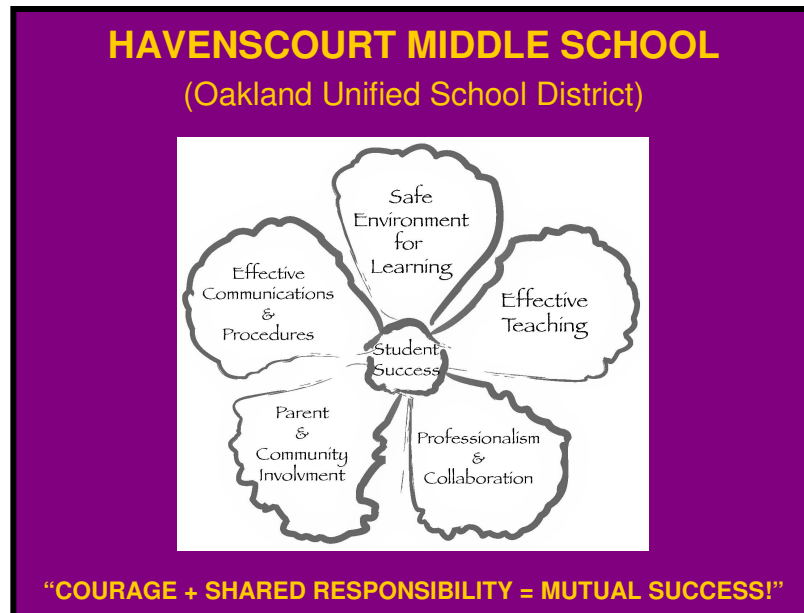


LEARNING LEADERS DIGEST

A 2-Year Retrospective on Leadership Development
at Havenscourt Middle School (Oakland USD)

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Compiled by Performance Fact, Inc.

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Executive Summary

The Learning Leaders Digest

This *Digest* presents highlights of leadership development initiatives at Havenscourt Middle School (Oakland Unified School District) during the 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 school years. Specifically, the *Digest* focuses on administrative leadership and teacher-leadership efforts facilitated by Performance Fact.

The *Digest* is designed to serve as a retrospective – a glimpse into lessons learned and implications for future action, as Havenscourt Middle School evolves into three “small schools” in the 2006-2007 school year.

Furthermore, the *Digest* is meant to serve as an acknowledgement and recognition of the efforts of Havenscourt teachers, staff, and administrators – efforts often carried out under extremely challenging circumstances for adults and students.

What We Set Out To Do at Havenscourt

Year 1: Focus on Clarifying the Vision for Change

Performance Fact began its 2-year partnership with Havenscourt Middle School by facilitating a Leadership Team Retreat in June 2004. By the end of the 3-day Retreat, the Leadership Team developed the framework and plans to engage the full staff in:

- Clarifying the **3-year strategic vision**;
- Identifying the core educational practices; and
- Defining the **action plan** for 2004-2005.

Year 2: Continuity in the Midst of Change

Year 2 at Havenscourt began with a June 2005 Leadership Retreat and an August 2005 Staff Retreat, led by administrators and teachers new to the schools. In June, the Leadership Team **analyzed** the **2004-2005 school performance** and **student learning data** and used their findings to develop continuous improvements to their Action Plan which the staff would implement during the 2005-2006 school year.

Ensuring Consistent Implementation and Follow-through

Performance Fact’s Eye on the Goal™ approach was introduced to guide disciplined implementation and continuous monitoring of the plan. During the 2005-2006 school year, facilitation of the process had shifted from Performance Fact personnel to the administrators and Department chairpersons – a clear indication of their ownership of and growing comfort with the approach.

In addition, an administrative coaching component was added, focused on enhancing the leadership capacity of the principal and the two assistant principals regarding specific leadership practices they identified.

Overall, however, implementation and follow-through were often inconsistent. And some of the tools available to teachers and administrators – including those provided by the district or developed by Performance Fact – were not as “user-friendly” as they ought to be.

So, what difference did all this make?

Student achievement did not improve significantly between 2004-2006. This fact highlights the need for more targeted supports and assistance for Havenscourt, particularly regarding the efficacy of day-to-day instructional programs.

However, the level and quality of teacher collaboration improved significantly, as did the leadership practices in a few categories (e.g., using data to reflect on instruction; setting student achievement benchmarks and instructional targets each marking period; linking professional development to instructional priorities). We believe that these practices are vital for improving student learning in the long run.

What Next?

Building on these early steps is vital. And so is addressing the fundamental challenges that face schools like Havenscourt; for example: leadership continuity & capacity; stability of the teaching staff; real-time, instructional support for all teachers.

Performance Fact looks forward to working with the school and the district to address these challenges.

