Promoting Resilience and Community in a High-Poverty Urban School

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PROMOTING RESILIENCE & COMMUNITY: A PURPOSE DRIVEN SCHOOL
AGENDA

- A Purpose-driven School: The Gift of Empowerment, Engagement, and Equity (Dr. Kimberly Mack)
- Research Foundations of John P. Parker School (Dr. Martha Hendricks)
- Global Environmental Literacy in Practice (Dr. Mack and JPP Teachers)
- Engaging our Parents and Community (Pamela Knox)
- Testimonial – Community Connectors (Deborah Elkins-Brown)
How do we engage elementary students to promote resiliency, citizenship, and critical thinking skills, while raising student achievement?
A NEW PARADIGM

• Make research-based, systematic shifts.
• Operate daily with focus and intention.
• Address the needs of the Whole Child.
  • Head *(Intellect)*
  • Heart *(Socio-emotional Strength)*
  • Hand *(Citizenship/Service)*
  • Health *(Health and Wellness)*
  • Home *(Family and Community Engagement)*
WHAT ABOUT CHILDREN IN POVERTY?

• Learners from High Poverty Environments
  • Authoritarian Parenting Style
  • Disadvantaged before birth
  • Less verbal exposure
  • Poor sense of agency
  • Low executive function
  • (Birdsong, 2016)
WHAT ABOUT CHILDREN IN POVERTY?

- By comparison of children at age 3, there are differences between children from homes of disadvantaged populations and their counterparts. (Lareau, 2003)

  - Words and IQ
    - Disadvantaged youth – 525 words and IQ 79
    - Other – 1,100 words and IQ 117
WHAT ABOUT CHILDREN IN POVERTY?

• Encouragements and Discouragements
  • Disadvantaged
    • 178/hour
    • 75,000 encouragements
    • 200,000 discouragements
  • Professional
    • 487/hour
    • 500,000 encouragements
    • 80,000 discouragements
A NEW PARADIGM IS NEEDED.

• Developmental Assets
• Growth Mindset & Grit
• Positive School Culture & Strengths
• Academic Engagement – New Program
DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS

• Developmental Assets
• Search Institute identify **40 positive assets** that kids need to be successful.
• Grounded in extensive research in youth development, resiliency, and prevention, it identifies:
  • Relationships and opportunities they need in their families, schools, and communities (**external assets**)
  • Social-emotional strengths, values, and commitments that are nurtured within young people (**internal assets**)


DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS (CONT.)

• **External Assets**
  • Support
  • Empowerment
  • Boundaries
  • Constructive Use of Time

• **Internal Assets**
  • Commitment to Learning
  • Positive Values
  • Social Competence
  • Positive Identify

**Belief:** Resilient children have developmental assets in place.
GROWTH MINDSET & GRIT

• Growth Mindset & Grit
  • Fixed mindset
    • Belief that your abilities such as intelligence or talent are fixed traits that cannot be changed.
  • Growth mindset
    • Belief that most basic abilities can be developed through dedication, diligence, hard work, and grit.

Belief: Our learners can develop their abilities with hard work and grit.
VIA CHARACTER STRENGTHS

• Values in Action organization identified 24 character strengths that are common in successful people
  • Take character strength survey (viacharacter.org)
  • Identify personal strengths
  • Celebrate strengths.

• Promote through lessons and Advisory training.
POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE

• Based on the research of Positive Behavior Intervention Supports focused, we focus on teaching learners how to engage in a positive culture.
  • 3 rules
    • Be respectful.
    • Be responsible.
    • Be safe.
  • School-wide Orientation (first 3 days of school)
    • Teach expectations in all areas of our school.
    • Exhibit posters that show expectations for school areas.
POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE (CONT.)

- Monday Morning Meetings (20 minutes)
  - **Purpose:** Celebrate learning and each other.
  - Agenda includes:
    - Dancing (Cha-cha Slide and The “Nae-Nae”)
    - Presentations about classroom learning.
    - Showcase character strengths with class presentations about the 24 character strength (Values in Action)
    - Lion Leader Awards to one learner per class
    - Reminders about Positive School Culture and Anti-bullying

- Teacher Treasure Box & Roar Store
  - Reward appropriate behavior
  - Remind learners about expectations
ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

Cincinnati Public Schools implemented an equity and access policy, which resulted in the Vision 2020 Focus for Neighborhood Schools.

- Offer specialized programming in neighborhood schools similar to magnet programs.
- Level the playing field between magnet and neighborhood schools.
- Increase interest in neighborhood schools.
WHY JOHN P. PARKER SCHOOL?

- Deficit thinking was pervasive throughout the school community.
- Behaviors were inappropriate.
- Low test scores
- Little community support for the school
  - Community strategized to change the school’s population.
    - Invited a charter school to move into the community to deplete enrollment.
    - Lobbied for the school to become a magnet program to attract affluent families.
GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY (GEL)

• Five (5) Components
  • Global Citizenship
  • Environmental Literacy
  • Digital Citizenship
  • Health and Wellness
  • Service Learning
GEL: A RESEARCH-BASED APPROACH

• Offers hands-on, authentic opportunities for learning all content areas.
• Enhances 21\textsuperscript{st} century skills (collaboration, problem-solving, critical thinking, and communication).
• Develops global citizens and stewards of our world.
• Prepares students for the jobs that have not yet been created.
• Ensures students know that they have a responsibility to make a difference in the world.
GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY (GEL)

- VISION 2020: GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xx8YRjjvJPU
Environmental Literacy

Pre-Kindergarten classes participated in a variety of learning through play activities that were GEL inspired

- Toured the campus
- Explored garden beds
- Observed the construction of our new landscape
Environmental Literacy

Nature helps students increase **vocabulary acquisition** and **make connections** with specific concepts, including inquiry-based observations, measurement and data, as well as patterning.

- Field trip to Greenacres allowed students identify and discover relationships between living things and their environments
  - Habitats
  - Food/Eating habits
  - Shelter
GEL IN PRACTICE: PRE-KINDERGARTEN

- **Global Citizenship/Service Learning:** Students toured and volunteered with an international humanitarian aid and disaster relief organization, where they learned about helping others in need.
- **Digital Literacy:** Classrooms are equipped with eBeams, iPads and/or tablets.
Health and Wellness: A program called Mission2Move gives students several opportunities for movement and meditation each week.

- Students practice proprioception exercises twice a week.
- Exercises:
  - The mummy
  - The washing machine
  - The Michael Jackson
GEL IN PRACTICE: KINDERGARTEN

We build on the awareness of self, others, and the environment. We begin to realize our responsibility and identify ways to make a difference.

• We expose children to variety of topics, identify a problem, determine ways to impact the problem, reflect.

Vermicomposting Project, 2017-2018
IS THERE A PROBLEM? WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

• Children need to own a problem in order to be motivated to take action.

• **Problem**: 12 school garden beds with soil containing clay
IS THERE A PROBLEM?
WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

- Student project includes:
  - Research the properties of soil.
  - Learn about the benefits of increased soil quality.
  - Donate compost soil to school and community gardens.
GEL CONNECTIONS

- **Global Citizenship:** Support understanding of how waste affects our community.
- **Environmental Literacy:** Promote learning about soil and decomposers.
- **Health and Wellness:** Make connections to our school’s fruit and vegetable program.
- **Digital Literacy:** Monitor soil samples and create compost using technology.
- **Service Learning:** Donate composted soil to school and community gardens.
How can we incorporate GEL components without sacrificing the instructional time needed to teach essential, foundational skills in literacy and math?

• Plan integrated, thematic units as a means for studying various components of the GEL curriculum.
START WITH THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

• The **BIG** questions
  • Not questions about factoids
  • Not easily answered easily
• Open-ended but delve deep into a subject, prompting students to develop their own questions about the content.
• Essential questions guide instructional choices.
START WITH THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

- Essential questions guide instructional choices.

Essential questions in Grade 1:
- How are people impacted by natural disasters?
- What makes reindeer interesting?
- How do humans impact the basic needs of penguins?
THEMATIC UNITS ACROSS CURRICULUM

Wild Weather and Service Learning

- **Reading**: Read aloud fiction and nonfiction texts about hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, etc. Build vocabulary.
- **Writing**: Respond to texts using graphic organizers for summarizing, main idea and details, and text features.
- **Math**: Graph local weather patterns. Use internet searches to graph patterns throughout the US.
- **Science**: Perform inquiries like “Tornado in a Jar”, “Lightning Rod”, and “Hurricane Town”.
- **Social Studies**: Map wild weather across the US. Learn about first responders and their rolls in the community.
- **Service Learning**: Visit Matthew 25 Ministries and volunteer with relief efforts.

Protecting Penguins

- **Reading**: Read fiction and nonfiction texts about penguins, including the Tacky books by Helen Lester.
- **Writing**: Write informative pieces about the basic needs of penguins and the human impact on these needs.
- **Math**: Compare heights and weights of penguins.
- **Science**: Perform inquiries about blubber and melting icebergs.
- **Music and Movement**: Recite rhythmic poems using penguin movements.
- **Community Outreach**: Acquire a grant to allow a penguin to visit from the local aquarium.
**GEL IN PRACTICE: EARLY LEARNERS -MULTIPLE DISABILITIES**

- We integrate classroom gardens in our curriculum, using hydroponics.
  - Hydroponic gardens support hands-on learning.
  - Student learn through various phases of the growing process.
    - Planting
    - Maintenance
    - Harvesting
GEL IN PRACTICE: EARLY LEARNERS - MULTIPLE DISABILITIES

• Hydroponics build responsibility and confidence.
• Explain verbally and graphically.
• Display their work (produce).
• Present their learning beyond the classroom.
GEL IN PRACTICE – MULTI-HANDICAPPED LEARNERS

• Hydroponics fill the gaps that may otherwise remain unknown.

• Sustainability
• Healthy living
• Food production
Global Citizenship: Support understanding of how gardens grow using hydroponics vs. traditional methods of gardening.

Environmental Literacy: Promote learning about hydroponics and understanding the different parts of a plant and how they function.

Health and Wellness: Seed to table. Children enjoy eating vegetables they planted.

Digital Literacy: Video lessons on plants and follow up interactive science activities on plant parts, life cycle, and all about plants game.

Service Learning: The school community and parents are able to take fresh vegetables home to eat.
GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY (VIDEO)

• ABC LOCAL NEWS – CHANNEL 9 NEWS REPORT
  • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C7ScmX8fdRs&t=11
CLC PARTNERSHIPS & COLLECTIVE IMPACT

• CLC – Community Learning Center
• Develops co-located community partnerships with outside agencies to support the needs of the whole child
• Promotes community engagement strategies that accelerate student achievement
• Executes strategies to increase parental engagement
CLC PARTNERSHIPS & COLLECTIVE IMPACT

SCHOOLS
- Curriculum
- Instruction
- Extracurricular Activities
- Food Services
- School Nurses
- Preschool Programs
- Art Education
- Parent Centers
- Student Services
- Federal and State Funding
- Summer Activities

COMMUNITY
- Civic Groups
- Businesses
- Recreation Facilities
- Health Services
- Recreation Programs
- Childcare Centers
- Professional Sports
- Art & Culture Opportunities
- Summer Camps
- Social Services
- Philanthropy Groups
- Churches
- After-school
- Professional Sports Teams
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- John P. Parker PTO
  - Little engagement to full engagement
    - Increased participation in parent-teacher conferences
    - Created and implemented fundraising action plan
    - Attended community council meetings to support school initiatives
    - Wrote grants
    - Attending and speaking at Board of Education Meetings
    - Sharing testimonials at community fundraising event
    - Developed parental leadership opportunities
      - Donuts for Dads & Muffins for Moms
      - Leadership Scholars
      - Born Learning Academy
      - My Block
  - Working with school committees
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

• Partnerships were developed to support the needs of the whole child and the family.
  • Kindergarten Readiness
  • Academic supports
  • Socio-emotional supports
  • Health and wellness
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

• KINDERGARTEN READINESS
  • Madisonville Pipeline – Think Tank for Community Agencies led by school
  • Early Childhood Network – Home and Care Center Providers, Birth to Age 5
  • Born Learning – Training program to prepare learners for Kindergarten by implementing literacy activities in the home
  • United Way Red Nose Project – Community and parent project to encourage school readiness
  • Community Reading Corners – Business in community host a corner for literacy materials supplied by the school
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

• Partners with direct service to learners are required to engage the family.
  • Pre-meeting for participants in the after-school programs.
  • Parent celebrations
    • Boys and Girls Club of Greater Cincinnati
    • Madisonville Education and Assistance Center (MEAC)
    • Whiz Kids dinners
    • Community Connectors
    • CYC Girls Club

• Partners work collaboratively to combine partner resources to meet learner needs.
  • Afterschool Program
  • Literacy Nights
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

• Partners work collaboratively to combine resources to meet learner needs.
  • Afterschool Program
    • MEAC
    • Boys and Girls Club
    • Whiz Kids
  • Literacy Nights
    • MEAC
    • CET
    • LeSoupe
    • Mission2Move
    • Cincinnati Health Department Clinic
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

• Partnerships to support our new program focus: Global Environmental Literacy
TESTIMONIAL:
COMMUNITY CONNECTORS
MENTORING PROGRAM

- Mentoring Initiative - sponsored by the Ohio Governor’s Office
- Brings together students, their parents, schools, community, faith/values-based organizations, and businesses
- Targets students in Grades 5-12
- Partners Grade 5-6 students with high school juniors and seniors as mentors along with opportunities for interaction with a business partner.
COMMUNITY CONNECTORS
MENTORING PROGRAM GOALS

1. Set goals for the 21st Century
2. Build Character
3. Develop Pathways to Achievement
4. Build a Sense of Resiliency
5. Believe in a Positive Future
COMMUNITY CONNECTORS
MENTORING PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

- Weekly mentoring activities with the support of instructors
- Service Learning Projects
  - Can good collection/donation
  - Garden maintenance
- College Visits
- Shadow Day
QUICK WINS
FROM INITIAL GEL INTEGRATION

- Increased enrollment by 16% in one year
  - 355 students to 425 students
- Garnered more partnership support with resources
- Offered more training opportunities for staff in teaching core curriculum using innovative strategies
QUICK WINS (CONT.)

• Developed more hands-on/project-based curriculum in all grade levels
  • Teaching composting in Pre-K and Kindergarten
  • Using pumpkins from pumpkin patch for mathematics study in Grade 1, 5, and 6
  • Conducting recycling project to teach mathematics skills in Grade 3
  • Promoting the understanding of ecosystems using the garden in Grade 2 & 5

• Increased achievement schoolwide
  • Annual Measured Objectives (0 to 89.9 points)
  • Performance Index (56.2 to 70.7 points)
GRADE 3 DATA FROM STATE ASSESSMENTS

- 3 Reading
- 3 Math
- 3 TGG

2016
2017
Goal 2018
GRADE 4 DATA FROM STATE ASSESSMENTS

Series 1
Series 2
Goal 2018
GRADE 5 DATA FROM STATE ASSESSMENTS

2016
2017
Goal 2018

5 Reading
5 Math
5 Science
REFERENCES


REFERENCES (CONT.)


QUESTIONS