

**Gause Elementary School
LAP and School Improvement Plan**

2011-2012

Planning Team

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1. Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Authentic, quality assessments are a valid component for teaching, learning, assessing, and re-teaching. Student achievement data is gained from multiple sources to identify progress toward standards and to determine appropriate future curriculum, use of resources and instruction. Grade level curriculum based assessments, as well as diagnostic and summative assessments are given in the areas of reading, beginning in kindergarten and continuing through grade 5, to measure student growth, and progress throughout the school year. Each grade level team will assess students' abilities in the area of reading, math and writing at the beginning of each trimester.

The Gause LAP plan is a supplemental plan for reading, which is delivered by a full-time teacher and two part-time instructional assistants. Served by their classroom teachers, all students receive 30-90 minutes of reading instruction each school day. The LAP staff serves K-5 students who have been identified as needing extra support during the day from 30 to 45 minute blocks of instructional time depending upon the grouping of students and their needs.

easyCBM Test

At the beginning of each trimester, all students in grades K-5 are given the easyCBM assessment in the areas of reading and math. This benchmark assessment is then compared to previous scores and used to monitor student progress as the year progresses. The easyCBM can be used as a benchmark assessment when administered at the beginning of each trimester, and as a way to monitor student progress before and after diagnostic and strategic interventions have taken place.

Table 1: Core Program Description

Core Materials/Strategies	Content area (R or M)	Grade(s)	How much time? M,T,Th,F/W	How many days/week?
Read Well	R	K	60/15 min/day	3
Core Standards with multiple resources	M	K	60/15 min/day	3
Read Well/Rigby with multiple resources	R	1	90/30 min/day	5
Growing with Mathematics Core Standards with multiple resources	M	1	60/30 min/day	5
Café/Daily 5 Scott Foresman with multiple resources	R	2	90/40 min/day	5
Core Standards with multiple resources	M	2	90/30 min/day	5

Scott Foresman with multiple resources	R	3	60 min/day	5
Growing with Mathematics with multiple resources	M	3	90/30 min/day	5
Scott Foresman with multiple resources	R	4-5	60/30 min/day	5
Core Standards with multiple resources	M	4-5	90/60 min/day	5

What are the strengths of these programs?

Gause Elementary School students in grades 3 thru 5 continually score above the state average on all required State tests (Measurements of Student Progress or MSP) in reading and math (see table below). When taken collectively, 80.5% of the school's students in grades 3 through 5 met the state standard on their respective grade level MSP test. In math, 72.2% of our students in grades 3 through 5 met the State standard.

GAUSE ELEMENTARY 2011 MSP SCORES

<u>GRADE</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>GAUSE</u>	<u>DISTRICT AVG.</u>	<u>STATE AVG.</u>
3	Reading	75.8%	75.7%	73.1%
3	Math	65.9%	65.4%	61.5%
4	Reading	84.5%	75.9%	67.3%
4	Math	78.3%	67.8%	59.3%
4	Writing	81.9%	67.3%	61.4%
5	Reading	79.8%	70.9%	67.6%
5	Math	72.1%	56.7%	61.2%
5	Science	72.1%	60.7%	55.6%

What are the concerns related to these programs?

However, when looking at the school's MSP data, less than half of our special education students in grades 3 through 5 met the State standard in both reading and math.

Table 2: Supplemental Programs

Reading	Mathematics
Read Naturally	Not supported by LAP during 2011-2012
System 44	
Read Well K, 1, and Plus Horizons	
Harcourt Intervention 1st grade	
Open Court Phonics	
Review	
Word Warm Ups 1 & 2	
Phonics for Reading	

Table 3: Supplemental Programs Description (LAP)

Intervention	Grade(s)	Frequency (Time and #days/wk)	Total # of Students	Ratio Adults:Students
Read Well K Small Group Work	K	30 min/2	17	About 1:4
Read Well 1 Small Group Work	1	30 min/3 60 min/2	17	About 1:4
Read Well 1 Extra Practice	1	25 min/2	14	About 1:4
Read Naturally and Phonics	2	40 min/4 30 min/1	14	About 1:3
Read Naturally and Math/Science Vocabulary	3	120 to 200 min/wk	6	About 1:5
System 44 and Math/Science Vocabulary	3	120 to 200 min/wk	4	About 1:5
Read Naturally and Math/Science Vocabulary	4	120 to 200 min/wk	13	About 1:5
System 44 and Math/Science Vocabulary	4	120 to 200 min/wk	8	About 1:4

Read Naturally and Math/Science Vocabulary	5	30 to 200 min/wk	16	About 1:5
System 44 and Math/Science Vocabulary	5	160 min/wk	2	About 1:2

What are the strengths of these programs?

3rd Grade: Ten students receiving LAP support completed the MSP in April 2011. In reading, 70% of them met the State standard on the MSP and in math 60% of them met the State standard.

4th Grade: Twenty students receiving LAP support completed the MSP in April 2011. In reading 70% of them met the State standard on the MSP, in math 65% met standard, and in writing 50% met standard.

What are the concerns related to these programs?

5th Grade: Eighteen students receiving LAP support completed the MSP in April 2011. In reading 44% of them met the State standard on the MSP, in math 33% met standard.

All Grade Levels: Even though the students' fluency scores have improved over time, few students are reaching grade level benchmark in fluency.

Table 4: Nine Characteristics of Highly Effective Schools Survey Data

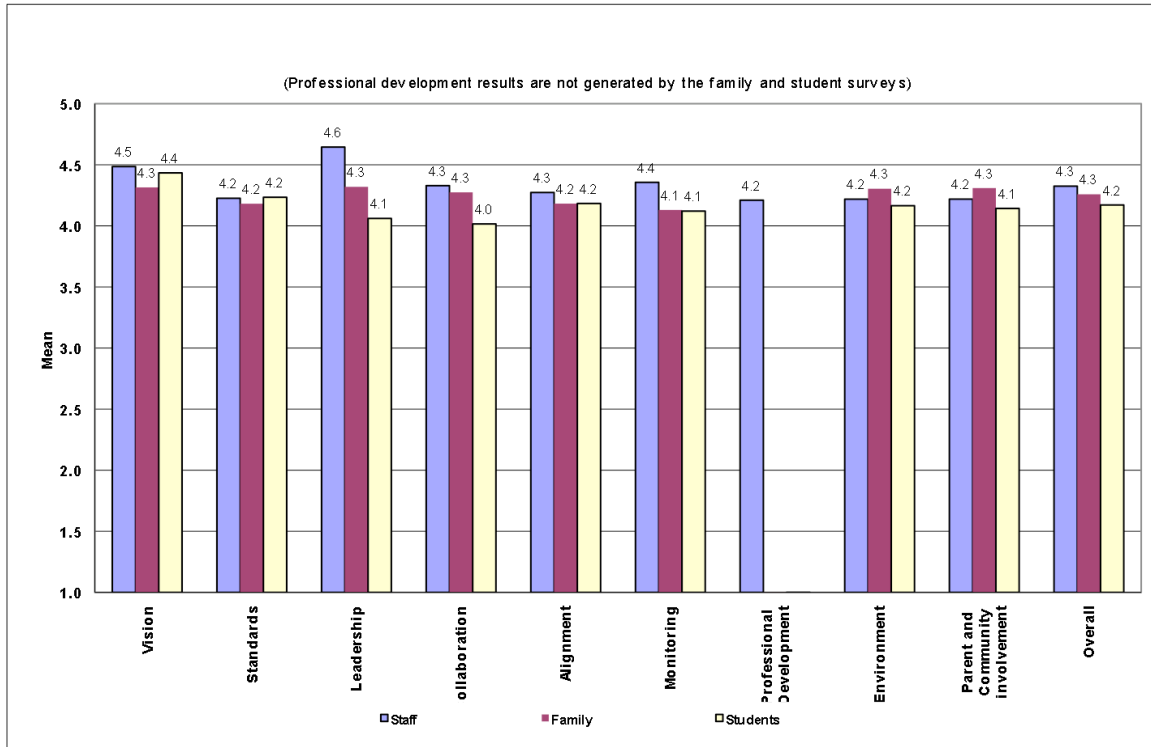
Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools (OSPI research, 2001)

Research has shown that there is no silver bullet – no single thing that schools can do to ensure high student performance. Rather, high performing schools tend to show evidence of the following nine characteristics:

- 1. Clear and Shared Focus:** Everybody knows where they are going and why.
- 2. High Standards and Expectations:** Teachers and staff believe that all students can learn and that they can teach all students.
- 3. Effective School Leadership:** Effective leadership is required to implement change processes within the school.
- 4. High Levels of Collaboration and Communication:** There is constant collaboration and communication between and amongst teachers of all grades.
- 5. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Aligned with Standards:** Curriculum is aligned with the state's GLEs (Grade Level Expectations) and PEs (Performance Expectations). Research-based materials and teaching and learning strategies are implemented.
- 6. Frequent Monitoring of Teaching and Learning:** Teaching and Learning are continually adjusted based on frequent monitoring of student progress and needs.
- 7. Focused Professional Development:** Professional development for all educators is aligned with the schools and district's common focus, objectives, and high expectations.
- 8. Supportive Learning Environment:** The school has a safe, civil, healthy and intellectually stimulating learning environment.
- 9. High Levels of Community and Parent Involvement:** There is a sense that all educational stakeholders have a responsibility to educate students, not just the teachers and staff in schools.

Nine Characteristic Survey Data: Staff, Parent, Student

The characteristics of Effective Schools survey was developed by OSPI. Teachers, parents and students completed a survey in the spring of 2011 to provide information on how they perceived Gause Elementary based on the Characteristics of Effective Schools. Staff, parents and students rated the different characteristics on a five-point scale: “agree completely” (5), “agree mostly” (4), “agree moderately” (3), “agree slightly” (2), and “don’t agree at all” (1). The summary of the surveys is below.



All Nine Characteristics – Mean, Results by Group

Gause Elementary School

(Professional Development results are not generated by the family and student surveys)

- The ratings of all three groups were very similar in each characteristic, with staff rating Leadership highest of all characteristics.
- Vision (Clear and Shared Focus) received the highest composite rating.
- Professional Development was only included on the staff survey.
- There was a high correlation of ratings between staff, family, and students on 8 of the 9 characteristics.

2. School-wide Reform Strategies

Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) School Improvement Strategies

The school reform work of the Gause staff is driven by the OSPI model of School Improvement Planning Process Stages of continuous improvement, which are:

Assess Readiness to Benefit: Engage school stakeholders in a continuous improvement process focused on improving student achievement.

Collect, Sort and Select Data: Collect, sort, and select data for whole staff to review.

Build and Analyze the School Portfolio: Facilitate whole staff involvement in building and analyzing the school portfolio.

Set and Prioritize Goals: Facilitate whole staff involvement in setting and prioritizing student-centered achievement goals.

Research and Select Effective Practices: Facilitate the study of identified goals and selection of effective practices related to the goals.

Craft Action Plan: Facilitate the drafting of an action plan that focuses on student achievement.

Monitor Implementation of the Plan: Facilitate the monitoring of the action plan implementation.

Evaluate Impact on Student Achievement: Facilitate the evaluation of the action plan based on student achievement.

Decision Making: Gause Elementary School's Mental Model

Effective schools and organizations use mental models to motivate an employee's reflection and inquiry skills to action. This process balances inquiry and advocacy toward making decisions based on the best interest of the school. This mental model establishes a priority on inquiry to promote a diversity of views rather than conformity and to underscore using the process before action. The result is that this process allows for everyone, not just individuals or small elite groups, to choose to be involved.

The following mental model is used by the Gause staff in the data driven decision-making process to pursue the "how to" answers and behaviors, that are required to make important decisions about an individual's teaching and a student's learning.

REFLECTION SKILL: This is the skill of slowing down our own thinking processes so that we can become more aware of how we form our own opinions and the ways they influence our actions.

ACTION SKILLS: These are the skills to support team actions and the ability to work cooperatively in order to help others gain the skills, which will support the group actions.

DIALOGUE SKILLS: These skills reflect the ability to invite multiple perspectives and interpretations as a means of challenging old assumptions and framing new understandings and actions.

INQUIRY SKILL: This skill concerns how we operate in face-to-face interactions with others especially in dealing with complex and conflicting issues. This is the skill of gathering and using information and data.

2011-2012 Building Focus On Improvement

During the 2011-2012 school year, the Gause staff and administration will work to implement a comprehensive assessment system (easyCBM) and use of data to drive instructional decision-making. This building focus will result in each teacher's proficient use of the Washougal School District's (WSD) new assessment program; easyCBM. District office staff as well as teachers and administrators from other WSD sites will also assist in this professional development.

Analysis of easyCBM, MSP, and other authentic assessment data will be used to provide grade level teachers with the information they need to diagnostically design instruction, provide timely monitoring of student learning/progress, as well as a way to monitor and assess the effectiveness of their instruction. Grade level and department Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings will provide the time and organization for this work.

An important area of continued work from 2010-2011 will be to provide a greater understanding and use of professional conversations as venues for professional growth for grade level and vertical teams. These types of conversations will be driven by the analysis and use of data designed to improve instructional practices and decision-making. Such conversations will occur between teacher-teacher, team-team, between principal-teacher, and between principal-staff.

Other strategies for the Gause staff to investigate and discuss throughout the school year may include – focus on Core instruction, focus on standards, use of evidenced-based practices (Marzano's High Yield Strategies; ALT work, etc.

Action Plans: (See Appendix C) Included in these plans are specific instructional strategies/practices, interventions, resources required, evaluation methods and professional development activities each grade level will use to enable students to meet the specific goals identified in reading and math.

3. How We Ensure Instruction by Highly Qualified Teachers/Staff

The district's human resources department reviews all employee files to ensure that teachers meet 'highly qualified' status within their current positions. In addition, they screen all applicants for new positions to ensure that only those teacher applicants who meet 'highly qualified' requirements are forwarded to building principals as potential candidates for new positions. This is similar to the process utilized when hiring para-educators - only those individuals meeting 'high qualified' requirements for a para-educator positions are forwarded to building principals for consideration of employment within all Title 1 schools.

- **Highly Qualified Teachers:** To be deemed highly qualified, teachers must have:
 - a bachelor's degree,
 - full state certification or licensure, and
 - prove that they know each subject they teach.

- Highly Qualified Para-educators
 - Have a high school diploma or a GED and complete 48 hours at an institution of higher learning **or**
 - Obtain an Associate's Degree or higher **or**
 - Pass a State approved assessment that assessed the ability to assist in instructing reading, writing and math

4. Professional Development Activities

Individual Staff Professional Goal Action Plans

Personal action plans are not only a part of developing a school-wide covenant of a shared purpose, but each staff member's own personal action plan directs his/her growth for continuous improvement. Personal action plans are designed down from the district's strategic plan through the school's SIP to each employee's personal action plan. This process will direct site and district staff development resources (funds and time) to meet site and individual needs. This allows employees to develop their own personal vision to match the site and district vision.

Staff Development

The district will work with the BLT and individual teachers to establish a district-wide staff development process and a peer-coaching plan. Title, LAP, state, district and federal funds will sometimes provide teachers access to other professional learning opportunities for staff at other buildings.

Other Focused Professional Development May Include:

- Weekly staff meetings are used for professional development purposes (i.e. in-depth discussions using professional literature and/or professional periodicals as resources). Special presentations by designated staff members or outside consultants such as ESD (Educational Service District) Science Support Staff, and other relevant district teachers and administrators.
- Building-wide implementation of *Time to Teach*, a discipline program that identifies, teaches, and reinforces appropriate student behavior in classrooms and all common areas.
- The school social worker attends the countywide SMART Team's Quarterly Update meetings in preparation to support students and staff in the event of a tragedy or crisis within the school building and/or district.
- WSD sponsored teacher workshops (i.e. Differentiated Instruction and Technology) are offered to teachers throughout the school year.
- Current Gause teacher serves as the ESD Science Liaison Trainer, K-5 and meets frequently with grade level teams as well as conducts staff meeting workshops on science standards and instruction.
- Online employee safety trainings; *What Every Employee Must Be Told*.

5. Strategies We Use to Increase Parental Involvement

- Active Booster group
- Student and Family Events (i.e., Sport-A-Thon fundraiser, Family Book Share Night, Family Bingo Night, Family Movie Night, Family Fitness Night, Booster meetings, Literacy Day)
- Newly updated school website
- Teacher/Classroom websites
- On-Line Family Access
- Frequent email communication with parents
- Monthly Parent Newsletter on the web site (green initiative)
- Parent Nine Characteristics Survey
- Teacher communication with parents
- Parent volunteers at a variety of school sponsored events
- Regular parent volunteers as needed by teachers in classrooms
- Fall and Spring Book Fairs
- Staff Appreciation Week
- August Back to School Open House
- Grade Level Fall Parent Curriculum Nights

6. How We Attract High-Quality, Highly-Qualified Teacher

Gause Elementary is unique in that the principal and the staff believe strongly in site-based leadership through an ongoing process of the development and maintenance of the school's mission, vision and purpose. This process is constantly revisited and all staff members are encouraged to hold all stakeholders accountable for the school's improvement plan's (SIP) validity and credibility.

The school also works closely with district office personnel to ensure that all teachers in the district are aware of the increased opportunities for professional development for teachers assigned to the school

It is the purpose of the Building Leadership Team (BLT) to support and facilitate effective and safe learning (instructional) environments through collegial support, open communication, sharing common concerns, and learning from each other.

The BLT will accomplish this by:

- Collecting and assessing instructional data
- Providing avenues for professional growth and change
- Promoting lifelong learning
- Promoting the philosophy of site based leadership

Site-Based Leadership

Ensuring the commitment or enrollment of staff in the above philosophy and process requires a belief in site-based decision-making. This process is used to improve performance and motivate staff by empowering those closest to the delivery of services – administration, teachers, staff and patrons - with more control and responsibility for successful changes of the school's operations.

The district, through WA State Grade Level Expectations (GLEs), Performance Expectations (PEs) as well as future National Common Core Standards, and assessments, defines the focus on student achievement and establishes an accountability plan for expectations. Teachers have freedom to make decisions through their grade level action plans, professional development training, etc., to accomplish the district's focus and WA State standards. The grade level action plans in reading and math should support the school's improvement plan (SIP, see Appendix C). These plans should be used to enroll staff and patrons to support different instructional methodologies to educate their students toward meeting the district and state wide educational outcomes.

Site-Based Guidelines

Guidelines, not rules, are used to direct improvement strategies. Guidelines better nurture personal interaction between educational colleagues, and are more conducive to creating a climate where colleagues will speak up when they see the school and/or grade level going in a wrong direction.

The BLT's focus will be to maintain a school environment where there is an interaction of commitment, complexity and credibility with respect to working with grade level and vertical teams.

You cannot take people from where they are to where you want them to be faster than they want to go. Developing member ownership in the process of improving student learning will result in member commitment rather than compliance.

Use data to inform. Authentic assessment data will provide teachers with the information they need to improve instruction and learning. Do not repeat the mistakes that have been made before or in the recent past.

7. Plan for Assisting Students Transition Between Grades

Kindergarten Teachers Observe Spring Preschool Classes - Every spring, prior to the school year ending, Gause Kindergarten teachers visit all Washougal community private and public preschools to assess the next year's students' readiness to learn. This data is then used to group students into balanced classrooms and in some cases, plan interventions necessary to a student's successful transition and inclusion into the K-5 setting.

Transfer Portfolios – Throughout each school year, grade level teachers compile individual learning portfolios for each of their students. Included in these portfolios are authentic documents of student learning; key assignments and both class and grade level assessments and/or their results. In June, once the next school year's teacher has been identified, these portfolios are "transferred" to the next teacher for their use as relevant data of each student's learning strengths and weaknesses.

Student Success Team (SST) – At the start of each school year, the SST meets with at risk student's previous year's teacher and their current teacher, along with other staff to ensure each student's successful transfer from one grade to the next. In some cases, parents are invited to these meetings when relevant.

School Social Worker/Counselor Student Exchange – Every June, our school’s worker meets with the middle school counselors to discuss any students whose issues regarding learning and/or behavior are discussed. Also included in this meeting is the information transfer of our 504 student population.

Special Education Teacher Transition Meetings – The same occurs with our special education staff and the special education staff at our district’s middle schools.

Student Transition to Middle School – At the end of each school year all of our 5th grade students and their teachers are visited by the middle school administration and counselor to discuss how they as students can help make their own transition to middle school successful.

Parent Transition to Middle School – The same happens for our parents, as they are invited to an informational meeting with the middle school administration and staff at the end of each school year.

8. How We Include and Train Teachers Regarding Use of Assessment

The district is implementing a universal and progress monitoring assessment system K – 8. Training for this system will be ongoing throughout the 2011 – 12-school year. Components of the assessment system professional development are informed by the following IES Practice Guide, *Using Student Achievement Data to Support Instructional Decision Making* recommendations:

- Make data a part of an ongoing cycle of instructional improvement
- Establish a clear vision for school-wide data use
 - Establish a school-wide data team
 - Define critical teaching and learning concepts
 - Develop a written plan that articulates activities, roles, and responsibilities
- Provide supports that foster a data-driven culture within the school
 - Designate a school-based facilitator who meets with teacher teams to discuss data
 - Dedicate structured time for staff collaboration
 - Provide targeted PD regularly

This system incorporates various assessment data including MSP results, easyCBM benchmark results for all students and easyCBM progress monitoring to ensure that students at-risk for poor educational outcomes are identified for secondary and tertiary interventions and that these students are benefitting from instruction/interventions provided.

9. How do we identify students for supplemental supports? How do we exit these students from program? (See Appendix D: WSD Decision Tree for Math and Reading)

Identification for entry into the LAP Program:

- Student rank ordering list used by LAP staff and regular education teachers
- Student Success Team (SST) process
- Curriculum Based Measurements (CBM)
- Use of rank ordering to identify most at risk students
- easyCBM data to establish instructional need and interventions, then later used for progress monitoring of each student

Exiting From the LAP Program: Students are recommended for exit from the LAP program when one or more of the following occurs:

- The student starts to meet grade level targets during the school year.
- The student meets standard on their grade level MSP (WA State's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) test.
- The student scores in the low risk range on benchmark assessments.

10. How We Coordinate and Integrate Funds

The district utilizes federal (Title IIA, Title III, SPED), state (LAP, TBIP, BEA), and local levy dollars to provide coordinated professional development. Building level plans are analyzed to determine common needs so that funds can be maximized. Program directors also examine building level data to provide targeted professional development and supplemental service supports.