Welcome to the Webinar!

Connecting with the Community: Learning from the Success of Twin Cities International Elementary School

We will be starting soon.
Connecting with the Community: Learning from the Success of Twin Cities International Elementary School

May 9, 2012
About the Resource Center

The **U.S. Department of Education** is committed to promoting effective practices, providing technical assistance, and disseminating the resources critical to ensuring the success of charter schools across the country. To that end, the Education Department, under a contract with American Institutes for Research, has developed the **National Charter School Resource Center**.
Presenters

Dr. Randal Eckart
Director, Twin Cities International Elementary School

Kelli Wilson
Assistant Director, Curriculum & Instruction

Jim Smith
Data Coordinator
Agenda:
Welcome
Introductions
Demographics & Background
History
Academic Data
School Programming
   (Instructional Program, Assessment, Interventions, Professional Development)
Parent /Community Involvement
   (Cultural Sensitivities)
   Q & A
Introduction
Presenters:

School Director, Randal W. Eckart Sr. Ed.D., is currently in his sixth year of employment (as Director) for the Twin Cities International Elementary School. Prior to this position, Dr. Eckart was a special education teacher, a junior high principal, superintendent of three different school districts, and adjunct professor for Educational Leadership at St. Cloud State University. Dr. Eckart has a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology from Roosevelt Univ. in Chicago, Bachelor of Science, Master of Science, and Specialist degrees in education from St. Cloud State Univ., and a doctorate in education from the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks. In addition, and outside of the field of education, Dr. Eckart was the Chief Operations Officer for the National Funeral Directors Association, a Chicago police officer, and the manager of several businesses in the state of Minnesota.
Kelli Wilson has been a classroom teacher for 10 years and has served as the Assistant Director of Curriculum and Instruction since 2006. Kelli has worked primarily with elementary age students from kindergarten to 6th Grade in both California and Minneapolis. Kelli received her Bachelor’s Degree from MN State University-Moorhead, holds a Master’s of Arts Degree from Hamline University, and an Education Specialist Degree from St. Thomas University. Kelli is a licensed teacher for grades 1-6, and a licensed administrator. Kelli works very closely with all stakeholders to enhance the educational experience for the students, families and staff members at Twin Cities International Elementary School. Kelli serves as the Testing Coordinator, English Learner Coordinator, and ESEA/NCLB Title Programs Coordinator as well as designing and implementing staff development for the school.
Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Twin Cities International Elementary School to provide a rigorous education in a culturally sensitive environment. Founded by educational leaders in the East African community, this public charter school ultimately seeks to prepare students for successful and productive lives as United States citizens while allowing them to retain their unique cultural heritage.
Vision Statement:

*To continuously provide and teach a model of success for each and every student!*

The Twin Cities International Elementary School envisions teaching practices as both reflective of, and responsive to the needs of all students. Through staff development, teaming and collaborative efforts, continuous improvement initiatives will be generated to ensure clear evidence to support movement toward mastery of content standards for all learners. Educational staff will utilize Individualized Student Learning Plans, the RTI model of Learning Interventions, ongoing formative assessments, and data record keeping and analysis to direct instruction that will best serve the academic needs of every student to ensure ongoing academic growth.
Demographics & Background
Demographics :

• Kindergarten through 4th grade
• Current enrollment of approximately 600 students.
• 98% East African or Middle Eastern backgrounds
• 96% qualify for free/reduced priced meals
• 91% identified as English learners
• 4% of students qualify for special education services
• 95% attendance rate.
TIES students:

• Speak 6 different home languages
  • Somali, Oromo, Arabic, Amharic, Urdu & English
• Were born in 20 different countries
• Come to TIES from 17 cities and 3 different counties across the metro area
• 80% of TIES students are born in the United States (1st Generation immigrants/refugees)
School Environment

- 5 sections of each grade level
- Class sizes no greater than 25 students
- Free, full-day kindergarten
- Bilingual paraprofessional for every 2 classrooms
- Community members employed at school
- Bilingual communication techniques with families
- Full-time reading/instructional coach
- Full-time data coordinator

- Enrichment classes
- Physical education
- Media/Technology
- Arabic language
- English language services
- Special education services
- Co-teaching/collaboration methods
- After school programs
- Summer school programs
- Homework tutoring centers located within the community
- SmartBoard technology in all classrooms
Background:

East Africans, mostly Somali and Oromo-speaking people, are one of the fastest growing populations in Minnesota. The Twin Cities community alone is estimated at over 50,000 and Minneapolis is home to the largest population of Somalis in North America.

As the number of Somali students in Minnesota Public Schools has increased significantly over the last ten years, large urban school districts throughout the Twin Cities region have struggled to address the needs and challenges of this new community.
East African children typically arrive in the United States with little formal schooling and enter the educational system academically behind their English-speaking, American-born peers. Their parent(s) or guardian(s) are often just learning English themselves and work multiple jobs, making it difficult to effectively supervise and help their children with homework.

Despite many of our students being born in the United States, they still arrive at school with a significant disadvantage in their English language skills. Until recently, many students did not attend preschool programs and/or have lived outside of the United States prior to entering school.

In addition to language barriers, the American education system historically struggles to provide students from low-income families with a greater challenge to achieve academic success.
In response, East African education leaders, alarmed that their children were not reaching levels of academic achievement necessary to lead successful adult lives, started a grass-roots initiative to create a public elementary charter school to meet the special needs of children in the East African community.
History
History:

Opening in 2001, TIES started with 150 students in K-6. After two building moves in the following years, TIES grew to over 500 students by 2006. Since that time, we have maintained an enrollment of approximately 600 students. TIES successfully completed its tenth year of operation during the 2010-2011 school year.

The same group of school leaders, together with the community, have come together to open a 5-8 middle school and a 9-12 high school in the past ten years. Total enrollment between the three sister schools averages approximately 1250 students.
Academic Data
State MCA Reading Data

State MCA Math Data

Twin Cities International Elementary School
277 12th Ave N. Mpls. MN 55401
Phone 612.821.6470
Fax 612.821.6477
www.twincitiesinternationalschool.org
**State MCA Reading by Proficiency Level and Enrollment**

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<tr>
<th>Proficiency Level</th>
<th>Reading Continuous group</th>
<th>Reading Non-Continuous group</th>
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**State MCA Math by Proficiency Level and Enrollment**

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<tr>
<th>Proficiency Level</th>
<th>4th Grade Continuous Enrollment</th>
<th>4th Grade Non-Continuous Enrollment</th>
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<td>Count</td>
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<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>% Does Not Meet</td>
<td>13.21</td>
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<td>% Partial</td>
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<td>% Meets</td>
<td>37.44/37.36</td>
<td>37.44/37.36</td>
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<td>% Exceeds</td>
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<td>% Non-Proficient</td>
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<tr>
<td>% Proficient</td>
<td>71.7</td>
<td>61.82</td>
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*We have included the data back to 2006-2007 when the school changed leadership and data became a more central focus of the school.*
State MCA Reading Growth Data

State MCA Math Growth Data
Title: NWEA MAP Reading Trends

Twin Cities International Elementary School
Reading - Percent At or Above Grade Level
NWEA National Placement Scale

- Kindergarten: 61.0%, 57.6%, 54.3%, 48.3%, 53.1%
- 1st Grade: 67.3%, 57.6%, 51.3%, 60.3%
- 2nd Grade: 79.5%, 65.9%, 58.1%
- 3rd Grade: 68.5%, 69.3%
- 4th Grade: 60.0%, 52.4%

Title: NWEA MAP Math Trends

Twin Cities International Elementary School
Math - Percent At or Above Grade Level
NWEA National Placement Scale

- Kindergarten: 24.0%, 40.0%, 46.1%
- 1st Grade: 36.0%, 52.3%, 63.4%
- 2nd Grade: 52.9%, 66.5%
- 3rd Grade: 63.7%, 71.5%
- 4th Grade: 62.0%, 77.3%
NWEA MAP Reading Gap Closure

NWEA MAP Math Gap Closure
School Programming
Timeline of Program Development

2007-2008:
• Large population of staff new to the school
• Addition of a reading teacher and reading paraprofessional to the staff
• Trained staff in the SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) method for best practices in English language instruction
• ENVOY classroom management training (Michael Grinder)

2008-2009:
• Sent many staff to various trainings as “Train the Trainer” model
• Redesign of curriculum to focus on standards based education
• Professional learning communities (PLC) began
• Added literacy components to math program
• Adopted new social studies and science curricula that also had a strong focus on content literacy
• Began focus on differentiated instruction & creating Individual Learning Plans for ALL students
• Used our reading program, Success for All, with fidelity and analyzed student data with teacher input to enhance the program for the future years.
• Developed a New Teacher Seminar
2009-2010:
• Pushed kindergarten students into the 1st grade component of the Success for All program as they demonstrated their readiness for the advanced literacy work.
• Began using the MAP for primary assessment for 1st graders and kindergarteners
• Implemented DIBELS reading fluency assessment across the grades
• Piloted a Response to Intervention program with our 3rd grade students, which was implemented across grades 1-4 in 2010.
• Implemented Individual Learning Plans for each student
• Began collecting and analyzing progress on specific areas of need to assist with differentiation in the classroom
• Trained staff on common formative assessments for implementation beginning in 2010.
• Data coordinator meets weekly with grade-level teams to facilitate conversations regarding student data and planning for instruction
• Attended professional learning community seminar and began implementation of PLCs
2010-2011:
• Identified Power Standards / Essential Learnings
• Wrote state standards in student friendly language called learning targets
• Implemented common formative assessments (CFA) in reading and math
• Restructured Individual Learning Plans for teacher ease
• Created a more frequent assessment program utilizing pre- and post-test data along with data for progress monitoring
• Students began to take ownership of their learning and set goals and tracked progress on those targets
• Created instructional cycles, using knowledge from staff development of Total Instructional Alignment and Effective Schools research.
• Made available to families a variety of web-based literacy programs that students can use at home or from any computer.
• Attended PLC seminar with more staff members
2011-2012:

• Aligned the new Common Core State Standards both horizontally and vertically
• Created an integrated approach to standards-based education
• Restructured our report cards to reflect standards-based learning
• Merged the Individual Learning Plan with the school report card
• Created local databases in addition to our data warehouse solution to assist us with data analysis
• Data coordinator meets weekly with grade-level teams to facilitate conversations regarding student data and planning for instruction
• Provided substantial meeting time for teams to do CFA and standards work
• Staff book study on *Total Instructional Alignment*, by Lisa Carter and *Power Standards* by Larry Ainsworth
• Attended PLC seminar with more staff members
Curriculum:
The school curriculum is the state standards, and not the adopted textbooks. Textbook programs are considered materials to support the instruction of the standards.

Supporting Materials:
Harcourt Math
Foss Science Kits
Scott Forsman Science
Success For All Reading Program
Houghton Mifflin Social Studies
Zaner-Bloser Handwriting

Time For Kids
National Geographic for Kids
Assessment:

TIES uses a multiple measure assessment plan to triangulate data used to inform instructional practices.

• Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment for reading & math in grades 2-4
• Primary MAP assessment for reading & math in grades K & 1.
• Success For All (SFA) reading program assessments
• DIBELS reading fluency assessment
• State MCA-II reading assessment
• State MCA-III math assessment
• Students (gr. 3 & 4) who are in need of special services, as indicated by an Individual Education Plan (IEP), are assessed using the state approved MTAS assessment
• English Learner (EL) students (gr. K-4) are also assessed for English proficiency using the state adopted ACCESS test or the W-APT for identification
• Common formative assessments
Intervention:

Intervention programs are blended into the school day, allowing for 30 minutes of specific learning target intervention for students not meeting the target as well as for students at grade level and enrichment intervention for students working above grade level. Students attend a “Masterminds” class four days a week with rotating classes every two to three weeks.

Interventions are created by teachers using the state standards as a guide. Identification for these sessions come from teachers analyzing common formative assessment data from the instructional cycle to determine which students need additional work on specific targets or enrichment work. These groups are formed using the research-based framework of Response to Intervention (RtI), following a tiered support system.

Teachers are selected to teach specific skills based on data related to current and past student growth and achievement for those standards. Students are re-assessed at the end of the Masterminds session to determine progress on the learning target. The following slides illustrate some of the data collection processes and analysis teachers use to determine Masterminds groups.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Student Name</th>
<th>5_211rpost retell a story using beg mid and end w details</th>
<th>5_212rpost find the moral of the story</th>
<th>5_213rpost past tense verbs when writing or speaking</th>
<th>5_214rpost ask questions by using key details in text</th>
<th>5_221MPOST I can identify plane figures</th>
<th>5_222MPOST I can describe plane figures</th>
<th>5_223MPOST I can sort plane figures</th>
<th>5_224MPOST I can identify solid figures</th>
<th>5_225MPOST I can describe solid figures</th>
<th>5_226MPOST I can sort solid figures</th>
<th>5_227MPOST use add and sub to find information for tables, graphs</th>
<th>5_228MPOST use add and sub to create tables, graphs</th>
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Twin Cities International Elementary School
Cycle 5 Pre and Post Average - 4th Reading

Data Source: Date TIES Database 4/24/12

Graph showing the average scores for different elements of poetry and figurative language across five teachers.
Professional Development
• Workshop week (1 ½ to 2 weeks)
• New Teacher Seminar (1 wk for first Trimester)
• Weekly staff development (Mon & Wed – 1 hr. each)
• Prep times (Tues & Thurs. – two 45 min. meetings)
• Professional development days (3-4 full days per year)
• End of year PD (2 full days)

Our ongoing professional development is focused in four areas – standards, ELL best practices, data collection/goal setting for students and RtI and early intervention services for at-risk students.
TIES has adopted an extensive professional growth plan model based on the research from Charlotte Danielson’s four domains: planning and preparation; classroom environment; instruction; & professional responsibilities.

This model encompasses peer and administrative observations, conversations surrounding guiding questions for the four domains, placement on a rubric for each component, development of growth plans, research and action to implement goals defined in the growth plan, and revisiting the rubric placements in a reasonable timeframe with which to measure/observe growth.

This process has created many professional opportunities for teachers and other educational staff to directly impact the learning program of the school. In addition, the school board is comprised of a majority of teachers, and these teachers participate in summer professional development to assist in the design of the school’s learning program.
Parent & Community Involvement
• Encourage the importance of education
• 95% of TIES parents attend conferences twice a year
• Involved in goal setting and the ILP
• Supportive of concerns
• Attend parent meetings in large numbers
• Serve as Board members
• Participate in homework tutoring centers
Cultural Sensitivities

• Student dress
• Parent communication
• Staff members from the community
• Accommodation for religious beliefs and observances
• Food service
• Adult education program
Summary
Some of the major innovative practices implemented over the past four years and currently set in place for the 2011-2012 school year are as follows:

- Individualized Learning Plans
- Common prep times for teaming, addressing individual student needs, and building teaching interventions
- Data collection and analysis
- Using data to drive instruction
- Goal setting based on a mind-set of continuous improvement
- SIOP and structured reading interventions
- RTI (Response to Intervention)
- Creating common assessments

These innovative practices have been implemented in accordance with the Twin Cities Elementary School’s strategic vision for improving student academic achievement. Our primary focus is on learning. Being in accordance with various professional learning community models, we emphasize a collaborative teaming model in our school, holding high expectations for all students, in which continuous improvement and essential learning outcomes are results-based.
The other half of our innovative practices put in place to ensure our strategic vision comes to fruition is:

**An entire teaching staff that is dedicated to:**

- Commit to learning for all
- Build shared vision and values
- Work in collaborative teams
- Establish essential outcomes
- Create common assessments
- Examine student data to improve instruction
- Commit to continuous improvement
Thank you for your time.

A Special “thank you” to the National Charter School Resource Center and Peggie Garcia for including us in this project.

Q & A
Questions?

Raise your hand or enter your question in the chat box on the left side of your screen.
Thank you for participating.

- Learn more about future webinars in the ELL series hosted by the National Charter School Resource Center: http://registration.airprojects.org/NCSRCCELL/register.aspx

- This webinar will be archived at the following website: http://www.charterschoolcenter.org/webinars/

- Please share your feedback with us through the evaluation.
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