

School Turnaround Office
Systemic Supports for District and School Turnaround Grant (SSDST)

GREATER AMSTERDAM SCHOOL DISTRICT – AUGUST 2015

School/District Background	Provide a brief overview of your district including location, size, demographics served, and needs of the district. Please provide an overview of why you decided to participate in this grant.
	<p>The Greater Amsterdam School District (GASD) is comprised of four elementary schools, a middle school and a high school. The District has been designated as a focus district with 4 of the 6 schools also designated as focus schools and one elementary school designated as a priority school. The Free and Reduced Lunch rate is 80% districtwide.</p> <p>The goal was to articulate a powerful vision that will create the necessary district and school based conditions for success of all students. Accountability and data systems needed to be in place to track progress and inform decisions. Principals and leadership teams needed to have the resources and skills to drive the change in the demanding environments.</p>

Promising Practice to be Highlighted	Thoroughly describe a promising practice currently taking place at your district as a direct result of the strategies through the SSDST Grant with each strand implemented. Also provide an explanation as to why this particular practice was chosen to be implemented at your district.
	<p>One goal of the grant was to develop a collaborative team structure within the buildings to embed data driven instruction including the development of a functional data driven cycle. Quality interim assessments across grade levels and disciplines have been developed and a system for data collection has been established. The focus was on developing a common language, deepening the understanding of the Common Core Standards, using formative assessments and implementing interim assessments. Shared responsibility and accountability drove the plan.</p> <p>The District implanted Professional Learning Communities (PLC) to provide time for educators to study assessments and use the data of common assessments to drive instruction. Master schedules in all six buildings were changed to support PLCs along with adding intervention time to support interventions and enrichment needs based on the assessment data. A comprehensive data structure is now in place where assessments are shared and data is easily accessible to all educators. These systems were not in place prior to receiving the grant funding.</p>
Evidence	How do you know the practice you have described is promising and/or successful? How have you measured its effectiveness and/or success?
	<p>PLCs have been the driving force for teachers to utilize their classroom level data to drive future instruction. For example, in 3rd grade, teachers have utilized their PLC time to implement an ELA 2 intervention time. (ELA = Enrich, Learn, Achieve, 2 (urgently low).</p> <p>Starting in September 2014, the 3rd grade team met weekly to address an ELA skill that would be taught and assessed the following week. The ELA 2 groups were formed by looking at classroom assessment data by specific skill. Each week a new skill was taught or re-teaching occurred if needed. There were four teachers available weekly for this additional intervention time, three classroom teachers and one reading specialist.</p>

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	<p>At one elementary school, there were a total of 15 ELA 2 intervention rotations, to date. Starting in September 2014, there were 11 students in the “L” group which is the low achieving group (intervention). Over the course of 15 intervention times, five of those 11 students consistently moved from the “L” group to the “A” (achieving) group and sometimes “E” (enrichment) group; which is a 46% increase in performance over time.</p> <p>Looking at the “2” group which is the urgent intervention group, there were a total of eight students in September 2014. Over the course of 15 intervention times three of those eight students successfully moved from the “2” group (urgent intervention) to the “L” group (intervention); which is a 38% increase in performance.</p> <p>PLCs have afforded the teachers the opportunity to delve in, understand, and appreciate the positive and lasting effects of DDI in both reading and math. All grade levels have performed math test item analysis to decipher specific skills that students have not mastered leading them to re-teaching small groups to obtain understanding. Teachers have focused on students’ reading levels and comprehension skills and grouped students accordingly. Overall, the time provided for PLCs has had and will continue to have a profound effect on the teaching and learning that is happening in the classroom.</p> <p>Observation Data Data from observations is utilized to inform PD opportunities. Preliminary data is indicating a 10% - 25% decrease in the number of developing ratings in the Domains 2 & 3 of the Danielson Teacher Observation Rubric.</p> <p>STAR Data Preliminary reports for STAR shows repeated student growth within the 2014-15 school year. Longitudinal reports will be available mid-July as we are only in year 2 utilizing STAR assessments.</p>
Looking Ahead	What are your sustainability plans and hopes for the future (both short and long-term) of your promising practice?
	Moving forward, we will continue to support our coaches in their efforts to support the teachers. We will continue to maintain the data systems and build upon them. We will also be moving forward with our work in building quality assessments and studying those that we currently have to be sure they are rigorous and tied to the curriculum, as needed.
Additional documentation	Please provide any additional documentation/attachments/website links created/demonstrate/communicated as a result of the implementation of the SSDST grant initiatives.
	N/A