

**Shaler Area School District**

**DISTRICT GOALS  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS**



**2009 – 2010**

## DISTRICT GOALS ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2009 – 2010

The Shaler Area School District Mission Statement is the basis upon which our district goals were developed. The Mission Statement is as follows:

*“The Shaler Area School District will educate and challenge all students to maximize their academic, social, emotional, and physical potential. Students will strive for excellence in information processing skills, problem solving, and effective communication. Our safe and caring learning environment, created in partnership with parents and community, will inspire life-long learners who are contributing citizens, responsive to change and sensitive to the needs of others.”*

**A needs assessment was conducted in the spring of 2004 which included discussions with teachers, parents, students, administrators, and board members. From those discussions, ten district goals were identified and a comprehensive district curriculum writing plan was established. All building level goals, professional education planning, and district academic initiatives are in alignment with these goals. The ten goals were condensed into five goals when the District’s Strategic Plan was formed in early 2008. The professional staff at Shaler has worked extremely hard at completing initiatives that reflect the attainment of these five district goals. We are very proud of the many accomplishments of our staff in meeting and in many cases, exceeding our goals. The next several pages give you a brief breakdown of the many goal accomplishments during the 2009-10 school year. The principals and teachers are to be commended for their work and dedication in helping to move the district in a common direction with an academic focus and goal-driven philosophy.**

The following team members provided input for this document:

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Mr. Marty Martynuska.....	Principal, Marzolf Primary School
Mr. Rick Pelkofer.....	Principal, Reserve Primary School
Mrs. Leah McCord.....	Principal, Rogers Primary School

# SHALER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

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## DISTRICT GOALS

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### PRIORITY: FOCUS ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

1. Establish a safe and disciplined learning environment that challenges students at all levels, involves parents in their child's education, and encourages the development of a strong work ethic.
2. Promote collaboration and foster a professional learning community with the primary focus on student achievement through long-term, intensive staff development and high quality instruction.
3. Align the written, taught, and tested curriculum through the development of challenging standards with a focus on reading, writing, speaking, and mathematics, emphasizing mastery of the basics and development of higher level thinking and problem solving skills.
4. Provide a support system that allows all students who fall behind to get extra help, then address those students at more frequent intervals to determine the effectiveness of remediation strategies.
5. Support and enhance the comprehensive arts curriculum (visual, dance, theater, music, and physical education) emphasize components of the district wellness program, and incorporate the functions necessary to develop technologically proficient students.

**GOAL #1: Establish a safe and disciplined learning environment that challenges students at all levels, involves parents in their child's education, and encourages the development of a strong work ethic.**

**PRIMARY SCHOOLS:**

- Enhanced security measures implemented in building operations with the front door entrance with buzzer system.
- Safety Committee continues to monitor and update school policy and procedures.
- Continuous training of staff members for CPI.
- Involve parents in school activities as volunteers in the classroom, school functions and as guests for program/assemblies by the students.
- Clear lines of communication between school and home. Use of school and teacher web pages to increase communication.
- Parent evenings offered for Title 1, Kindergarten orientation and Parent Night, Poetry Café (3<sup>rd</sup> grade), and PSSA Family Night.
- Differentiated Instruction during TITAN time and student work centers for each content area to emphasize the success of all students.
- Teacher presentations at each PTO meeting to highlight best practices in classrooms.
- Harcourt's StoryTown provides opportunities for students at all academic levels to succeed with below level, on level, and advanced activities.
- Parents were invited to the Thanksgiving program, Dr. Seuss' birthday celebration, assisting with centers, and be guest readers.
- Monthly homework calendars were created in order to revisit academic concepts presented in the classroom. Parents work with their children in order to complete the activities nightly.
- Guidance counselors provided small group support for students as well as implemented the STARFISH anti-bullying program.
- Continued implementation of school-based mental health services.
- Provide non-violent crisis intervention training for staff.
- Implementation of Burchfield Basics School Rules
- Increased parent communication through the use of school and teacher web pages.

## **SHALER AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:**

- Refined safe routines for events throughout the school day that would help maintain an orderly and safe school environment as well as help students feel secure at school. Before bell and dismissal routines enabled the students to move through the building with ease. A morning announcement system that incorporated music from various artists helped cue the students to the start of the day. The continuation of “bus room” dismissal system was collaboratively revised in order to maximize efficiency. Students very rarely missed a bus home. Developed a traffic pattern with community stakeholders to separate cars and buses in order to ensure a safe and orderly dismissal. Changes were well received by the school community.
- Color coded maps were mailed to families who were encouraged to visit the building before school started during open times and at orientation. This enabled students and their families to get a true feel for the building before the beginning of school. Young students also were able to give directions throughout the building as if using a street map. Additionally, visitation periods were open to parents and families.
- Refined the orientation presentations in order to customize for specific grade levels. A fourth grade “Welcome to Our School Night” was presented. An additional “Welcome Back to Our School Night” was presented for fifth and sixth grade classes. Power point presentations were refined and posted on the school web site for additional reference for families. A student activity book, listing all school sponsored activities was created and distributed during these sessions. Parents of special needs students were invited to attend an informational meeting about programs and services provided at SAES.
- Administration worked and visited with all primary schools in order to exchange pertinent information about incoming students and families. This information was utilized in the planning, preparation and scheduling of fourth grade students. This process ensued successful transitions from the primary schools to SAES. A school day visit was instituted for all third grade students. This day consisted of a tour, information presentation, and meeting with personnel in the building in order to establish a comfort level for our incoming young students.
- SAES administration facilitated transitional meetings for the sixth grade students with SAMS support staff (guidance counselors, social worker, and assistant principal). Information shared included discussions regarding student strengths needs and special considerations.
- SAES students participated in an onsite school visit to SAMS.
- Student handbook was updated and distributed to families. This book clarified the routines and procedures for the school. It was also posted on the school web site.
- A new student agenda was developed for students to use as an organizational tool. Each student received a different agenda quarterly. An emphasis was placed making

the agenda kid and family friendly. Each new agenda had information and activities related to our annual theme of “All Roads Lead to Success”.

- School wide assemblies were held to promote character building. (Red Ribbon Week, Anti-Bullying, Anti-Cyber Bullying, and Cultural Diversity).
- Strong ties were established with the PTO. They supported the school by designing and marketing a new tee shirt with our school slogan, having an information booth at the Homecoming Day festivities, and strongly encouraging a positive start to the new school. They also organized and supported fundraising activities that paid for all forty-two homeroom field trips. The PTO also organized two major school wide parties for the students. The PTO has also created an informational tool through their webpage. This organization is an important part of the school.
- Safety drills were instituted and practiced throughout the year
- Students were challenged to work with their families by participating in the Duquesne Light energy conservation program. The school was recognized by the company for our efforts.
- Students participated in a school wide fund raising activity for the local community center. Faculty supported efforts to help the Caring Team.

#### **SHALER AREA MIDDLE SCHOOL:**

- Establish school wide rules and expectations at the beginning of the year. Use consistent follow-up of rules with rewards, consequences, and re-teaching.
- All teachers are trained in Crisis Prevention Intervention.
- Student Handbook communicated our discipline policy enforced by all staff and principals.
- Practice building safety drills throughout the years (code blue, code yellow, etc., fire and weather).
- Newsletter to parents sent twice a year, updates and resources available on webpage for parents, use assignment sheets and homework signed for 7<sup>th</sup> grade students and at risk students.
- Homework hotline available for student and parent use and Parent Portal for all parents.
- Parent meetings held throughout the year when a concern is presented.
- Encourage and motivate students with innovative teaching strategies.
- All students must keep and use their student agenda for tracking assignments, important reminders, parent communication, and as their hallway passport.

## **SHALER AREA HIGH SCHOOL:**

- Development of a high school mission statement:  
*Every Child, Every Day: With a focus on inclusive practices, we will meet the needs of all students by aligning our curriculum with academic rigor and strategic interventions.*
- The Parent/Faculty Organization is an active part of the school community.
- Progress reports are mailed home.
- Phone calls are required for at risk behaviors and positive progress.
- High School webpage was continually updated with current news and events.
- EdLine Parent Portal.
- Coordination of the SAP process.
- District policy on attendance and discipline is closely followed.
- Liaison relationship established between the magistrate and school officials.
- Continued positive relationship between the high school and local police.
- Security cameras help monitor the interior and exterior building.
- Students work as Office Aides to distribute messages and complete clerical errands.
- Several Denim Days raise money for local charities and foster good will.

**GOAL #2: Promote collaboration and foster a professional learning community with the primary focus on student achievement through long-term, intensive staff development and high quality instruction.**

### **PRIMARY SCHOOLS:**

- Continuation of RtII framework with academic by implementing TITAN time and other interventions for students during the school day.
- Second step of the behavioral RtII framework with the Positive Behavior Support team.
- Provide staff development opportunities to ensure implementation of district goals and initiatives.
- Technology integration and training opportunities with Promethean Boards, Activote expressions, Flip Video Cameras and lap-top computers.

- Teacher collaboration time, teacher work share and teacher-teacher class visits to provide multiple opportunities for growth.
- Data-teaming and planning time with grade level teams and building-wide teams.
- ESAP process/framework to focus on student academic success.
- Use of EdInsight for data analysis and student profile review.
- Research-based methods such as Word Building are used on a daily basis.
- Previous training in using the 4-Square writing model is utilized. Kindergarten students have learned to write a paragraph and stories based on a main idea.
- Reading specialists provided remediation for students having difficulties in any area of reading. Research-based best practices were used to provide intervention in phoenemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.
- Robust vocabulary words are taught through the reading series, *Steck-Vaughn's Elements of Reading*, and the school-wide word of the week vocabulary programs.
- Text Talk is used to build students' listening comprehension, and higher level thinking with open-ended questions.
- Leveled readers address individual student needs. Decodable books and leveled readers are read multiple times to provide students with more automaticity and fluency in their reading. Re-reading also helps the students who are struggling feel success and confidence after multiple exposures to the text are provided.
- Math lessons use hands-on manipulatives to build students' understanding and knowledge of concepts being taught. The use of manipulatives addresses multiple learning styles. The math series correlates to Pennsylvania standards. Enrichment packets are created for students within the classroom who are mastering the concepts at a faster pace.

#### **SHALER AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:**

- A working relationship was established with the University of Pittsburgh through the Educational Leadership Initiative. Administrators were mentored by ELI leaders to work to develop a building wide collaborative leadership model. Faculty attended several all day workshops to develop a working background for this model. These workshops were directed to specific disciplines. The information was well received by the staff.
- During in-service times, department teams developed tiered unit lesson plans, differentiated assessment tools, and common assessments that were used with students.

- Department heads met to discuss and design the implementation, with administrators, the Standard Aligned Systems (SAS). Presentations were developed and completed during in-service days.
- Faculty member attended state level conference regarding the SAS model. This training provided a foundation for the curriculum mapping process that was implemented with SAES staff.
- Staff members participated in numerous trainings at PATTAN and then provided in-service training to the SAES staff.
- Teachers attended a presentation on the Gaskin's ruling to comply with this ruling within their classroom.

**SHALER AREA MIDDLE SCHOOL:**

- Data teaming/grade level meetings.
- Common planning – sharing ideas.
- Professional development opportunities and in-services
- Team meetings/Grade level meetings
- Faculty meetings and district meetings
- Curriculum writing meetings
- Educational Leadership Initiative
- Involvement in data collection through PATI surveys

**SHALER AREA HIGH SCHOOL:**

- Participation with the Western PA Principals Academy
- Department chairs are the liaison between the administration and teachers.
- Master schedule was developed with the goal of having all department chairs with a first period prep, to facility meeting on a regular basis.
- Continuation of a monthly meeting with the Assistant Superintendent and building principals.
- Our building is involved with the Math Science Collaborative;
- Dual Enrollment Grant

- 2010 National Merit Scholarship Winner

**GOAL #3: Align the written, taught, and tested curriculum through the development of challenging standards with a focus on reading, writing, speaking, and mathematics, emphasizing mastery of the basics and development of higher level thinking and problem solving skills.**

**PRIMARY SCHOOLS:**

- Facilitate curriculum mapping project district-wide
- Facilitate and promote use of SAS system
- Promote increased rigor and “HEAT” model for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills
- Increase the use of technology in daily instruction with meaningful purpose
- Continue to utilize differentiated instruction techniques in the classroom, student-centered bulletin boards, data-based instructional decisions, and research-based programs to support learning and achievement through RtII.
- Provide daily lesson plans combining curriculum with appropriate PA standards while clearly defining student expectations
- Lessons based on research-based strategies, such as differentiated instruction
- Inquiry-Based Science Program (To adhere to the standard of writing across all subject areas)
- PSSA practice for reading/math standards
- Curriculum mapping
- PDE SAS training and continued use of resources available

**SHALER AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:**

- Faculty worked as building level departments to map their curriculum. The faculty focused on the scope, sequence, pacing and commonality of delivery of instruction through this process.
- Team planning time was used to develop tiered lessons. Students were given opportunities to demonstrate completion of learning tasks and mastery of information in a variety of ways.
- A wide variety of supplemental materials was introduced to the staff to aid in lesson planning. Special education faculty was trained in the Read 180 and System 44

programs. These researched based remediation programs were implemented during the second half of the school year. Follow up sessions were provided by Scholastic to ensure fidelity of the program.

- Technology was incorporated in a variety of ways. Promethean boards and media carts were purchased with funds generated at the elementary school level.
- The Communication Arts department selected the Story Town reading series to pilot for the 2009-2010 school year. A core group of teachers in each grade participated. Emphasis was placed on maintaining the spiral of skills introduced in the Primary buildings with this same reading series.
- A reading initiative program was established, “Blazing the Titan Trail”. This program fostered and promoted successful independent reading for all students. The Scholastic Reading Inventory test was administered to all students to establish lexile levels for reading independently. The reading counts program was used as a tool to hold students accountable and track their achievements.

#### **SHALER AREA MIDDLE SCHOOL:**

- Response to Instruction and Intervention was implemented for reading.
- Curriculum revisions began for each department
- Staff was trained and exposed to the SAS site
- Alternative education program and classes realigned to better serve at-risk students.
- The administrators attended the state PAESSP conference that was held at Station Square. They attended workshops related to differentiated instruction, special education, school safety and school law.
- Staff worked with Dr. Furman and Dr. Luke to develop a true middle school program to be implemented for the 2010-2011 year that meets the academic, developmental, and social needs of teenagers.
- Staff attended conferences and workshops for special education, diversity, RTII, Standards Aligned Systems, the Math/Science Partnership, FCS, technology education, science, math, social studies, and English related topics.
- Staff implemented technology in their lessons to enhance learning and skill acquisition.
- Department chairs are the liaison between the administration and teachers.
- Master schedule was developed with the goal of having all students teamed and provided with flexible/exploratory options.

## **SHALER AREA HIGH SCHOOL:**

- Improved 11<sup>th</sup> grade PSSA proficiency:
  - Math – 60% to 61%
  - Reading – 66% to 75%
- Continuation of the curriculum mapping process
- Curriculum alignment with the PDE Standards Aligned System
- Standards and anchors are posted in the classes
- Standards are referenced in the daily lesson plans
- Formative Assessment Data Analysis
- Class focus on Higher Order Questioning
- Exxon Mobile Grant for Math and Science

**GOAL #4: Provide a support system that allows all students who fall behind to get extra help, then address those students at more frequent intervals to determine the effectiveness of remediation strategies.**

## **PRIMARY SCHOOLS:**

- Continue to follow the RtII framework and data-teaming process established for academic and behavioral supports.
- Utilize the RAC coach, Title 1 teacher and Intervention Coach as supports for all students who need additional academic supports
- Progress monitor students and maintain up to date and accurate records for students to chart progress and make sound instructional decisions by using DIBELS and EdInsight
- Differentiated instruction and tiered assignments in all content areas within the classroom setting
- Building-Wide Data team meets once a month to discuss intervention and instructional strategies that will support the overall needs of our students K-3 and works closely with the data available from benchmark assessments and progress monitoring data.
- Grade level data team meets three times a year to discuss benchmark assessment data and devises instructional plans to support academic needs of all students in the particular grade level for core subjects.

- Building-wide data team and ESAP team meeting to discuss individual student profiles and plans of action to support their academic and/or behavioral needs; this team also involves parent input.
- The Adapted PE program is in place in all buildings
- Improvement in all students who improve their personal best is recognized during fitness awards.
- Adapted Fitness tests were developed to demonstrate success for all students no matter what ability level they are at.
- There are after school programs offered to help the students improve their fitness, skills, and enjoy life-long activities at their own ability and level.
- The support system provided for the students is very good. There are reading coaches, Title I Teachers, Informal flexible grouping, assessment that pinpoint where student's weaknesses and strengths are and where they need the most help.

#### **SHALER AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:**

- Two person teaching teams were established to maximize instruction time in the core subjects. Math instruction time was increased to a 70 minute block. A "Titan Time" was created on a daily basis in order for students to receive remediation and enrichment.
- Intervention coaches were assigned to a specific grade level in order to maximize the support provided for students in reading. Data was reviewed and analyzed in order to determine students who would receive these services. These coaches utilized the Read About program to improve student fluency and comprehension skills.
- The elementary student assistance program was streamlined. The forms were redesigned in order to expedite the student referral process.
- PSSA test taking strategy club was held after school to help students reduce test taking anxiety. Transportation was provided for these students.
- First in Math was utilized as a math resource by all students at no cost to the school. The students improved their computation skills while playing this on line game. This was available to all students at school and at home.

#### **SHALER AREA MIDDLE SCHOOL:**

- SAP process conducted by the social worker with grade level representatives.
- Speech and Language Services.

- OT/PT services.
- Learning support, emotional support, and life skills classrooms.
- Alternative Education program
- RTII Reading implemented and trainings provided
- Continued with Americorps tutoring program and homework club.
- Study Island was used by the ES and LS teachers.
- Counseling services and out-side agency support provided services for at risk students.
- Teachers completed data plans to target academic strategies for at-risk students.

#### **SHALER AREA HIGH SCHOOL:**

- Math, English and general education tutoring stations throughout the building during all periods.
- The Shaler Area Academy, offered after-school, continues to meet the needs of at risk students.
- The high school Alternative Education Program has been successful in supporting regular education at-risk students
- Read 180 program
- Distinguished Educator from the PA Department of Education helps facilitate the Getting Results framework for high school improvement.

**GOAL #5: Support and enhance the comprehensive arts curriculum (visual, dance, theater, music, and physical education) emphasize components of the district wellness program, and incorporate the functions necessary to develop technologically proficient students.**

#### **PRIMARY SCHOOLS:**

- Visual – art show/ice cream social; student art work displayed in halls for families and students to view; integrate curriculum into arts; collaborate with teachers.
- Theater – student plays within the classrooms, and school productions with assistance from the music department.

- Music – general music classes have opportunities to perform for audiences 2 times a year; music integrated into general curriculum when opportunities arise for collaboration with teachers/grade levels.
- PE – programs directly linked with curriculum (jump rope for heart, collection of canned good, “Souper Bowl”, etc); extra-curricular activities – Fit-Kids Club; Awarded with a \$9000 grant from Highmark Healthy High Five, and integration of physical activities.
- Promoting Healthy Eating choices with the implementation of a pilot program between Jeffery and the Nutrition Co. initiated by our school nurse. This program features Wellness Wednesday, grade level bulletin boards each month to promote eating healthy fruits and vegetables, as well as the creation of the YAC (student advisory committee) and iNutrition classroom lessons.
- Drama Center
- Morning Wake Up Call
- PSO Concert
- Children’s Museum Field Trip
- Harcourt Daily Warm Up Segment
- Dental Health Hygienist Visit
- 911 Van
- Hand Washing Lesson
- The students were allowed time for creativity while completing extensions projects in reading after reading a novel. For example, students acted out plays, created musicals and puppet shows which reinforced the concept being taught.
- The teachers utilized wireless laptop computer carts to broaden the curriculum and learning opportunities grades K-3. Several Marzolf teachers have all day access to these carts as recipients of district technology grants.
- Permanent mural completed by art teacher and Art Club students in library. Each student contributed to mural of a dragon related to Eric Carrel’s book Dragon, Dragon.
- Music was incorporated into daily calendar routine, as well as reading and math lessons. Songs and movements were used to help build and expand understanding of concepts, such as letter/sound relationships, skip counting, days of the week, etc. Dance and music were also incorporated into numerous physical education classes.

## **SHALER AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:**

- A recess schedule was developed.
- A “Shaler Area Elementary School Spotlight” column was established by the GATE students with the Pine Creek Journal. Students prepared a monthly two page color news report highlighting the activities in the school. Through this relationship, the reporters from the Pine Creek Journal came to cover some of the other events and programs in the school.
- We communicated on a weekly basis via a parent newsletter that was sent home and posted on the web page. Daily updates to the webpage ensured the most up to date information for parents.
- The use of Global Connect was instituted.
- Students participated in the musical “Willy Wonka”.
- Every student participated in the winter and spring concert series.
- Approximately 100 students auditioned for the spring talent show.
- Students actively participated in over 40 different after school clubs and activities.
- A grant was obtained from Target to provide an opportunity for all 6th grade students to attend the Pittsburgh Symphony.
- We are promoting the instrumental program by our students attending assemblies presented by the Middle School Jazz Band as well as the High School Jazz Band.
- The theater arts were encouraged by our students seeing presentations of the high school play, “Alice in Wonderland” and also the high school musical, “Bye Bye Birdie”.

## **SHALER AREA MIDDLE SCHOOL:**

- Showcase Night held in May to “showcase” our program to the community
- Black History month and Diversity Day speakers
- Working with food services to offer healthier selections.
- Student Council Food Committee
- PE program recognized as one of the top 5 in the state for their focus on moderate to vigorous activities.

- Music and choral concerts and performances throughout the year both within the district and in the surrounding communities.
- Life skills students take numerous cultural trips throughout the year.
- All students took general music in 7th grade.

**SHALER AREA HIGH SCHOOL:**

- Promotion of a balanced learning environment of Academics, Arts and Athletics.
- Artist in Residence from Carnegie Mellon University
- PA Department of Education HIV/STD/Pregnancy Prevention Grant
- “Fall for the Arts” and “Spring for the Arts” activities promote the arts in the building
- Participation in the 2010 Walt Disney World competition in Orlando, FL
- Ecology Club earned the Sprout Fund and Pittsburgh Foundation Spring Program Grant
- Maximizing Adolescent Potentials (MAPS) Program through the University of Pittsburgh
- 2010 Racial Justice Award
- 2010 Princeton Prize Winner