree. Secure district funding of teacher team attendance at the Summer PLC Institute. The goal is to have every teacher attend the Summer PLC Institute over the course of two years.**

**Party Responsible:**

- Director of Staff Development
- Centennial Administration
- Centennial Faculty/Staff

**Action Step 12:**

**Continue implementation of the college readiness benchmarking system in grades 9, 10 and 11. Results will be used to identify students in need of interventions to meet college readiness standards. Administer two benchmark assessments per year, per grade, to measure college readiness skills.**

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Fall</u>	<u>Spring</u>
8 <sup>th</sup>		Explore
9 <sup>th</sup>	Explore	Plan
10 <sup>th</sup>	Plan	Retired ACT
11 <sup>th</sup>	ACT	Released ACT

**Action Step 13:**

**Redefine the roles of the math and literacy coaches to support curriculum and instruction initiatives outlined in the restructuring plan. Coaches should be instructional coaches with knowledge of Understanding by Design, formative assessment, and effective progress monitoring of student learning.**

**Rationale:**

Research (Speck, 1996) indicates opportunities must be built into professional development that allows the learner to practice the learning and receive structured, helpful feedback. Instead of relying on unfocused, random acts of coaching, instructional coaches have consistent, specific coaching conversations with teachers using a specified protocol and a data collection process that supports these conversations.

Providing specific feedback ‘interrupts defensive reasoning’, allow people to ‘recognize and eliminate error’, and ‘helps people see the discrepancy between what they think they are doing and what they are actually doing’ (WestEd, 2008).

**Timeline for Implementation:**

- Year 1: Implement instructional coaching in core academic areas.
- Year 2-5: Evaluate progress and adjust accordingly.

**Responsible parties:**

- Principal
- Curriculum Coordinators in ELA, math, social science, science
- Director of Secondary Education
- District Leadership

**Action Step 14:**

**Continue to implement Prep for Success course.**

The support class will be designed to improve math and English college readiness skills and it will take the place of an elective course for targeted students.

**Timeline for Implementation:**

- Year 1: Continue implementation during first and second semester.
- Years 2-5: Evaluate effectiveness of support class.

**Responsible parties:**

Director of Secondary Education, Principal, Counseling Department

**Action Step 15:**

**Design a Summer Bridge class for students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade and expand the bridge program in subsequent years to support transitions to each grade level (e.g.: 9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>).**

The Summer Bridge program should focus on essential literacy skills to support students’ work in rigorous courses. This course should be offered for elective credit.

**Timeline for Implementation:**

- Year 1: Continue with supports currently in place (AP Scholars Program, English 105 Summer Bridge).
- Year 2: Expand summer bridge offerings to English 205, 305/306.
- Year 3-5: Continue to evaluate effectiveness of the summer bridge program and expand offerings as needed.

**Responsible parties:**

Curriculum and Instruction Department, Building Administration, Counseling Department

**Action Step 16:**

**Establish an Academic Mastery Lab that will provide students needed academic support during the school day.**

The Academic Lab will be modeled after the program at Stevenson High School and staffed by certified faculty members in place of a supervision assignment.

**Rationale:**

This class will be a mechanism to support academically struggling students during the school day. Targeted students will receive support in a flexible environment with technology available for additional support.

**Timeline for Implementation:**

- Year 1: Pilot academic lab targeting ninth grade students.
- Year 2: Continue targeting ninth grade students and expand to 10<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Years 3-5: Continued evaluation and implementation.

**Responsible parties:**

- Principal,
- Student Services,
- Curriculum and Instruction Department

**Action Step 17:**

Provide training in TESA (Teacher Expectations Student Achievement) for all new and/or non-tenured faculty staff.

Rationale:

TESA is based on expectation theory. The project was inspired by early studies of teachers expectations conducted by Thomas Good and Jere Brophy. Good defines teacher expectations as “inferences that teachers make about the future behavior or academic achievement of their students, based on what they know about these students now.

TESA is designed to intervene by both heightening teachers’ awareness of their perceptions and how those perceptions affect their expectations. Teachers are encouraged to give perceived low achievers more opportunities to perform in class, to receive more feedback, and to establish personal relationships with every student.

Over the more 20 years since TESA began, results have been noticeable consistent. Most evaluations of the program focused on student achievement. During the pilot and field test years, comparison of reading achievement test scores between TESA and control classrooms revealed that the TESA classrooms were consistently two months ahead of their control counterparts. Teachers consistently report that TESA positively affects student self-esteem and builds a collaborative climate in which both students and teachers enjoy learning. Students are stimulated by the warmth of an enhanced learning climate and report more intense feelings of encouragement and inclusion.

Timeline for Implementation:

- Spring 2010: Plan for a TESA session for implementation Fall, 2010.
- 2010-11: Run one TESA session each semester for 20 teachers.
- 2011-12: Continue providing TESA sessions if needed, with the goal of having 80-90 % of faculty/staff trained.

**Action Step 18: Improve implementation of Professional Learning Communities and provide assistance with the implementation of the restructuring plan by creating a position called the School Improvement Coordinator to provide targeted training on all PLC concepts including meeting facilitation, data based decision-making, collaboration, setting of SMART goals and student performance monitoring. The School Improvement Coordinator will also assist with the implementation of the restructuring plan by assisting with the planning, implementation and monitoring of action steps. This position will be for the 2010-11 school year only and provide direct assistance to our high schools.**

**Implementation Timeline:**

**Spring 2010: Develop job description for the School Improvement Coordinator**

**Summer 2010: Hire for position**

**Responsible party:**

Curriculum and Instruction Department (CI), Principal, and District Leadership

**Action Step 19 : Revisit the need to align special education self contained curriculum with state standards/college readiness standard and to define level of need that equals more restrictive placement in self contained so decisions are based on data and student needs.**

***Reasoning***

Currently the achievement data for special education students is significantly lower than general education peers (State Assessments and grade Distribution). A Special Education Literacy Coach position was established this year (2009-10) to support literacy implementation through intervention work and coaching for special education teachers.

**Implementation Timeline**

- Year 1: Implement
- Year 2-5: Implement and evaluate action step

***Responsible Parties: Principal & Special Education Department***

**Action Step 20 : Create targeted Professional Development on inclusionary environment, service delivery, and all staff/administrators in understanding the roles and responsibilities associated with the special education process.**

***Reasoning***

Currently the achievement data for special education students is significantly lower than general education peers (State Assessments and grade Distribution). Centennial High School least restrictive environment (LRE) data illustrates that only 54% of special education students are inside the regular education classroom 80% or more of the day (11/2009). The District is at 66% (11/2009), Illinois is at 49%, and the Nation is at 54% (2007).

**Implementation Timeline**

- Year 1: Implement
- Year 2-5: Implement and evaluate action step

**Responsible Parties:**

Principal, Special Education Department, Building sped admin, General educators, and other service providers

**Tenet 2: Student Services**

## College/Career Emphasis

**Action Step 24: Establish a College and Career awareness initiative and reorganize all student services to ensure that students are exposed to additional college and career emphasis from grades 9 through 12.**

Develop a college transition initiative for seniors that will expose them to skills necessary for success in college via organized activities during the senior year.

**Action Step 25: Designate a counselor as the lead “College Coach” to organize college awareness activities, college visits, and college enrollment workshops. The counselors will also work with local trade unions and employers to provide career awareness opportunities for students in grades 9 through 12.**

**Action Step 26: Establish a Post-Secondary “GO Center” where students can go and access information about colleges, careers and the military on campus via technology.**

The Post-Secondary Center will have open access for all students to receive one-on-one assistance with completing college enrollment paperwork, financial aid forms, and conducting internet searches. Students will also be able to conduct internet career searches and find information about local employment opportunities.

**Action Step 27: Organize one school-sponsored college visit per semester and one school-sponsored college enrollment workshop for families and students per semester.**

The visits will be designed to expose students to the college experience and the enrollment workshops will be designed to educate students and parents about the enrollment process and provide assistance with the college enrollment paperwork.

**Implementation Timeline**

Year 1: Plan awareness initiative, Designate a College/Career Counselor, Plan for College and Career Military Center, and Schedule pilot college visit.

Years 2-5: Implement action step.

**Responsible parties:**

Principal, Counselors, ECP coordinator, Curriculum and Instruction Department (CI), and District Leadership

**Action Step 28: Enhance the current partnerships with local trade unions and facilitate the establishment of other summer career focused academies for targeted students as a way of exposing students to local trades and careers.**

Create several career theme based summer academy through collaborative partnerships. Arrange site visits to local industry for students.

**Reasoning**

The most common response given to the graduate profile question was that students who graduate from Centennial should be prepared to pursue postsecondary education via college, university, and/or technical trade school if they so desire. In order to truly realize this outcome it is imperative that the services provided to students be aligned accordingly. Secondly the residual benefits to creating a college going culture are immeasurable and will have long term implications for current students and those to follow.

The College/Career Awareness initiative will follow the three “E” model of exposure, expectation, and education. Educational outcomes for all students, but especially students from underserved populations, are enhanced when students are exposed to college and careers by taking students on actual site visits. The site visits establish visual representations of what college is like and make the possibility of attending college more tangible for 1<sup>st</sup> generation college students.

Early exposure to careers via site visits and summer academies will also expose students to new possibilities. The awareness initiative also includes aligning staff expectations and student expectations around the idea that college and careers are viable options. Lastly, education concerning the actual process of acquiring a job or enrolling into postsecondary education will be equally emphasized within the college and career awareness initiative.

There is a need for additional personnel to facilitate the development and implementation of this initiative. The comprehensiveness of what is needed in this area warrants the hiring of a person whose sole responsibility is on the college enrollment and career awareness activities for students in grades nine through twelve. The current counselors will be working in conjunction with the college and career advisor to serve their particular grade level; however, the college/career advisor will be coordinating all global campus initiatives. Equally as important is the need for a set-aside area to convert into a welcoming college and career center that has open access to parents and students with a welcoming environment where they can go and get information and support.

**Implementation Timeline**

Year 1: Plan summer academies and continue current implementation.

Years 2-5: Implement action step

**Responsible parties:**

Principal, Counselors, Curriculum and Instruction Department (CI), and District Leadership

Mentoring and Support Systems

**Action Step 29: Implement a freshmen “AVID-like” advisory program during closed lunch.**

The advisory class would be a part of the student schedules and activities during advisory and would focus on college enrollment, career awareness, and academic study skills necessary to be successful on ACT and beyond.

This program could utilize junior and senior leaders who have been a part of AVID or who do not have complete schedules.

**Implementation Timeline**

- Year 1: Implement freshmen advisory activities and train facilitators
- Years 2-4: Continue implementation of action step and modify as needed

**Responsible parties:**

Principal, Counselors, and Curriculum and Instruction Department (CI)

**Action Step 30: Establish a performance coach program where adults select targeted groups of students to check and connect with on a regular basis.**

The performance coach will be responsible for encouraging the targeted student to attend assigned intervention, review the student’s academic performance, and coach the students to success on PSAE by monitoring student performance as it relates to PSAE preparedness.

**Implementation Timeline**

- Year 1: Assign volunteer performance coaches to targeted students
- Years 2-5: Implement action step and monitor student PSAE preparedness progress

**Responsible parties:**

Principal and staff

**Action Step 31: Refine the Honor Support Team process based on lessons learned during the 2010 school year.**

**Action Step 32: Continue to monitor student performance weekly via the C, D, F list and provide timely feedback to teachers.**

**Implementation Timeline**

- Year 1: Refine and implement HST process
- Years 2-5: Implement action step and evaluate student progress as measured by grade rate distribution

**Responsible parties:**

Principal, Counselors, Curriculum and Instruction Department (CI), and Achievement and Pupil Services Department (APS)

**Action Step 33: Work with local Mental Health Board and other local health agencies to pursue grant funding to establish a social services coordinator position housed on campus to act as a social service liaison for students who are in need of additional social service support.**

**Implementation Timeline**

- Year 1: Schedule meeting with Grant writer, Mental Health board, and other local health agencies to pursue funding
- Years 2-5: Develop partnership to provide social services to students on campus

**Responsible parties:**

Achievement and Pupil Services Department (APS), Principal, and Counselors

**Tenet 3: School Organization and Management Structure**

## School Organization

**Action Step 34: Review supervision assignments of teachers and investigate creating opportunity for professional collaboration and/or student intervention and support during the school day.**

**Action Step 35: Continue the implementation of Academic teaming at the freshmen level.**

**Action Step 36: Create a modified schedule so that open lunch can be used as an incentive. Lunch will continue to be closed for freshmen. Investigate the possibility of closing lunch for sophomores in conjunction with a sophomore study hall.**

**Implementation Timeline**

- Year 1: Continue to implement freshmen initiative and plan for implementation of sophomore closed lunch
- Years 2-5: Implement and evaluate action step

**Responsible parties:**

Principal, ECP coordinator and Counselors

**Action Step 37: Implement a data monitoring system to report how many freshmen are not earning enough credits to become a sophomore and use this system as an early identification system for potential dropouts.**

**Implementation Timeline**

- Years 1-5: Implement on track monitoring system

**Responsible parties:**

Principal and Counselors

**Action Step 38: Implement a required Career and Technology Education class for freshmen focusing on Education to Career and Profession concepts, WorkKeys, study skills, etc.**

**Reasoning**

Because the research is clear that the first year of high school is pivotal, but the transition into high school is often characterized as a time when students experience a decline in grades and attendance (Barone, Aguirre-Deandreis, & Trickett, 1991), school systems must support first year high school students to improve their chances of success. In schools in which transition programs are fully operational, researchers saw a dropout rate of 8%, while schools without transition programs averaged 24% (Reents, 2002). More than one semester “F” in core subjects and fewer than five full course credits by the end of freshman year are key indicators that a student is not on track to graduate (Allensworth & Easton, 2005). Low attendance during the first 30 days of the ninth grade year is a stronger indicator that a student will drop out than any other eighth grade predictor, including test scores, other academic achievement, and age (Jerald, 2006). According to statistics provided by the National High School Center Transition Report racial disparities across the nation highlight the ninth grade

bulge and tenth grade dip—these figures are the most pronounced for African American and Latino students. For example, grade nine enrollment is 23–27% higher than grade eight, and attrition between grades nine and ten hovers around 20% for African American students; for their white peers, grade nine enrollment is 6–8% higher than grade eight, while attrition between grades nine and ten is stable around 7% (Wheelock & Miao, 2005).

To address the dropout epidemic, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) have integrated a ninth-grade “on-track” indicator into their accountability system in an effort to help high schools focus on students in need of intervention. The indicator, developed by researchers at the Chicago Consortium on School Research, uses students’ class credits and failures as predictors of their probability of graduating on time. The establishment of a Freshmen Academy is an organizational change that has shown potential to positively impact the high school transition challenge.

The Freshmen Academy would be composed of teacher teams made up of Math, Science, Social studies, and English teachers. The team of teachers would all teach a common group of students. The Academic Team structure will be designed to better support students during the transition from the middle school environment to the high school setting. Team teachers will be working collaboratively to meet the academic and behavioral needs of students assigned to their team. A data system will be implemented to report how many freshmen are not earning enough credits to become a sophomore leading to early identification system for potential dropouts. Because tardiness and deviant behavior are most common at the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level, all core freshman classes will be located in close proximity to other freshman level classes and the freshman students will be following a different bell schedule than other students. Many discipline problems with freshmen and sophomores occur during open lunch period where students are allowed to leave campus for lunch. These discipline problems that occur off campus eventually end up disrupting the learning environment for all students. In order to address this challenge a modified bell schedule will be created for freshmen and sophomores that will include closing lunch.

#### **Implementation Timeline**

- Year 1: Design and Implement
- Years 2-5: Implement and evaluate action step

#### **Responsible parties:**

Principal, CTE Content Area Chair, and Curriculum and Instruction Department (CI)

#### **Action Step 39: Investigate the reorganization of the counseling center and assignment of counselors and assistant principals.**

##### *Reasoning*

The research is clear about the power of creating a collaborative work environment for the adults that serve our students. Equally as important is the need for cohesive relationships to emerge between the students and adults in the building. Organizing the counselors and administrators around the team concept will capitalize on the power of collaboration and will help to facilitate relationships with students as they progress through high school.

#### **Action Step 40: Reorganize the entire special education department to improve the special education services received by students and improve the educational outcomes produced by special education students.**

Establish clear accountability for IEP compliance through defining Content Area Chair position, Special Education Building Administrator through the Assistant Principal position, and the District Special Education Administrator position.

**Reasoning**

Currently the achievement data for special education students is significantly lower than general education peers (State Assessments and grade Distribution). Special Education teachers should have direct contact with the majority of the students on his or her caseload to provide consistent feedback, progress monitoring, and case management. Special Education teachers should have collaboration time with general education teachers for optimal instructional delivery to plan instruction, deliver instruction, and evaluate student progress. Currently IEP writing, implementation, and compliance is at varying degrees of proficiency. A system must be implemented to support teachers and monitor the ISBE guidelines.

**Implementation Timeline**

Year 1: Implement

Year 2-5: Implement and evaluate action step

**Responsible Parties:**

Principal and Special Education Department

Resource Management

**Action Step 41: In order to ensure all campus financial expenditures are related to the achievement of adequately yearly progress and the production of the graduate profile authority for the allocation of all financial resources will be the responsibility of the campus principal.**

**Implementation Timeline**

Year 1: Implement

Years 2-5: Implement and evaluate action step

**Responsible parties:** Achievement and Pupil Services Department (APS), Finance Department, and Principal

**Reasoning**

In order to make systematic, programmatic, and personnel changes the principal will be given more flexibility in the allocation of campus resources. This additional flexibility will allow the principal latitude to assign funding based on need and the relationship of the expenditure to the overall campus goals. Specifically, flexibility is important in the areas of staffing, professional development, and department allocations. As Harvard researcher Richard Elmore (2002) argued: “The evidence is now substantial that there is considerable money available in most district budgets to finance large-scale improvement efforts that use professional development effectively. The money is there. The problem is that it’s already spent on other things and it has to be reallocated to focus on student achievement... Adding money to a system that doesn’t know how to manage its own resources effectively means that the new money will be spent the same way as the old money.”

The principal will be given flexibility to allocate the entire campus allotment based on need and relationship of expenditure to producing goals of meeting adequate yearly progress and the production of the graduate profile. According to a synthesis of research on school turnarounds, “a reallocation-first strategy also exerts discipline on system and school leaders to focus initially on the highest value- added changes.” (51)

**Tenet 4: Community and Parent Engagement**

*(Community and Parent Engagement embedded in Action steps 4-8, 20, 23, 25-29, 34, and 46.)*

**Action Step 42: Establish more community computer satellite centers in churches or other high density areas where internet access is not readily available.**

*Reasoning*

The digital divide in the homes of underserved populations has a direct impact on student access to educational material outside of the classroom. Many of the intervention programs and supporting materials used in the school are accessible via the internet; however, underserved minority students are less likely to have access to a computer with internet access in the home. We currently have partnerships with several local churches and have established computer satellite centers for students within the surrounding community. The district provides computers, teachers and staff in a partnership with the church to provide supplemental afterschool services to students. We currently have two centers and would like to add two additional centers in other parts of the community to ensure that targeted students have access outside the school day.

**Implementation Timeline**

Year 1: Continue to provide support to established computer satellite centers

Year 2-5: Implement and evaluate action step

**Responsible parties:** Instructional Technology Department (IT) and Achievement and Pupil Services Department (APS)

**Action Step 43: Partner with U of I to establish a parent University with parenting classes available monthly to parents delivered on Centennials campus: Topics --College Enrollment, Job Interviewing, College Financial Aid, English for non English speakers, Parenting classes, ACT at home, etc**

**Action Step 44 SPED:**

**Create more opportunities to share information with parents of students with special needs in the areas of transition planning, school services, and post-secondary services.**

**Reasoning**

ISBE and the Federal government require transition planning for students over the age of 14 ½ years of age to outline the post-secondary goals of students with special needs monitored by Indicator 13 on District Performance Indicators. Last year approximately 86% of students in Unit #4 had a complete transition plan. The target in established by ISBE for Indicator 13 is 100%. Parent involvement is key to the development of this planning for students. The services that are provided to students in high school must correspond directly with post-secondary goals established by the IEP team.

**Implementation Timeline**

Year 1: Implement

Year 2-5: Implement and evaluate action step

**Responsible Parties:**

Principal and Special Education Department

**Monitoring and Evaluation of Plan Implementation**

**Action Step 55: The high school restructuring taskforce will set SMART goals that are aligned with the Centennial Graduate Profile. These goals will serve as the targets toward which all efforts will be aimed.**

The high school restructuring taskforce will identify measures and methods of data collection that will be used to evaluate the fidelity of implementation of the restructuring plan. The overall goal of the entire plan is for the school to make Adequate Yearly Progress as defined by NCLB. However, parallel targets will be used to measure progress toward key components of the graduate profile as outlined below:

Profile Target 1. Continue learning through postsecondary education at a college, university, or technical trade school

SMART Goals (*Goals below in addition to those set specifically for making AYP*)

1. Ensure that the most common grade earned in all classes is A, B, or C as measured by semester grades utilizing current grade rate distribution analysis.
2. Ensure that 95% of the students graduate from high school in four years as measured by the graduation rate component of NCLB.
3. Ensure that 90% of the students who graduate are accepted into a college, university, technical trade school, or the military.
4. Ensure that the number of all students and specifically the number of students in underserved populations enrolled in dual credit, honors, or AP course is increased by 10% over the current 2009 enrollment in these courses.
5. Increase the number of students graduating with a career and technical certificate or with college hours toward completion of a certificate.
6. Increase the number of freshmen students on track to graduate as measured by number of credits earned by the end of freshman school year.

**Action Step 56: Create a Centennial Restructuring Oversight Committee with the responsibility of monitoring the implementation of the restructuring plan and evaluating the outcomes produced by the embedded action steps.**

The restructuring oversight committee will be modeled after the Stratton Oversight Committee. There will be internal members from the district level, the school principal, representatives from CFT, parents, community members, representatives from Parkland and University of Illinois, representatives from the ministerial alliance and representatives from the local trade union. This committee will meet once a quarter to review implementation of action steps and educational outcomes produced during the quarter. This committee will serve in a monitoring and advisory role.

**Action Step 57: Create Centennial Restructuring Action Teams.**

Centennial Restructuring Action Teams will be composed of cross disciplinary staff responsible for implementation of action steps within each specific tenet of the restructuring plan. The action teams will be responsible for preparing TASK MAPs and Analysis for each Action Step by the end of March 2009. The Action teams will be responsible for working with the assigned responsible party to implement, monitor, and adjust each action step.

Rough Draft #1