

Coventry Public Schools

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Coventry Grammar School Goals
2017-2018

1. **Identify, define, and measure the critical skills and attributes that are required for success and align systems to continuously improve student performance and achievement.**

- *Provide the collaborative structure for the district reading specialist and the reading consultant to support and model for classroom teachers in an effort to strengthen instructional conferring strategies essential to enhance student comprehension levels and student goal setting*

The start of the 2016-2017 school year brought six new classroom teachers to Coventry Grammar School. A priority early in the year was to ensure that these teachers had a clear understanding of the scope of the language arts assessment calendar and had in-depth training in the administration of all assessments. This extensive training was developed and delivered by the CGS reading consultant over the first six weeks of school.

Developing and refining conferencing strategies that would be most effective at each grade level fell in line with the district initiative of Growth Mindset and was the overarching theme when teams met with the district literacy specialist and the CGS reading consultant throughout the year.

These ongoing extended grade level discussions supported an in-depth look at the administration of current grade level baseline assessments with a focus on student achievement trends, the effective implementation of mini-lessons and the use of differentiated conferencing strategies. Student data was examined in an effort to determine how to set increasingly more challenging expectations during focused center activities. Teachers were asked to closely align this work and to use resources that included priority and supporting ELA standards within their planning.

Throughout this process, time was dedicated to the refinement of learning targets to support students understanding of the instructional expectations in the goal setting process as they worked in individual and small group conferencing sessions with their teachers.

As part of the district initiative of Growth Mindset all CGS teachers were involved in the book study of *Leaders of their Own Learning*. The combined staff at CGS and GHR utilized staff development opportunities to study, discuss and collaborate on the significant planning necessary to implement student led conferencing at the K-5

level. During the March meeting a template was drafted that would guide the discussion for the 2017-2018 school year for implementation during Spring 2018.

- *Support the analysis of student data and student work through collaborative discussions that incorporate the district data collection protocol in an effort to deepen teachers' effective pedagogical practices*

It was a priority over the course of the year to provide collaborative opportunities for Grade 2 and Grade 3 teachers to work together to ensure full implementation of their joint reading plan. Achievements from the plan included:

- Jointly held vertical team meetings to review the curriculum and instructional strategies from Grade 2 to Grade 3 to ensure smooth articulation of skill development and instruction
- Development of a pacing chart for lessons and center work in Grade 2 to ensure the alignment to all reading standards
- Delivery of five Chromebooks in all six Grade 2 classrooms to support student research and the daily use of keyboarding skills
- Utilization of the *Looking at Student Work Protocol* to review authentic student work samples

In addition, in an effort to support Grade 2 teachers with the variety and depth of SBAC questioning, resource lessons were developed and delivered during classroom discussion and were modeled for the classroom teachers with the intent of strengthening comprehension strategies when using informational text. The use of digital resources, content specific vocabulary as well as questioning techniques were highlighted as instructional techniques.

- *Provide support and guidance to classroom teachers as they transition to the Eureka mathematics program in an effort to strengthen students' number sense, fluency and mathematical applications*

Across all grade levels, monthly professional development facilitated by our district math specialist and the CGS math intervention teacher resulted in the alignment of math instruction utilizing the Eureka resource. While lesson planning began in the spring of 2016, this school year began with the full implementation of the Eureka resource during math instruction at all grade levels.

Each month the teachers participated in valuable training that reviewed the monthly scope and sequence and the pacing and assessment protocols to ensure fidelity to the Eureka method as well as to the alignment with the CCS and SBAC formatted questions. Emphasizing the math standards of emphasis, the pacing of lessons, the forms of assessment, the components of the each lesson, the rigor of math problems and the depth of questioning were on-going topics at every grade level.

Our dedicated K-2 math intervention teacher fully supported the implementation of this resource through the supportive coaching she provided for staff as well as through the full intervention instructional schedule she provided for students. Classroom teachers felt tremendous support with the K-5 Eureka math resources due to the spring introduction, the summer math curriculum opportunities and the monthly grade level training.

As on-going aspect of math and literacy staff training was the review of the district Student Work Protocol while reviewing authentic student work. The instructional strategy of providing timely and specific feedback to students was also reviewed and discussed in a variety of venues which included staff meetings, grade level meetings as well as through the Vertical Team/Instructional Round discussions.

- *Partner with the Hale Early Education NAEYC accreditation team to support the planning and implementation necessary to prepare for the accreditation process*

In partnership with fellow district administrators and members of the preschool staff, I have worked as a member of the accreditation team to support the initial organization necessary to prepare for the upcoming NAEYC reaccreditation in the spring of 2018. As a chair of the assessment committee, I worked with a team of preschool teachers to study and provide evidence of the appropriate measures necessary to monitor the early childhood standards throughout the curriculum.

The collaboration with the Hale Early Education Center staff also included the opportunity for vertical team meetings between the preschool teachers and the kindergarten team on two occasions this year. These planned opportunities provided staff from Hale and CGS to have facilitated conversation that focused on a variety of topics which included:

- Review and of CT Early Learning and Development standards
 - Understanding Challenging Behaviors in Young Children: Social and Emotional Development
 - Review of the Kindergarten Scope and Sequence
 - Review of Educational Software (ESGI) to support student assessment
 - Development of a preschool data sheet to be used in the planning and placement of incoming K students
- *Support the partners of the expanding CGS Autism program in an effort to provide continuous professional development, program enhancements and clear guidelines that will support the positive expansion of the program.*

After intense study in the 2016-2017 school year, it was determined that the enrollment of students identified with autism was increasing significantly at CGS. In an effort to educate and strengthen the knowledge base for all staff, the CGS administrator worked collaboratively with the Superintendent and the Director of Pupil and Staff Services in partnership with the EastConn consulting team throughout the school year.

Training began over the summer with a visit to EastConn's Columbia site with a team of teachers and administrators. Beginning in August, weekly training sessions have been held for the special education teachers and para-educators supporting the ABA program and consult meetings have been held with the administrative team approximately every 6 weeks to review the strategic plan that has been developed to address the current and growing needs of the district.

The CGS administrator also joined school administrators and staff members in the planning for the expansion of the program to GHR - August 2017. These discussions as well as the informational forums that have been held for administrators, staff members, community stakeholders and families that have been led by the Director of Pupil and Staff Services have been instrumental in providing awareness to the community.

- *Work in collaboration with the leadership teams at Hale Early Education Center and GHR to plan and formalize opportunities that build continuity and focus on instructional alignment between all grade levels that include the delivery of special education services, literacy and math instructional models and data review.*

To further support the instructional practices with both the preschool and the Grade 3 teachers at George Hershey Robertson, Instructional Rounds and Vertical Team discussions were organized for two visits to each site between January and May.

In collaboration with Michele Mullaly and Lois Hasty, the kindergarten team and the preschool staff meet to extensively discuss literacy instruction and the alignment of the CT ELDS (preschool standards) and the CCS. These discussions allowed the teams from each site to discuss instruction, curriculum alignment, social and development milestones of the primary students and assessment expectations. (meeting dates: February 28/April 25)

The Grade 2 and Grade 3 meetings took the form of both Vertical Team/Instructional Rounds. Teachers had the opportunity to visit classrooms with a focus on literacy instruction. The follow-up discussion focused on reading instructional methodology, alignment to the the CCS and the SBAC, forms of student conferencing and assessment. These opportunities melded well into the planned reading plan that had been set earlier in the year. (meeting dates: January 18/March 28)

In May Kindergarten Orientation was held at CGS in an effort to share the many facets of the full day kindergarten program. This year 100 families attended the sessions. In addition to this annual event, the CGS administrator and a kindergarten teacher teamed with the Early Childhood Coordinator, Jill Miner to hold two informational sessions for pre-school parents in March. These sessions were well attended and positively supported the registration process.

Smart Goals

- *Students in Grades K-2 will demonstrate at least one year's growth in reading as measured by the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) and the Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) from fall 2016 to spring 2017. (at goal - Fall: 58% to Spring: 78%)*
- *Students in Grades 1 and 2 will increase their mean RIT score on MAP Math: Operations and Algebraic Thinking standard by 3 points or higher as measured by the MAP Mathematics assessment from fall 2016 to spring 2017. (Grade 1 - Fall: 159.9 to Spring 183.7) (Grade 2 - Fall 182.3 to Spring 199.2)*
- *Students K-2 will demonstrate one year's growth in their mathematical problem solving strategies as measured by the newly aligned benchmark exemplar assessments from fall 2016-spring 2017. (awaiting data)*
- *Students K-2 will increase their writing scores by at least 5% as measured by on-demand writing prompts from fall 2016 to spring 2017. (at goal - Fall: 50% to Spring: 84%)*

Whole School Indicator

All classrooms will showcase standards-based learning targets, which will support the development of student goal setting as evidenced by student and staff data points.

With Leaders of the Their Own Learning as the collective mentor text used throughout the district, the CGS staff used this current research as the momentum for the varied learning targets they established in their instructional settings. The implementation of these instructional strategies were discussed at grade level meetings, staff meetings and staff development throughout the year.

To set the stage for our students regarding growth mindset and "grit" the building administrator read: *The Most Magnificent Thing* and *The Smallest Girl in the Smallest Grade* to all 20 classrooms in the month of September.

Classroom learning targets, individual goals set by students and student/teacher conferencing were prevalent in all classrooms and could all be directly attributed to the district initiative that was introduced to staff in August.

2. Maintain and promote a positive and respectful learning community.

The addition of seven new staff members at CGS gave the administration the opportunity to make a concerted effort to review the many facets of the daily schedule and protocols that take place each day.

In an effort to build and support a positive and healthy learning community, teaching staff were honored and acknowledged for their leadership, collaboration

and school spirit through a variety of ways at staff meetings and at grade level meetings.

This initiative then grew to the staff “cheer squad” that developed monthly themes and activities to support the hard work of the entire staff.

We were fortunate to be joined this year by a full time graduate intern from ECSU, a student teacher from ESCU and a student teacher from UCONN. These young professionals supported classroom instruction, participated in school events and joined their grade level team colleagues in daily instruction and in staff development. Their positive relationships within the school community succeeded in providing positive role models for the students.

Growth mindset and “grit” were themes emphasized during the early months of the year as the CGS administrator shared visioning with staff, met with students in their classroom settings and worked with small instructional teams.

The momentum of shared learning related to this theme continued through staff presentations collaboratively presented with Dr. Giller on student goal setting and growth mindset as well as the yearlong study of *Leaders of their Own Learning* where goal setting strategies and planning for student conferencing were shared amongst the K-5 staff.

In an effort to share the new initiatives with families, presentations that highlighted Eureka math, Student Goal Setting and Growth Mindset were presented during monthly PTO meetings. Materials regarding these initiatives were also made available during Open House in September and parent conferences in October and March.

Parent Feedback Goal

- *Increase opportunities for families to actively participate in classroom and school-wide activities that highlight academic achievement and as measured by monthly participation data.*

Since September teachers have opened their doors to parents to celebrate authentic learning opportunities. The content area that was the focus for classroom teachers this year was the writing process. In our third year of Writer’s Workshop, teachers celebrated their young authors through a variety of classroom celebrations. This brought 480 parents into CGS classrooms since October.

The Reading Room offers our K-2 students tiered intervention in the initial instruction that includes the five critical components of reading: Phonological Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, and Comprehension. This support takes place as “push-in” support in every classroom at CGS as well as individual or small group instruction for students in the Reading Room.

The reading consultant and reading teacher organized informal learning sessions for families to build student confidence as well as to support and encourage strategies for home practice. In February the Reading Room also hosted a Title 1 Compact Tea which highlighted classroom reading instruction as well as the support services provided throughout our building. In April, the Reading Consultant collaborated with the Library Media Specialist and the PTO to sponsor "Camp Out and Read ." These sessions brought 86 parents to CGS since their first program at our fall Open House.

The area of health and wellness continues to be emphasized through our daily physical education classes. To support active living, our physical education has recruited volunteers to support and run our Grade 1 and Grade 2 running club during recess. Held daily during the fall and spring, 80 parents have volunteered or participated with our students. Miles and miles have been run around the CGS playground!

Jump Rope for Heart has traditionally been a focus in physical education classes in the month of February. This focus on promoting a healthy lifestyle and a healthy heart supports educational awareness for the students, provides donations to the American Heart Association and brought 70 parent volunteers to CGS! A win all around!

Our annual Field Day will be held on June 9th. This is well planned active day for all students and staff with 21 stations on the school grounds. This day would not be successful without the 40 volunteers that spend the day supporting the teachers at each station.

3. Recruit, retain and develop high quality staff at every level.

- *Support professional learning through book club offerings that will focus on supporting and guiding competencies in reading comprehension and developing learning targets and goal setting*

The CGS administrator joined members of the CGS staff at the International Literacy Association Conference in Boston in July. The opportunity to hear educator and author Jennifer Serravallo speak spurred us on to offer her text, *Reading Strategies* as a book club offering this school year. The *Reading Strategies* text allowed 13 members of the staff to take an active role in the discussion of the many strategies highlighted in the text. Members of this group used this text as their main resource as they developed their professional goals this year.

The group found this professional dialogue to be so successful that the *Writing Strategies* text has already been purchased for next years highlighted book club text.

- *Continue the professional development opportunities for Writers Workshop in partnership with Teachers College in an effort to expand student publishing opportunities*

CGS has had the opportunity to partner with Teacher's College for the last three years. This year, we scheduled five staff development opportunities over the course of the year. With the addition of six new classroom teachers, we were able to

provide personal staff development on the structure and elements of the Writer's Workshop model to these teachers in October. From this point, with the guidance and support of our staff developer, teachers reviewed teaching units, refined teaching rubrics and honed their conferencing skills. The coaching and lab site model that is implemented during these visits allowed teachers the opportunity to work with their students in an authentic setting with immediate feedback and guidance provided.

The conferencing and publishing aspects of Writer's Workshop were also reviewed and supported the Parent Feedback Goal of celebrating and sharing authentic student work. Over the course of the year, 50 celebrations were held in our classrooms.

- *Promote parent and community partnerships in an effort to strengthen the academic social and emotional growth of our students. (Booth and Dimock Library, Parks and Recreation, PTO sponsored cultural arts events, STEPS, Coventry police, fire)*

Communication and collaboration with the CGS community continues to be a priority. The relationship with the PTO was fostered through monthly officer meetings, attendance and presentations at monthly meetings and at attendance at all PTO sponsored events. Through shared dialogue, the administrator was able to share information regarding curriculum, technology, school and district initiatives, school and district goals and the yearly budget. In an effort to reach parents that may not be able to attend regular PTO meetings, the Administrator held informal sessions for families and sent information out through the bi-monthly PTO newsletter.

The philosophy at CGS has been to continue to foster community partnerships as a way to share the resources of the community with families and to proudly display the spirit of Coventry Grammar School. The following partnerships were highlighted this year:

- Coventry Fire Department: Collaborated a walking field trip to the fire department in October for 336 students.
 - Coventry Human Services: Mitten Tree Holiday Collection (December)
 - Principal's Challenge for CCMC Pajama Day (December)
 - District Wellness Committee: Wellness Campaign (January)
 - American Heart Association: Jump Rope for Heart (February)
 - Participation in Roadway Safety Poster Contest (March)
 - PTO: Participation in the Annual Talent Show (March)
 - PTO: Participation in monthly spirit days
 - PTO: Coins for College (May)
 - Arts Festival: Annual event for CGS community highlighting the Arts (May)
- *Customize training for new staff that supports the teacher evaluation process with targeted learning opportunities, individualized conferences and opportunities for professional growth that focus on effective instructional practices, strategies and assessment protocols*

The CGS staff had various opportunities to work on differentiated learning opportunities that are aligned with district goals through scheduled PD days, early

release days, after school offerings, Vertical Team-Instructional Rounds and faculty meetings as well as through Instructional Team meetings, Vertical Related Arts meetings and district-wide Curriculum Cabinet meetings. District math support and Writer's Workshop support was also on-going. In addition, individualized technology workshops were customized for the staff that included all aspects of Google, the use of Google Chromebooks for student research and website development.

Throughout this training it was vital to ensure that all new staff had mentors to support their work in the TEAM process. Seven veteran staff members took on the role of mentors to eight of the first and second year teachers at the preschool and CGS. These dedicated professionals made the additional study and research a positive experience for the novice staff.

Time was also allotted to TEVAL training throughout the year. This included providing Smart Goal training for all certified staff in September and follow-up mid-year and end of the year conferences with all CGS teachers. Three dedicated presentations were given to the staff in September, October and January to support their evaluation process.