

Closing the Achievement Gap:

Improve instruction in the core, or “forget about it”

Don Davis, Superintendent
Waterford Unified School District

LEA Session Webcast
September 24, 2009

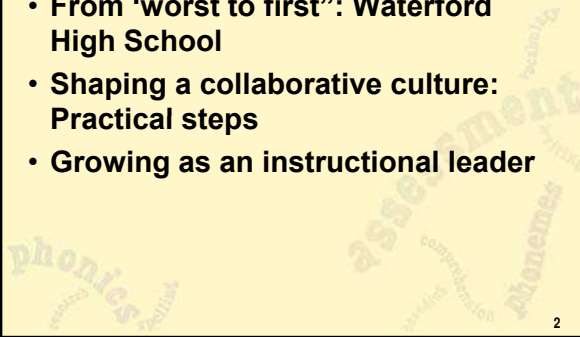
SACRAMENTO COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION



3-Part Presentation



- From ‘worst to first’: Waterford High School
- Shaping a collaborative culture: Practical steps
- Growing as an instructional leader



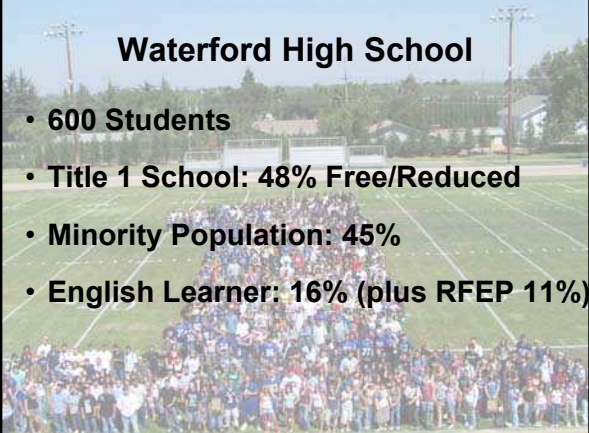
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Waterford High School



Waterford High School

- 600 Students
- Title 1 School: 48% Free/Reduced
- Minority Population: 45%
- English Learner: 16% (plus RFEP 11%)



“Bottom of the Barrel”

JOAN BARNETT LEE/THE BEE

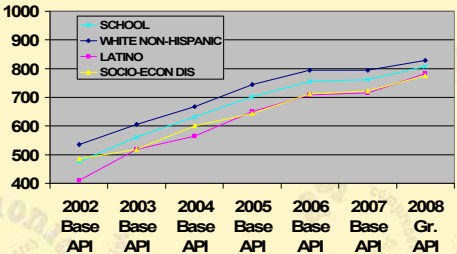
Last Updated: February 22, 2003, 05:47:59 AM PST

Sonoma Elementary School in Modesto got two 10s, a perfect score.
Waterford High School was at the bottom of the barrel, with a pair of 1s.
 And other schools in the region were in between when the state Department of Education released two rankings Thursday that show how California's 8,801 schools stack up on a scale of 1 to 10.

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Waterford High School

Academic Growth with Sub-Populations, 2002-2008



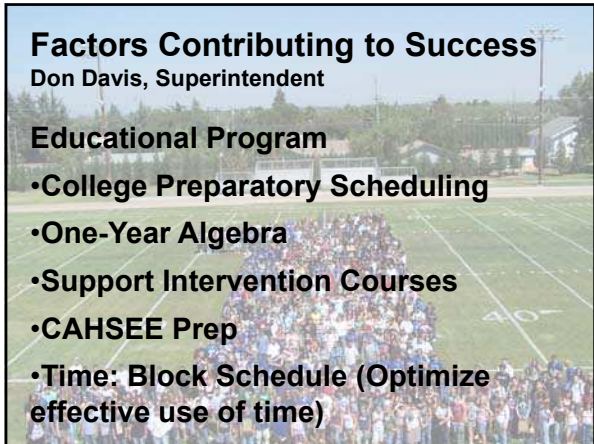
Year	SCHOOL	WHITE NON-HISPANIC	LATINO	SOCIO-ECON DIS
2002 Base API	~500	~550	~450	~480
2003 Base API	~550	~600	~500	~520
2004 Base API	~600	~650	~550	~580
2005 Base API	~650	~700	~600	~630
2006 Base API	~700	~750	~650	~680
2007 Base API	~750	~800	~700	~730
2008 Gr. API	~800	~850	~750	~780

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Factors Contributing to Success
Don Davis, Superintendent

Educational Program

- College Preparatory Scheduling
- One-Year Algebra
- Support Intervention Courses
- CAHSEE Prep
- Time: Block Schedule (Optimize effective use of time)



Factors Contributing to Success
Continued

Culture

- Mission / Vision / Beliefs / Pillars
- Progressive
- Professional Community

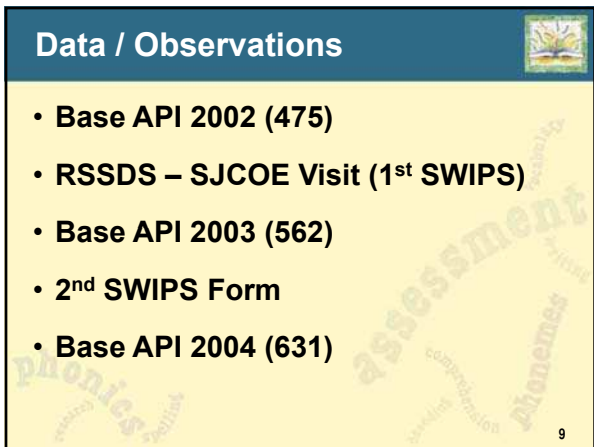
Instruction

- Instructional Norms / Instructional Tours / Instructional Development




Data / Observations

- Base API 2002 (475)
- RSSDS – SJCOE Visit (1st SWIPS)
- Base API 2003 (562)
- 2nd SWIPS Form
- Base API 2004 (631)




Data / Observations
Continued



- WASC Process (Faculty Proclamation “Scores rise as instruction improves”)
- Instructional Norms
- Base API 2005 (702): Site Visitation – Broadening the Sphere of Influence
- Base API 2006 (755): Instructional coaches

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Data / Observations
Continued



- 2007 Growth API (761): “Improve collaboration, improve instruction.”
- 2008 Growth API (808): Formalize Peer-to-peer observation and feedback

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Critical Academic Areas of Need



- Improved Instruction
- Reading Comprehension
- Performance Gaps

During our WASC Self-Study, we cemented our commitment

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Critical Academic Areas of Need

Continued



Improved Instruction

Though there has been significant improvement in student performance on state-mandated exams, all population sub-groups continue to have significant numbers of students achieving in performance bands below the "proficient" level. This is true in all academic areas. Efforts have been made to align curriculum with adopted standards, select essential standards for instructional emphasis and create benchmark exams.

To continue to see improved achievement and realize these gains over time, the consensus of the stakeholders is to improve the effective delivery of teacher-directed instruction; this instruction will utilize assessment data to drive lesson development leading to all students producing grade-level work every day.

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What Works Clearinghouse



- Turning around low-performing schools
- Four recommendations
- http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/Turnaround_pg_04181.pdf

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Recommendation #1




Signal the need for dramatic change with strong leadership

- Communicating a clear purpose
- Creating high expectations and values
- Sharing leadership and authority
- Identifying advocates within the staff
- Building consensus

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Vision




To become wholly focused on

- ✓ student learning,
- ✓ teacher-directed instruction, and
- ✓ professional collaboration,

so that Waterford High School serves as a **demonstration site** for other educational professionals.

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Beliefs




The mission and vision are achieved by commitment to the following:

- ✓ High quality teacher-directed instruction raises student achievement.
- ✓ Academic content standards and assessments offer clear direction for instruction.


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Beliefs
Continued



- ✓ An organizational culture characterized by professionalism promotes excellence.
- ✓ Outstanding Curricular, Co-Curricular and Extra-Curricular programs advance student development.


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Pillars 

Pillar 1: Pursuing Excellence

- Improve instruction, programs and operations so that students achieve countywide and statewide excellence in academics (API, AYP, and college admission), athletics, and the arts.


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Pillars
Continued 

Pillar 2: Personalization

- Ensure that students become well-known by faculty and staff, and commit to professional peer relationships among teachers, administrators, and classified employees.

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Pillars
Continued 

Pillar 3: Purpose Driven

- The mission is advanced through data-driven decisions, teacher-directed instruction, and a commitment to teaching as a personal calling.

Each student graduates with choices!

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Pillars
Continued 

Pillar 4: Standards-Based Curriculum and Instruction

- The California Content Standards are embraced when seeking and developing curriculum and when preparing well-crafted lessons.

Each student has the opportunity to learn each day!


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Pillars
Continued 

Pillar 5: Block Schedule

- Time is utilized as a resource to maximize student productivity.

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A Professional Covenant 

“The key to successful schooling is building a covenant, comprised of purposes that bonds people together around common themes and that provides them with a sense of what is important, a signal of what is of value.”

Sergiovanni (2005)
*Strengthening the heartbeat:
Leading and learning together in schools*, p. 8

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Fundamental Core Value



- The leader never compromises the core values of the organization.
- Waterford High School fundamental belief: “Student achievement rises as instruction improves.”
- “Improve Instruction → Improve Achievement”
- “Improve Collaboration → Improve Instruction”

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Personal Reflection



To what extent has the “effective delivery of instruction” become a foundational aspect of your leadership?

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Recommendation #2



Maintain a consistent focus on improving instruction

- Revere data
- Professional Development focused on instructional goals
 - “Gold Standard” job-embedded PD
- Relentless focus on improving teachers’ skills

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Recommendation #2

Continued



- Continually monitor instructional practice
 - Instructional tours
 - Peer observation
- Monitor student progress

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Observation



Of the 120 sessions presented at the *Closing the Achievement Gap Summit*, how many addressed the effective delivery of instruction in the school's core program?

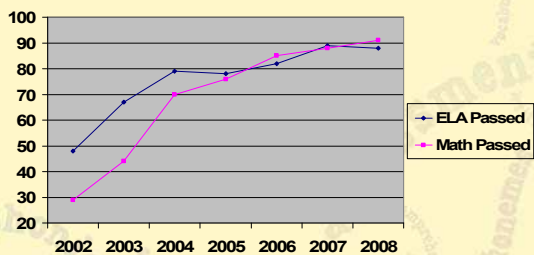
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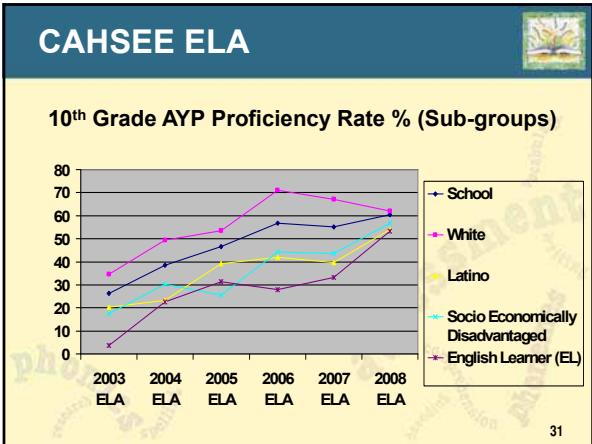
Waterford High School

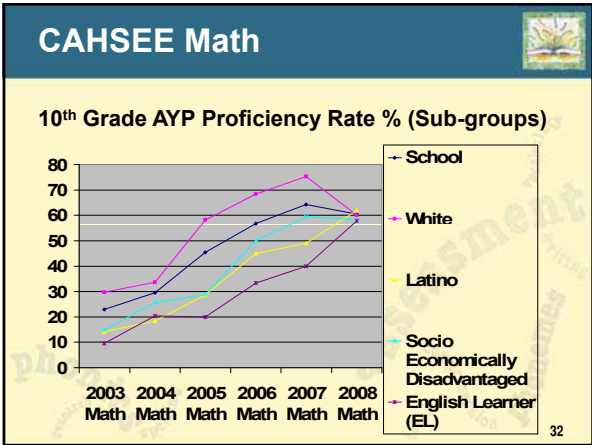


Percentage of 10th Grade Students Passing CAHSEE



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WHS Instructional Norms

Instructional elements that occur in all classrooms across all content areas

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WHS Instructional Norms
Continued



- **Objective**
 - Students know and can articulate the purpose of the lesson; this includes the skill and concept that is being taught.

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WHS Instructional Norms
Continued



- **Teach FIRST then Check for Understanding**
 - The practice of teaching before questioning is the norm. Moreover, teachers routinely enhance student engagement by checking for understanding, often mainly utilizing non-volunteers. Before releasing students to begin independent work, teachers have checked for understanding and are confident that students have grasped the skill and the concept that have been presented.

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WHS Instructional Norms
Continued



- **Student Production**
 - Students are expected to produce grade-level work every day in every class. This can be accomplished through guided practice and independent or group work.
- **Alignment of Independent Practice**
 - Teachers ensure that the independent work that students are expected to complete is directly aligned with the learning objective and with the delivered instruction.

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WHS Instructional Norms
Continued




- **Concept Development**
 - Strategic instruction to promote acquisition of the underlying principle or “main idea” of the learning objective

★★ Coming Soon ★★

- **Meaningful Interaction**
 - Student collaboration on a well-defined task designed for a specific purpose

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Professional Development

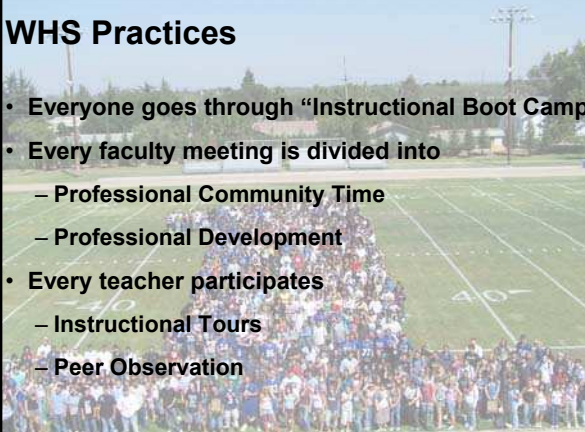


“Schools and School Districts [Principals, Ed. Services Directors, Teachers, and external experts] must provide high-quality staff development relative to effective instructional practices identified by the research.”

Marzano et al. (2001)
Classroom instruction that works: Research-based strategies for increasing student achievement

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WHS Practices



- Everyone goes through “Instructional Boot Camp”
- Every faculty meeting is divided into
 - Professional Community Time
 - Professional Development
- Every teacher participates
 - Instructional Tours
 - Peer Observation

Leadership Is Not a Solo Act



Leadership is inevitably collective...
collective leadership is the best way
to get results.

~ Senge & Kofman

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Peer Coaching



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The Role of the Peer Coach



To ensure the successful implementation
of instructional norms.

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Peer-Coaching Assistance



- Introductory training at the start of the year for teachers new to the district
- Presentations at Staff Development sessions
- Observations with pre-observation/post observation discussion
- Lesson-planning Guidance
- Assistance towards Teacher-Directed Instruction Certification

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Waterford High School Drop-in Observation Instructional Norms



Date	Class	Period																				
<p>Waterford High School Drop-in observation Instructional Norms</p>																						
<p>OBJECTIVE (Electronically from the content standard) indicates how well an activity fits the purpose of the lesson, that includes the skill and concept that is being taught. Can the student use the skill and concept in other situations?</p>																						
<p>TEACH FIRST then</p>																						
<p>CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING The practice of teaching higher questioning in the terms of the lesson. Teachers routinely observe student engagement by checking for understanding (this usually entails asking non-ambiguous, short questions) and responding.</p>																						
<p>STUDENT PRODUCTION Students are expected to produce quality work every day in every class. This can be accomplished through assignments, guided practice and independent or group work, and the student's engagement in the process.</p>																						
<p>ALIGNMENT OF INDEPENDENT PRACTICE Students receive the independent work that students are expected to complete in directly aligned with the learning objectives and with the additional instruction. When the students complete the independent practice.</p>																						
<p>CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT Strategic instruction designed to promote acquisition of the underlying principle or "back story" of the learning objective. Allow the students have the classroom as they show the concept of the lesson.</p>																						
<p>MEANINGFUL INTERACTION Students understand and are able to interact in a meaningful manner. When the class goes consistently to class.</p>																						
<p>INSTRUCTIONAL LIST</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Objective</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Whiteboards</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Guided Practice</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Permanent Record</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> TAPPL</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Non-volunteers</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Higher Order Question</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Student Production</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> CSTJ</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Elaboration, Explain, Echo</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Modeling</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Periodic Review</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Re-teaching</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Meaningful Interaction</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Alignment</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Concept / Importance</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Wait Time</td> </tr> </table> <p>The above were observed in your class today. WELL DONE!</p>			<input type="checkbox"/> Objective	<input type="checkbox"/> Whiteboards	<input type="checkbox"/> Guided Practice	<input type="checkbox"/> Permanent Record	<input type="checkbox"/> TAPPL	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/> Higher Order Question	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Production	<input type="checkbox"/> CSTJ	<input type="checkbox"/> Elaboration, Explain, Echo	<input type="checkbox"/> Modeling	<input type="checkbox"/> Periodic Review	<input type="checkbox"/> Re-teaching	<input type="checkbox"/> Meaningful Interaction	<input type="checkbox"/> Alignment	<input type="checkbox"/> Concept / Importance				<input type="checkbox"/> Wait Time
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			<input type="checkbox"/> Wait Time																			

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Evaluation




- Collective Bargaining Agreement (How does the language define formative observations?)
- Develop Observation Instrument that reflects the norms (not the Ca. Standards for the Teaching Profession).
- Focus pre and post observation conversation on the delivery of instruction as it relates to the norms.
- Summative evaluations: marry norms w/ CSTPs.

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Waterford High School

Lesson Observation




Waterford Unified School District
Waterford High School - Lesson Observation
Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Instruction	Student	Program	Learning Potential	Instructionality	Date Observed by
OBJECTIVE					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Objective is aligned with content standard 2. Objective is clearly measurable in language 3. Objective is measurable in measurable progress 					
Comments: _____					
CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evidence of understanding is observed when VOT 2. Evidence of understanding is observed when VOT 3. Evidence of understanding is observed when VOT 4. Evidence of understanding is observed when VOT 5. Evidence of understanding is observed when VOT 6. Evidence of understanding is observed when VOT 7. Evidence of understanding is observed when VOT 8. Evidence of understanding is observed when VOT 9. Evidence of understanding is observed when VOT 10. Evidence of understanding is observed when VOT 					
Comments: _____					
SKILL & CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Skill is clearly taught or explained 2. Skill is clearly taught or explained 3. Skill is clearly taught or explained 4. Skill is clearly taught or explained 5. Skill is clearly taught or explained 6. Skill is clearly taught or explained 7. Skill is clearly taught or explained 8. Skill is clearly taught or explained 9. Skill is clearly taught or explained 10. Skill is clearly taught or explained 					
Comments: _____					
STUDENT PRODUCTION					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student produces product which shows the process 2. Student produces product which shows the process 3. Student produces product which shows the process 4. Student produces product which shows the process 5. Student produces product which shows the process 6. Student produces product which shows the process 7. Student produces product which shows the process 8. Student produces product which shows the process 9. Student produces product which shows the process 10. Student produces product which shows the process 					
Comments: _____					

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Waterford High School

Lesson Observation, continued




Waterford Unified School District
Waterford High School - Lesson Observation, continued
Teacher: _____ Date: _____

ALIGNMENT OF INDEPENDENT WORK					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The independent work was clearly aligned with the standards/objective/lesson plan to be mastered 2. The independent work was clearly aligned with the standards/objective/lesson plan to be mastered 3. The independent work was clearly aligned with the standards/objective/lesson plan to be mastered 					
Comments: _____					
PLANNING					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The lesson was planned and prepared in advance 2. The lesson was planned and prepared in advance 3. The lesson was planned and prepared in advance 					
Comments: _____					
CURRICULUM					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The lesson was aligned with the curriculum 2. The lesson was aligned with the curriculum 3. The lesson was aligned with the curriculum 					
Comments: _____					
SPECIAL POPULATIONS					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The lesson was aligned with the special populations 2. The lesson was aligned with the special populations 3. The lesson was aligned with the special populations 					
Comments: _____					
CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT and TIMING					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The lesson was aligned with the classroom management and timing 2. The lesson was aligned with the classroom management and timing 3. The lesson was aligned with the classroom management and timing 					
Comments: _____					

Date of pre-conference: _____ Date: _____
 Date of post-conference: _____ Date: _____
 Signature of Observer: _____ Date: _____
 Signature of Visit Member: _____ Date: _____

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Reflection



- **Would the teachers in your school/district report that they have a clear understanding of the instructional expectations?**
- **Why, or why not?**

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Recommendation #3


Provide visible improvements early in the turn-around process

- Student discipline
- Effective use of time
- Improvements to facilities
- Low-hanging fruit

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Low-Hanging Fruit
It's just as sweet!

- Something that is non-controversial
 - Wait time when CFU
 - Instructional minutes "time on task"
 - Students know the purpose of the lesson (objective)



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Recommendation #4

Build a committed staff

- A cohesive staff with high expectations for instruction
- Focus on improving student performance
- Strong professional relationships
- Create new positions

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A Cohesive Staff
with High Expectations for Instruction

- **Professional ladder for instruction**
 - Instructional Norms: Non-negotiable
 - Professional Certification: RSDSS
 - Developing into an Instructional Coach

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Waterford High School




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2006 and 2007



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Truth 


No school is limited to the constraints of its demographics, but no school, or district, can overcome the constraints of its leadership.

Mike Neece
2007 AVID State Conference

Everything rises and falls on leadership

John Maxwell


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The Impact of Leaders 

Principals, for better or worse, set the emotional tone of their school, and one of the most significant responsibilities of the principal is to portray a positive attitude about the ability of the staff to accomplish substantive things.

Marzano, Waters, & McNulty (2005)

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References 


Herman, R., Dawson, P., Dee, T., Green, J., Maynard, R. & Redding, S. (May, 2008). Institute of educational sciences: Turning around chronically low performing schools. *IES Practice guide*. U.S. Department of Education.

Marzano, R. (2001). *Classroom instruction that works: Research-based strategies for increasing student achievement*.

Marzano, R, Waters, T. & McNulty, B. (2005). *School leadership that works: From research to results*. Alexandria, VA: ACSD.


Sergiovanni, T. (2005). *Strengthening the heartbeat: Leading and learning together in schools*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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Activity 


- Identify 2 instructional norms that you would like to see established at your site.
- What steps or processes do you believe it will take to support the development and implementation of the norms?

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Other Ideas for “Norms” 

- Objective for each lesson (deconstructed from content standard)
- Daily Oral Language
- Academic Vocabulary Development
- Concept Development (“Big Idea”)
- Sentence starters
- Daily warm-up problems in each lesson

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Other Ideas for “Norms”
Continued 

- Periodic Review occurs each day
- “Bell-to-Bell” expectations
- Congruence (matched lessons)
- Non-fiction writing
- Higher Order Questions

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Professional Community

- Congenial
- Collegial
- Collaborative

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Objective

“Use strategies that enhance site-based collaboration”

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Objective

```
graph TD; A[Professional Community] --- B[Professional Collaboration]; A --- C[Professional Development];
```

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Collaboration



- It is likely that each of us has an understanding of, or a picture in our mind of, professional collaboration.
- With a partner, create a list of all the opportunities, or possibilities, for collaboration that exist on your campus.
- Take 5 minutes.

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Opportunities



- Data review
- Department, grade-level meetings
- Staff meetings
- Peer observation, pre- and post-
- Principal advisory committee
- One-on-one conversations
- Instructional coaching model
- Instructional tours: walk-through

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Possibilities



- Developing and evaluating guiding principles
 - Mission / Vision / Beliefs & Values / Goals
- Discussing educational issues and investigating best practices
 - Professional conversations

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Possibilities
Continued



- **Establishing and refining instructional expectations**
 - Teachers helping teachers find the “Value Added”
- **Analyzing performance and processing data**
 - Evaluating program and implementing recommendations

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Strategy #1




Provide relevant research or findings conclusions from noted experts

“... operating from a well-articulated and visible set of ideals and beliefs regarding schooling, teaching, and learning.”

Marzano (2005)
21 Responsibilities

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Strategy #1
Continued



“The key to successful schooling is building a covenant, comprised of purposes that bonds people together around common themes and that provides them with a sense of what is important, a signal of what is of value.”

Sergiovani (2005)
Strengthening the heartbeat: Leading and learning together in schools, p. 8

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Strategy # 2



- Provide a brief article or excerpt for teachers to read.
- Ask them to answer guiding questions individually, and then to share their answers in a small group.

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Practice



- Take 6 minutes to read the article.
- Identify 3 important points from the Schmoker article and be prepared to paraphrase them.
- How are you as a teacher or an instructional leader contributing to improving the effective delivery of instruction in your school?
- Take 10 minutes to share your responses with your group.

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Strategy # 3



Have a consistent process.

- One-half of the staff meeting minutes is devoted to “Professional Community.”
- One-half is devoted to “Professional Development.”

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Combating Deflections



- If you don't address the school's professional culture and identity, someone else will.
- Some will use demographic data to deflect responsibility.

73

School Identity



- Each school in California is placed in a "demographic" category (similar schools)
- Is your school's identity tied to its demographic realities?

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Demographics



Of every 100 White Kindergartners:


- 93** Graduate from high school
- 65** Complete at least some college
- 33** Obtain at least a Bachelor's Degree

(25-to 29-Year-Olds)

Source: US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, March Current Population Surveys, 1971-2001, in The Condition of Education 2002.

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Demographics
Continued



Of every 100 African American Kindergartners:


- 87** Graduate from high school
- 50** Complete at least some college
- 18** Obtain at least a Bachelor's Degree

(25-to 29-Year-Olds)

Source: US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, March Current Population Surveys, 1971-2001, in The Condition of Education 2002.

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Demographics
Continued



Of every 100 Latino Kindergartners:


- 63** Graduate from high school
- 32** Complete at least some college
- 11** Obtain at least a Bachelor's Degree

(25-to 29-Year-Olds)

Source: US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, March Current Population Surveys, 1971-2001, in The Condition of Education 2002.

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Aberration or Inspiration



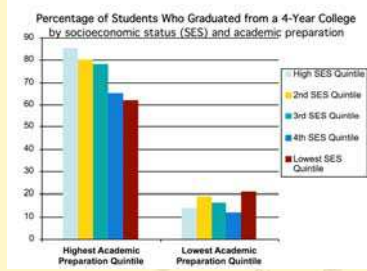
School	Econ/Dis	Minority	API
La Quinta HS	57%	91%	840
McGarvin MS	57%	89%	870
John Murdy Elem.	72%	95%	827

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Academic Preparation

Academically well-prepared students are likely to graduate from college regardless of their social background. Unprepared students of all backgrounds are not likely to do so.

Adelman, 1999



American Educator, 2004

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Leadership: Shaping the Culture

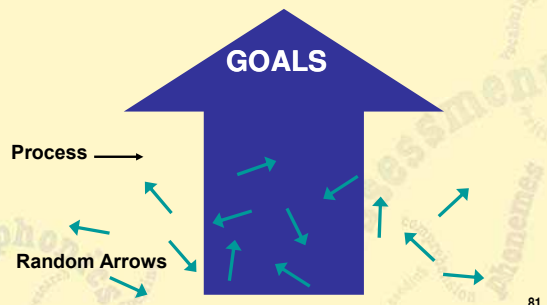
- Can you define, or rate, the professional culture at your school?
- Where does the culture lie on the “extremely toxic to extremely healthy” continuum?

Extremely Toxic ←————→ Extremely Healthy

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Disconnected Improvements

Vision: Every Student Achieving



81

Connected Improvements

Vision: Every Student Achieving

Processes →

Aligned Arrows

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Reflection


- Identify at least one (preferably two) core value(s) that exists or that you would like to have exist at your school.

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Examples of Core Values


- All students can learn
- Students will have opportunity to learn every day
- Professional collaboration promotes instructional excellence
- State content standards and assessments provide clear direction for instruction
- Time is a valuable resource and must be allocated to maximize learning

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Shaping a Collaborative Culture 


- **Start with the “Big Ideas”**
- **What are our beliefs:**
 - About education
 - About kids
 - About our school
 - About each other as professionals

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Shaping a Collaborative Culture 

- **Collaborate on identity**
 - How is our school known? Perceived?
 - What sets our school apart?

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Shaping a Collaborative Culture 

- **Collaborate on MISSION:**
What is our purpose?
- **Collaborate on VISION:**
What do we want to become?

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Process for a successful outcome

- When conducting a professional community activity have the following steps in mind:
- Define the task: “Today we are going to restate our VISION”
- Create sub-groups: Not by subject or grade level
- Set the expectation for production (KIS)

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Principal's Role

- Participate in a sub-group
- Be the keeper of the notes
- Synthesize the findings
(If you don't do anything else, do this!)
- Report back

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Principal's Role

- Creating a culture where people feel valued, and compelled to accomplish something significant

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Applications

This process can be used for:

- Defining a MISSION Statement
- Writing the Single Plan for Student Achievement SMART goals
- Analyzing school wide outcome data
- WASC recommendations and action plans
- Creating/restructuring programs
- Establishing Instructional Norms

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Professional Community


Small group discussions

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Professional Development

5 Indicators of a Professional Community


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Indicators of PLC 

Indicator #1: Data is revered

- Indeed, one of the defining characteristics of schools producing unprecedented gains in student achievement (particularly with students whose backgrounds are not conducive to such gains), is that they rely on data to identify probable successful interventions. (Hopkins & Ainskow, 1993)
- Share: In what ways do you share data?


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Indicators of PLC
Continued 

Indicator #2: Peer Observation

Instructional excellence is achieved when teachers take part in teacher-to-teacher review of instruction. If introduced and administered correctly, it will become a positive factor in the teaching/learning environment of the school. (Mike Schmoker, 1998)

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Indicators of PLC
Continued 


Indicator # 3: Professional Conversation about practice

Teachers share ideas daily regarding vital issues of instruction, curriculum, testing and school operations (Habermann, 2004).

- Reflection: Briefly describe the last professional conversation you had.

96

Indicators of PLC
Continued




- **Indicator # 4: Collaboration**

Teachers become involved in partner and team teaching and other collaborative efforts in program development, writing and research (Habermann, 2004).

97

Indicators of PLC
Continued




- **Indicator #5: Rooting for one another's success**

In a professional community teachers are aware one one another's challenges and share in the celebration of their students success.

98


Strategy #4



Relentless focus

- **Periodic Review: The next few slides offer examples of keeping the focus before teachers.**

99


Reflection 

“High expectations for success will be judged not only by the initial staff beliefs and behaviors, but also by the organization’s response when some students do not learn.”

Larry Lezotte (1991)

We accept high levels of learning for all students as the fundamental purpose of our school and, therefore, are willing to examine all practices in light of their effect on learning.

100


Reflection
Continued 

Share with your group your initial thoughts regarding the two statements you just read.

1)“High expectations” in the first passage seems to be attributed to the professional behavior of faculty and its response to student achievement. How do you view your contribution to the organization’s (Waterford High School faculty) actions when students do not learn?

2)How would you respond to the second statement? Do you agree that as a faculty we are willing to examine the practices that have an effect on student learning? What do you consider to be “practices that effect student learning?”

101

Reflection
Continued 


Collaborative cultures, which by definition have close relationships, are indeed powerful, but unless they are focusing on the right things they may end up being powerfully wrong.

Michael Fullan

We make progress when we move from a language of complaint to a language of commitment, from a language of “they” to a language of “we,” from focusing on what we can’t stand to focusing on what we stand for.

102


Reflection
Continued



- Taking these two statements together, what characteristics should we be guarding against as we advance our professional culture, and what are some attributes that we should be striving for?
- And what, in your opinion, is the current status of the professional culture of _____ School?

103

Reflection
Continued




Implementing Higher Order Thinking activities (i.e. questions, essays, student interactions) can improve student learning. Teachers report, however, that it is difficult to infuse higher order questions “on the fly” and therefore H.O.T. activities need to be planned ahead of time.

- Respond to the above statement.
- How have you implemented higher order thinking activities into lessons?

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Strategy # 5



Principal’s Role

- “Prime the Pump”
- Participate in a sub-group
- Be the keeper of the notes
- Synthesize the findings (If you don’t do anything else, do this!)
- Report back

105

Final Activity



Choose one of the topics below and discuss with your group. We'll pause for 5 minutes.

- Discuss some topics for professional dialogue that could occur at your site.
- Discuss how you would structure staff meetings to include time for professional community.
- Report to the whole group one topic for professional dialogue, how it would be conducted, and the product that would be produced.

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Learning by Doing



Capacity building...is not just workshops and professional development for all. It is the daily habit of working together, and you can't learn this from a workshop or course. You need to learn it by doing it and having mechanisms for getting better at it on purpose.

Michael Fullan

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