

**Milton School District
Focused Monitoring Summary
Report
2013 – 2014**



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Bureau of Special Education
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MILTON SCHOOL DISTRICT 2013-14 FOCUSED MONITORING FINAL REPORT and 2014-15 ACTION PLAN

In May 2013 the Milton School District received notification that it had been chosen as one of the districts to participate in the N.H. Department of Education, Special Education Focused Monitoring Process (FM) for the 2013-14 school year. Focused Monitoring is a process designed to assist districts in examining data and developing a plan to narrow the achievement gap between students with disabilities and all other students.

It was the aim of the Milton School District to closely align Focus Monitoring inquiries and activities with other district wide systemic educational improvement initiatives taking place in SAU 64. Accordingly, the Focused Monitoring Process was incorporated into current district improvement goals and strategies in a yearlong effort.

Inventory of Data Reviewed

In preparation for the Focused Monitoring work in Milton the following data sources were reviewed:

- NECAP Longitudinal Data
- SIG Plans for Nute
- DINI/SINI plans
- Restructuring Plan for the elementary school
- Review of current school based initiatives aligned to the 7 School Turnaround Principles. Based on the discussion the administrative team was able to identify emerging themes that could guide the work of the work of Focused Monitoring and Focus and Priority Schools for the upcoming year (see Appendix 1).

Essential Question

At an initial meeting in the SAU office, two priority causes of the achievement gap were identified by the school district: instructional practices and instructional supports. The focus of the work in Milton was to investigate instructional practices and supports district wide to answer an essential question established by the district: What instructional practices and supports are in place to ensure that all students are provided with engaging and effective instruction? And, how can we expand upon these practices and supports?

Focused Support Team

To answer the essential question the district established a Focused Support Team that integrated Focused Monitoring expectations, state established Priority/Focus School expectations and the state supported SWIFT initiative expectations. The SWIFT schools in the district were engaged in a multiyear process focused on the promotion of five core domain areas to support grade level academic and social learning: Administrative Leadership, Family and Community Partnership, Inclusive Education Framework, Inclusive Policy Structure and Practice, and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support.

The Focused Support Team includes the following representatives from SAU 64:

- 3 principals (Aaron Bronson, Nute; Doug Kilmister, MES; Jerry Gregoire, Paul)
- 3 assistant principals (Caroline Roberge, Nute; Jocelyn Young, MES; Nate Byrne, Paul)
- 1 Superintendent (Michael Tursi)
- 1 Curriculum Coordinator (Mary Wilson)
- 1 Student Services Director (Anne Kebler)
- 3 lead teachers one from each building (Scott Currier, Nute; Ann McKearin, MES; Jen Leavitt (Paul)
- 2 Special Education Coordinators, (Monica Greenleaf and Andrea Drolet)

School Based Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Teams

The school district established Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (CIA) teams in each of the schools to provide a structure for school based collaboration and learning and to assist the work of the Focused Support Team. In addition the CIA team structure provides an opportunity to:

- Be reflective through data inquiry and decision making
- Build shared leadership in each of the schools
- Review, through data analysis, the impact that student behavior has on instructional practice
- Design a process for collecting and analyzing data on instructional practices and supports in each of the schools
- Examine best practices that support personalized learning for students.
- Develop an plan of action for implementation that reflects best practices

Members of the CIA teams include:

Nute "CIA" Team (Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Team)

- Scott Currier, Math
- Brian Contorchick, Social Studies
- Chrissie Henner, Science
- Travis McKellar, Special Education Coordinator
- Lisa Burrows, Middle School Guidance
- Nicole Tursi, Middle School Reading Specialist
- Karen Johnson, Physical Education Teacher
- **Curriculum Coordinator and either Assistant Principal or Principal

Milton Elementary School "CIA" Team

- Marianne Doane, 4th Grade
- Melissa Salinger, 2nd Grade
- Erin Paine, Special Education Case Manager
- Ann McKearin, MES Reading Specialist
- Randy Myhre, Librarian
- **Curriculum Coordinator and either Assistant Principal or Principal

Paul School "CIA" Team

- Jen Leavitt, Title I
- Monica Greenleaf, Special Education Coordinator
- Jenn Kuehl, 8th Grade Math
- Kathy Frothingham, 1st Grade
- Miles Roberge, Math Interventionist
- Sharon Bonnevie, 3rd Grade
- **Curriculum Coordinator and either Assistant Principal or Principal

Data Collection and Findings on Essential Question

The Focused Support Team met regularly to review a variety of data sources in order to respond to the essential question noted above with one of the intended outcomes of addressing the marginal achievement of students with disabilities in the Milton schools.

Data Sources

1. *Perceptual Data*: One of the first data collection activities involved Team members providing perceptual data to identify strengths and challenges related to instructional practices and instructional supports in SAU 64. Some common themes that emerged:

Strengths:

- Hard working staff
- Great community support
- People power
- Staff want to do good things for kids
- Small size of district/schools

Challenges:

- Significant behavioral issues that impact instruction
- Staff not using data to inform instruction
- Lack of aligned K-12 curriculum
- Lack of consistent leadership

2. *Instructional Survey Data Collection (See Appendix 2):* In order to investigate current instructional practices the Focus Support Team reviewed research findings on “best practices” and developed a survey instrument to assess current practices relative to best practices. A questionnaire (comprised of 33 questions) was designed to gain information on the instructional practices being used in Milton to help identify “best practice” instructional strengths. The questions were based upon the meta-analyses research from John Hattie and Robert Marzano on instructional strategies, which have been found to make significant differences in student learning.

The survey was put on Survey Monkey and was taken by teachers in the district. The Focus Support Team did an initial review and analysis of survey results. The Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction Teams (CIA) in each of the schools reviewed the results, using a data review protocol.

At the Focused Support Team’s January meeting the team reviewed the instructional practices survey results. They identified strengths and weaknesses from the survey and agreed upon next steps, which included having the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment (CIA) teams in each of the schools analyze the data. Principals agreed to report back at the March meeting on the results of the CIA team survey analysis.

At the Paul School the CIA team discussed concerns, surprises, strengths, challenges. The Team wanted to collect more data on what the teachers’ perception was about what the practices listed actually mean. Strengths identified: Rtl, trusting environment, highly organized presentation, activating prior knowledge. Next steps: plan to lead staff through the same process in small groups at a staff meeting. More data needed re: what some of the strong practices actually look like. Also, clarify/quantify sometimes vs. often vs. almost always.

At Milton Elementary School the CIA team met to discuss the results. There was good participation in the survey. CIA reviewed it and identified strengths based on often+ almost always + greater than or equal to 85%. The idea of a strengths based approach made a lot of sense. Next steps- have people share/showcase the good practices they’re using. Team discussed video recording. CIA will model this first. The team identified six strengths from which to choose. Next year teachers will be encouraged to engage in a similar practice. The team will provide resources to teachers as well as a self-reflection guide. Most members expressed a desire to stay on the team next year.

At Nute Middle/High School the CIA team looked at the instructional practices survey using the data analysis protocol. The team discussed how to use the data and how to roll it out with staff (CPT or whole staff). To identify strengths, the team looked for similarities, what had people reported, tried to generalize it to teaching population. Strengths were identified based on often and almost always combined at 80%.

3. *IEP Compliance Review Data:* As part of Focused Monitoring, the NH DOE conducted a compliance review of 18 student files to see if the district was compliant with writing IEPs. According to the Student Services Director there was only one file that passed completely. Case managers had an opportunity ahead of time to review the criteria and fix things. IEP compliance report was received, which included 15 citations for non-compliance. There were many student specific citations. Some

were items that could be easily fixed. The main problem area was writing measurable goals. Another issue was doing written prior notice correctly. The district was told to write WPN for each separate decision. It seems like the district doesn't have as good an understanding of the law as they should and has some programmatic changes to make. The district also has outdated policies (not in line with laws that changed in 2009). What implication does this have for students' learning? The district is not understanding what specialized instruction means and how to do it well.

The question was asked: How does this relate to our essential question? This demonstrates that the supports that we feel we are providing students are not direct enough based on their specific needs.

4. *Instructional Supports Data Collection:* To assist in answering the question posed above, the Focused Support Team identified the following instructional supports available in the district:

- Strategies to deal with anxiety
- Assistive technology
- Personal interest
- Self-regulation/monitoring
- Using common formative assessments
- Personalized learning
- Team teaching
- CPT
- RENEW
- Guided study
- Related services
- Mentoring
- After school program
- Student voice & choice
- Recognize student success
- Teaching executive function
- Supports to families
- Sensory diet
- Title I
- PBIS
- Responsive Classroom
- Town & community relationships
- Transitions
- Leadership
- Teach that effort matters
- Family engagement
- Para support
- Special education
- Data coaches
- Reading specialists
- IEPs
- 504s
- PGP

The Focused Support Team discussed whether this is a discussion to have right now or continue to work on the instructional practices piece. The team agreed that without an established and common instructional framework, it would be difficult to identify and prioritize the needed instructional supports at this time. Investigating instructional supports was tabled.

5. *Inclusionary Model Video:* To assist in better understanding of best practices for instruction and instructional supports the Focused Support Team viewed a video on the Dr. William W. Henderson K-12 Inclusion School in Dorchester, MA. The inclusionary model provided a context for discussing the Milton K-12 Instructional Practices Survey administered district wide. After watching the video the Team identified the following instructional practices that align and support their vision for SAU 64.

- Data Meeting, enthusiasm and understanding
- Universal Design
- Relying on small group instruction
- Co teaching and co planning
- Special Educator was an equal party
- Engaged faculty
- Approach of the stations and really broke it down on the abilities and what they need.
- All students access all curriculum
- Personalized individualized instruction for the students
- Different Instructional Practices

6. *Self-Reflection on Modeling Instructional Practices Data Collection:* The following self-reflection questions were reviewed by the Focused Support Team in May as a model for gathering additional data on instructional practices. The questions adapted from Tomlinson (2014), Hattie (2012), William

(2011) and University of Colorado, Denver (1993).

- Showing trust toward students and creating a mutually trusting environment
 - What were the ways I demonstrated to ALL students that they were able, valuable, and responsible? How did I treat ALL students accordingly?
 - What did I do to demonstrate to the students that I believed in them when they were struggling?
 - How did I give the message to ALL students that they possess untapped potential in learning what is being taught today?
- Providing students with learning disabilities with tools and strategies they need to organize both themselves and new material
 - How was I explicit with explaining the learning objectives to the students (especially those with disabilities)?
 - What did I do to explain to students how to be successful with the learning goal?
 - Can ALL students rephrase the learning objectives and outline a plan on how they can be successful? Did I explain the various supports available to students to be successful with the learning objectives?
- Providing feedback that enables students to progress toward challenging learning intentions and goals
 - How was my feedback considerate of each student's cultural and learning differences?
 - How was my feedback clear enough for students to engage in thinking about how to improve? How did my feedback point each student toward actions that are challenging but achievable for that learner?
 - Based on the feedback from students, how did I determine the next steps in instruction toward the learning goal?
- Utilizing cooperative learning
 - How did I structure the task so that it created positive interdependence among the members of the group? How did I ensure that members of the group sink or swim together and that one member could not succeed at the expense of others?
 - How did I structure the environment to allow face-to-face interaction? How did students assist and support one another's efforts to learn?
 - How did I promote individual accountability? What did I do to prevent a member from getting a free ride on the work of others and prevent low quality of work being accepted from the group?
 - How did I teach the social skills necessary for members to contribute positively, acquire trust and manage conflict?
 - How did I encourage group processing in applying how today's learning lead to more understanding of the material?
- Using a variety of strategies to capture students' attention and engage them
 - What strategies did I employ and for what purpose?
 - How did I move from using one strategy to another?
 - What lead me to use a different strategy?
- Breaking lessons into chunks for students
 - How did I determine the learning progression?
 - What materials or strategies did I employ that helped with students' understanding of the concepts?

2014-15 DISTRICT ACTION PLAN

The 2014-15 District Action Plan is intended to describe the specific goals and strategies that will be implemented as a result of the yearlong inquiry process focused on the essential question. This strategic process serves as „roadmap“ for advancing the learning for all students while projecting the specific strategies that will address the achievement gap between students with unique learning challenges and

abilities and their peers. The plan is designed as a document that can be reviewed and revised as necessary throughout the implementation year.

Building upon the work that was accomplished during the 2014-15 school year SAU 64 has outlined the following curriculum, instruction, and assessment activities for the 2014-15 school year that support the district's commitment to ensure personalized learning for all our students.

Curriculum

Curriculum development is ongoing and is being aligned to the New Hampshire College and Career Readiness Standards for Milton School District and the 2001-2004 Massachusetts State Standards for the Wakefield School District. It is anticipated that this work will be completed by the 2016-2017 school year. The process for the curriculum development work has three stages: scope and sequence, unit design, and performance assessment task and rubric creation.

Instruction

A schedule to incorporate teacher collaboration within the school day has been developed for all schools within SAU 64. The work of the teacher collaboration is to ensure that there is a focus on learning. Educators demonstrate their commitment to helping all students learn by working collaboratively by:

- Gathering evidence of current levels of student learning
- Using strengths-based results from the research-based instructional strategies survey to develop practices and ideas that promote student learning
- Implementing the practices, supports, and ideas
- Analyzing the impact of the changes to discover what was effective and what was not.
- Applying the new knowledge in the next cycle of continuous improvement

To foster utilization of supports most effectively, the Milton Elementary School scheduling committee has proposed lengthening the literacy and numeracy blocks K-5. Common times for literacy (up to 120 minutes) and math blocks (up to 75 minutes) have been proposed to allow for sharing of resources and student placement within grade bands. According to the proposed schedule K-2 and 3-5 share common times at least four days a week to allow for this flexibility.

In addition, special educators will be providing specialized direct instruction in the classroom setting frequently for K-5. Each of the special educators will attend their grade level teacher collaboration meetings. Paraprofessionals will be assigned to special educators. Special educators, in conjunction with the classroom teachers, will update the paraprofessionals of the data decisions from the teacher collaboration meetings.

Paul School has also created grade span schedules and times to allow for teacher collaboration during the school day. The Paul School grade spans are K-1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8. The scheduling committee has designated additional time beyond the core instruction to deliver services to students in order to address what those students need.

Nute Middle/High School will continue to use Common Planning Time to tune units and lessons, provide peer support and feedback on peer observations, and calibrate scoring of student work.

Assessments

Universal screening tools will be utilized to gather evidence of current student learning (NWEA and PBIS Screening Inventory).

Progress monitoring tools will be utilized to measure growth (AIMS Web and NWEA).

Diagnostic tools will be utilized to pinpoint students' strengths and opportunities for growth (Phonological Awareness Test, from Conway NH- based on the PAST), Yopp Singer Test of Phonological Awareness, Rapid Automatic Naming Screen- Precision Teaching Haughton Learning Center, Phonics-Quick Phonics

Screen, Spelling- Words Their Way Spelling Screen, Vocabulary- STAR Reading Test, Comprehension- STAR Reading Test, and individualized norm-referenced assessments).

Performance and curriculum-based assessments aligned to standards will measure growth of content knowledge.

Data from the above assessments will be analyzed and adjustments to instruction or supports will be made if necessary.

Appendix 1:

Crosswalk Principles for SAU 64
Priority/Focus Turnaround Principles/SWIFT/Focus Monitoring

Turnaround Principle	SWIFT Feature	Focused Monitoring
1. Providing strong leadership.	1. Strong and Engaged Site Leadership	Implement a continuous problem solving model by participating in the Five Step Inquiry Process
Turnaround Principle	SWIFT	Focus Monitoring
Principle 2. Ensuring that teachers are effective and able to improve instruction	2. Strong Teacher Support System	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organize and analyze data. 2. Investigate factors impacting student achievement and identify emerging themes? 3. Determine effective practices and develop a plan in response to the essential question?
Turnaround Principle	SWIFT	Focus Monitoring
Principle 3. Redesigning the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Inclusive Academic Instruction 6. Strong School Culture 	5. Implement, monitor, and evaluate the plan.
Turnaround Principle	SWIFT	Focus Monitoring
Principle 4. Strengthening the school's instructional program based on student needs and ensuring that the instructional program is research-based, rigorous, and aligned with State academic content standards.	3. Inclusive Academic Instruction	Collaborative Guided Evidence-based review of student progress
Turnaround Principle	SWIFT	Focus Monitoring

Principle 5. Using data to inform instruction and for continuous improvement, including by providing time for collaboration on the use of data	1. Strong and Engaged Site Leadership 2. Inclusive Academic Instruction	
Turnaround Principle	SWIFT	Focus Monitoring
Principle 6. Establishing a school environment that improves school safety and discipline and addressing other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, and health needs.	4. Inclusive Behavior Instruction 5. Fully-integrated Organizational Structure 6. Strong School Culture	
Turnaround Principle	SWIFT	Focus Monitoring
Principle 7. Providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement.	7. Trusting Family Partnerships 8. Trusting Community Partnerships	
	9. Strong LEA / School Relationship	
	10. LEA Policy Framework	

Appendix 2:

I incorporate the following strategies into my teaching practices:

1. I utilize student self-reported grades.
Never Occasionally Very Often Always
2. I use Piagetian methods i.e. focus on students' developmental stages of thinking.
Never Occasionally Very Often Always
3. I use Response to Intervention i.e. use of a continuum of research-based practices to meet the behavioral and instructional needs of all students according to student data.
Never Occasionally Very Often Always
4. I show trust towards students and create a mutually trusting environment.
Never Occasionally Very Often Always
5. I employ a highly organized presentation of subject matter.
Never Occasionally Very Often Always
6. I use micro-teaching i.e. using a video recording of a lesson with a de-briefing.
Never Occasionally Very Often Always
7. I utilize classroom discussion in a way that involves the entire class.
Never Occasionally Very Often Always
8. I use formative assessments before or during the learning process herself.
Never Occasionally Very Often Always
9. I provide my students who have learning disabilities with tools and strategies they need to organize themselves as well as new material.
Never Occasionally Very Often Always
10. I use clear communication of the intentions of the lesson and criteria for success.
Never Occasionally Very Often Always
11. I provide feedback that enables students to progress towards challenging learning intentions and goals.
Never Occasionally Very Often Always
12. I utilize advance organizers.
Never Occasionally Very Often Always
13. I use a complete 6 step process to teach vocabulary.
Never Occasionally Very Often Always
14. I provide my students with complex cognitive tasks such as investigation, problem solving, decision-making, and experimental inquiry.
Never Occasionally Very Often Always
15. I utilize cooperative learning.
Never Occasionally Very Often Always
16. I use cues and questions to activate prior knowledge and deepen student understanding.
Never Occasionally Very Often Always

