



DOVER SCHOOL DISTRICT

Focused Monitoring Report

JUNE 10, 2009

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INTRODUCTION

Date of Report June 10, 2009

Overview of Focused Monitoring

Focused Monitoring is a point of convergence for the Individuals with Disabilities Educational Act (IDEA 2004) and No child Left Behind (NCLB), demonstrating that the two federal mandates can not only co-exist, but can work together to benefit all students. IDEA 2004 measures an individual student's progress toward meeting his/her annual academic and/or functional IEP goals. NCLB measures the annual performance of all students with disabilities in math and reading in comparison to their non-disabled peers.

The purpose of the Focused Monitoring process is to improve educational results and functional outcomes for all children with disabilities by maximizing resources and emphasizing important variables in order to increase the probability of improved results.

In New Hampshire, the "achievement gap" between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers has been chosen as the key performance indicator of educational results for children with disabilities. The Focused Monitoring process involves monitoring compliance of priority areas of special education and targeting resources for continuous improvement. Focused Monitoring is thus an accountability and management system that supports measurable, continuous systemic improvement.

Dover Achievement Gap

Dover was chosen for Focused Monitoring because the gap in achievement of Dover students with disabilities compared to their non-disabled peers was wider than other school districts of similar size and demographics. This gap is illustrated by the following tables:

ALL NH STUDENTS - PERCENT PROFICIENCY 2006 AND 2007

READING				MATH			
2006		2007		2006		2007	
IEP	All Others	IEP	All Others	IEP	All Others	IEP	All Others

26%	78.74%	31.13%	79.62%	25.8%	71.82%	28.40%	72.37%
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Table 1

DOVER SCHOOL DISTRICT STUDENTS - PERCENT PROFICIENCY 2006 AND 2007

READING				MATH			
2006		2007		2006		2007	
IEP	All Others	IEP	All Others	IEP	All Others	IEP	All Others
19.10%	78.41%	15.22%	78.99%	22.61%	73.01%	21.20%	75.37%

Table 2

When comparing NECAP results for all students in NH for testing years 2006 and 2007, students with disabilities scoring in the “proficient” category increased in Reading from 26% to 31.13% and in Math from 25.8 to 28.40%. In contrast, in Dover the percent of students with disabilities scoring proficient decreased from 2006 to 2007. In Reading, 19.10% of students with disabilities were proficient in 2006 while only 15.22% were proficient in 2007, and in Math, 22.61% of students with disabilities were proficient in 2006 compared to 21.20% in 2007.

District Profile

The Dover School District is a medium sized suburban district, relatively homogeneous in ethnic and cultural background, serving approximately 4100 students. We have three elementary schools (K to 4), a middle school (5 to 8), and a high school/regional vocational technical center. Our high school receives tuition students from two neighboring communities, Barrington and Nottingham. In addition, we have an alternative high school program, approved as a special education program that serves at-risk and disabled adolescents from our district and tuitions students from nearby districts. The Dover School District also supports the HUB, which provides educational opportunities for younger children who have not yet entered school, and the Dover Adult Learning Center, which gives teen and adult learners the opportunity to earn GED.

Dover’s elementary schools are diverse in their demographics. Woodman Park School (WPS) is the oldest elementary school in the city. Current enrollment is approximately 500 children. The city of Dover includes the second largest housing project in the state and approximately 160 elementary school children from the housing project attend Woodman Park School. Approximately 45% of the school’s population receives free or reduced lunch and 4% are English Language Learners. WPS houses the district special needs pre-school which increases the special education population to about

16%. Woodman Park School is a school-wide Title I school. Every child at Woodman Park School is eligible to receive Title I services. Woodman Park School has been identified by the New Hampshire State Department of Education as a school in need of improvement in the area of reading due to the performance of the students in special education. In addition, the economically disadvantaged students also failed to make adequate yearly progress in reading on the fall 2007 NECAP assessment. With the index target scoring criteria going up every year, WPS developed an improvement plan addressing the needs of all students falling below proficient on the NECAP reading assessment regardless of their specific subgroup.

In contrast, Garrison Elementary School's (GES) current enrollment is about 550 and draws from both high and low income neighborhoods. English Language Learners make up 3.5% of the student population and 7.5% are identified with special needs. GES houses a district self-contained classroom for children with severe and medically fragile disabilities. All cohort groups at GES students made AYP in FY08.

Horne Street School (HSS) is located in a predominately middle class neighborhood. In 2007-2008 the city redistricted elementary districts to alleviate high student to teacher ratios at Horne Street School. The Horne Street School student population was reduced from approximately 450 students in 2006-2007 to 360 students in 2007-2008. Demographics of the student population following the redistricting resulted in a reduced economically disadvantaged and educationally disability population. The school retained a community of limited English speaking students. At present, 7% of the population is identified as English Language Learners and 6.3% is identified with an educational disability. Horne Street School did not make the Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics in the Educational Disability group, but did score within the Confidence Interval (CI) for Economically Disadvantaged group. In Reading Horne Street School did not achieve AYP in the Economically Disadvantaged or Educational Disability Group. Of those groups, only the Educational Disability group failed to achieve AYP for two years. All others achieved the AYP goals within the CI for 2007 based on the Fall 2006 assessment data.

Our middle school, Dover Middle School (DMS), currently enrolls about 1100 students. About 17 percent of students receive free and reduced lunch. Organization of the school is based upon a Middle School philosophy and includes smaller team communities within a grade level. About 10.5% of the school population is identified with an educational disability and 1% is English Language Learners. Dover Middle School did not meet the AYP benchmark for the past two years in the area of reading. Specifically, our economically disadvantaged, educationally disabled, and non or limited English proficient sub groups did not meet requirements

At Dover High School (DHS), about 14.5% of the student population is identified with an educational disability. However the proportion of students identified with a

disability varies among the three communities feeding into DHS: Dover 11.3%; Barrington 21.4%, and SAU#44 24%. The Educational Disability population did not make AYP in Reading or Math but did make Safe Harbor in Reading on the 2007 NECAP.

Our district was designated a DINI in Reading for 2008-2009 due to the low performance of students with educational disabilities and students with economic disadvantage at all schools but GES. The following schools were designated Schools in Need of Improvement in Reading: Horne Street School; Woodman Park School; Dover Middle School; and Dover High School.

District Mission and Beliefs

The Dover School District is the center of a dynamic community dedicated to developing individual potential and self-esteem through education. We are committed to creating a diverse learning environment, emphasizing collaboration and innovation. Our schools will develop lifelong learners and responsible citizens.

The mission of the Dover School District, in partnership with students, family, and community, is to ensure that each child has the opportunity to develop to his or her fullest potential in an academically challenging, supportive, and safe environment.

The Dover Master Development Plan identifies the following goals for the period 2005-2009:

- Each child will develop competencies that meet or exceed grade level expectations commensurate to individual capabilities.
- Each student will benefit from a system-wide accountability plan based upon data focusing on student learning.
- All schools will design structural supports for governance, curriculum, and programs to prepare each child for post-secondary educational and career options.
- The Dover School District will promote a healthy and safe school climate.

Achievement Team Membership

Subcommittees: Data, Curriculum Instruction Assessment (CIA), Parent Involvement (Par Inv)

NAME	TITLE	POSITION	CONSTITUENCY
Sandra Crosson	Director of Pupil Personnel Services	Co-Chair, FM Leadership Team, Data subcommittee	SAU administration
Jean Briggs-Badger	Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment,	Co-Chair, FM Leadership Team, CIA subcommittee	SAU administration
John O'Connor	Superintendent	FM Leadership	SAU administration

	Dover School District,	Team, Data subcommittee	
Patrick Boodey	Principal Woodman Park School	FM Leadership Team, Par Inv subcommittee	WPS community
Deb Migneault	Principal Dover Senior High and Career Technical Center	FM Leadership Team, Par Inv subcommittee	Dover High community
Larry DeYoung	Principal Dover Middle School	FM Leadership Team, CIA subcommittee	Dover Middle School community
Diane Gormley	District DINI Coordinator	FM Leadership Team, CIA subcommittee	Schools not making AYP
Paula Glynn	Title I Coordinator	FM Leadership Team, CIA subcommittee	Title I eligible families, Title I tutors
Dustin Gray	Principal Garrison Elementary School	FM Leadership, Data subcommittee	Garrison Elementary School community
Malcolm Forsman	Principal Horne Street Elementary	Achievement Team, Data subcommittee	Horne Street School community
Nicole Gallagher	Social Studies Teacher & Special Education Case Manager, Dover Alternative Program	Achievement Team, Par Inv subcommittee	High school students with disabilities at risk for graduation
Lynda Nelson	LD/ED Certified Special Educator, Horne Street School	Achievement Team, CIA subcommittee	Special Educators elementary level; elementary students with educational disabilities
Sherrie Sheehan	DMS Special Education Coordinator	Achievement team, Par Inv subcommittee	Special Educators middle school; middle school students with educational disabilities
Elaine Marhefka	GES Fourth Grade Teacher	Achievement Team, Data subcommittee	Regular education elementary teachers, GES community
Beth Lent	Counselor, HSS and parent of student with disability attending GES	Achievement Team, Par Inv subcommittee	Parents of students with disabilities, HSS community

Carolyn Mebert	Professor of Statistics UNH, Dover School Board	Achievement Team, Data subcommittee	School Board, Dover community
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Table 3

Essential Question

What are the contributing factors to the achievement gap between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers, and how may this gap be narrowed?

GETTING READY FOR INQUIRY

The Focused Monitoring Readiness Survey was completed by the FM Leadership and Achievement Teams. Their ratings identified improved student outcomes, common mission in literacy and numeracy, and district decision-making process as the areas of concern. Areas participants rated as strengths included the following: alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment; professional development; and public reporting of district progress.

Inventory of Data Sources

An inventory of data sources by schools was reported by the director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment (see appendix). The team reviewed the list and noted that the NWEA has been eliminated by our school board. Reading assessments include DRA and Marie Clay’s Observational Survey. For students K-2, the PALS is administered in the fall and spring. In addition, some reading specialists use the DIBELS to monitor progress. A writing rubric has been adopted by the district that parallels the NECAP writing rubric. Quarterly writing prompts have been scored as formative assessments.

Inventory of Initiatives

The district is busy this year with many initiatives, including the following:

Dover Growing Readers: a language arts curriculum for K-8 created through grade level collaboration; includes Literacy by Design small group instructional kit, Robust Vocabulary, and Focus Lessons; includes core instruction in a 90 minute block (K-6) and 60 minute block (7-8) and supplemental intervention using Horizons, Corrective Reading, Earobics, Wilson Foundations, Lessons in Literacy, and Leveled Literacy Intervention ; allows for supplemental intensive instruction in groups of 3 or 1:1

C.O.R.E. (Common Order of Required Elements): collaborative project identifying the essential standards to be mastered at each grade level and a scope and sequence for mastery across grade levels

Leveled Literacy Intervention: reading specialists, classroom teachers, special educators, and paraprofessionals participated in teacher training using this literacy intervention program designed to supplement the Fountas and Pinnell work in the block instruction

Robust Vocabulary: A summer training is planned with Isabel Beck to assist teachers in integrating “robust vocabulary” into literacy lessons

Formative Assessment: consultation and training from West Ed in creating formative assessments aligned with the C.O.R.E and used to identify students needing additional time to learn the essential standards for their grade level

John Collins Writing Program: teacher training for secondary level teachers to improve effective writing strategies

Performance Pathways: administrators, data team members, literacy facilitators, and special education coordinators were trained in the use of Performance Pathways to identify proficiency levels, skill deficits, and response to interventions

Co-Teaching: The middle school implemented a new model of special education service delivery in the classroom. General and special education teachers participated in summer professional development and on-going support/dialogue regarding the implementation of this new model.

Initial Analysis of Achievement Gap

In our first achievement team meetings, we examined the achievement gap data provided to us by the FM facilitators in Table 1 and Table 2. We noted the percent of students with IEPs in Dover, scoring proficient or above on the 2007 NECAP Reading, was 15.22% while the state average for students with disabilities was 31.13%. Dover’s nondisabled students outperformed the state average of nondisabled students in Math. On the 2007 NECAP Math, 75.37 percent of nondisabled Dover students scored proficient or above while only 72.37% of all NH nondisabled students scored proficient or above. The proficiency rates on the NECAP for Dover students with disabilities were higher in Math than Reading for both 2006 and 2007. This may be due to the accommodation of reading questions to students. Proficiency rates for students with disabilities in Dover declined from 2006 to 2007 while state proficiency rates for students with disabilities increased. The achievement gap for Dover students with disabilities appears to be growing in Reading and Math.

Alignment of SINI/DINI with Focused Monitoring

The low rate of proficiency for students with IEPs contributes to the SINI and DINI status of the district and the schools within the district. The District Improvement Plan's timeline and Monitoring Team was realigned to the Focused Monitoring process. The members of the Focused Monitoring Leadership and Achievement teams were chosen to include members of School Improvement Teams and the DINI district team. All improvement efforts in literacy were restructured to include special education representatives. A priority area for the DINI team was developing a common language in literacy by consistent use of an aligned curriculum. For example, all special educators participated in the identification of Common Order of Required Elements (C.O.R.E.) and the creation of common formative assessments aligned to state standards and GLE/GSE. School improvement plans were written prior to the Focused Monitoring process. However these SINI school plans do address the achievement gap in their objectives and strategies, such as

- Increasing parent involvement (WPS)
- Expanding intervention program options (WPS, GES, HSS, DMS)
- Increasing 1:1 direct instruction in literacy (GES, HSS)
- Including all students with disabilities in core curriculum through use of a co-teaching model (DMS)

Research Reviewed

In getting ready for the FM process, our team members reviewed research and best practices. Here are some of the references we consulted:

Berhardt, Victoria, L. (2002). *The School Portfolio Toolkit*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Berhardt, Victoria, L. (2003). *Using Data to Improve Student Learning in Elementary Schools*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Boudett, Kathryn Parker, City, Elizabeth A., Murnane, Richard J. (2007). *Data Wise in Action*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Educational Publishing Group

Dufour, Richard, Dufour, Rebecca, Eaker, Robert, Many, Thomas (2006). *Learning by Doing: A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at Work*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.

Fullan, Michael, Hill, Peter, Crévola, Carmel. (2006) Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Hehir, Thomas (2006). *New Directions in Special Education: Eliminating Ableism in Policy and Practice*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Jensen, Eric (2005). *Teaching with the Brain in Mind*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Henderson, Anne T., Mapp, Karen L., Johnson, Vivian R., Davies, Don. (2007). *Beyond the Bake Sale: The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnership*. New York: The New Press.

Henderson, A.T., Map, K. L. (2002). *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family and Community Connections on Student Achievement*. Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.

Marzano, Robert J. (2006). *Classroom Assessment and Grading that Work*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD

Marzano, Robert J. , Pickering, Debra J., Pollack, Jane E. (2006). *Classroom Instruction that Works*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD

Preuss, Paul G. (2003). *School Leader's Guide to Root Cause Analysis: Using Data to Dissolve Problems*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Zemelman, Steven, Daniels, Harvey and Hyde, Arthur. (1998). *Best Practice for Teaching and Learning in America's Schools*. Portsmouth, NH: [Heinemann](#)

ORGANIZING AND ANALYZING DATA

Understanding District Data

In order to help us understand the achievement gap in Dover, the following graphs were constructed:

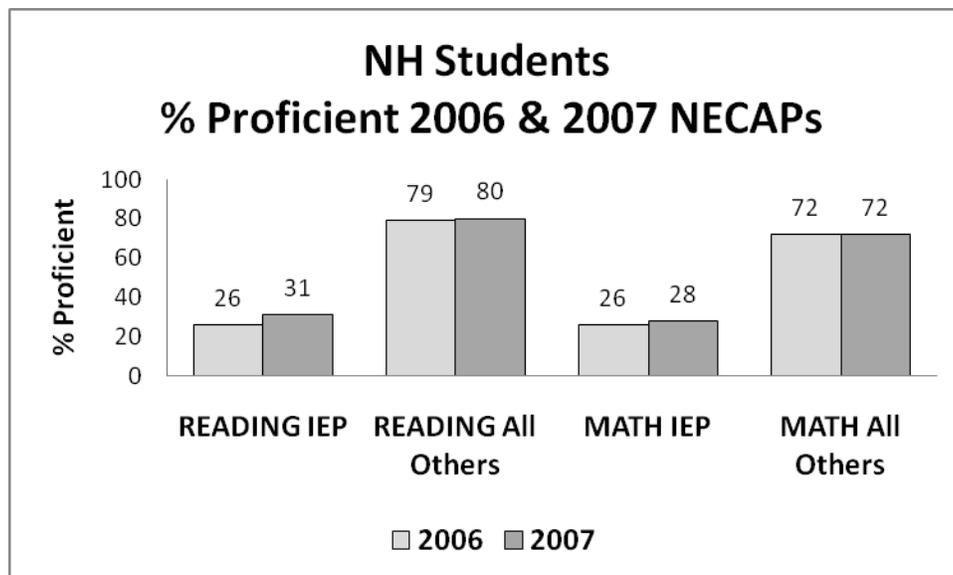


Figure 1

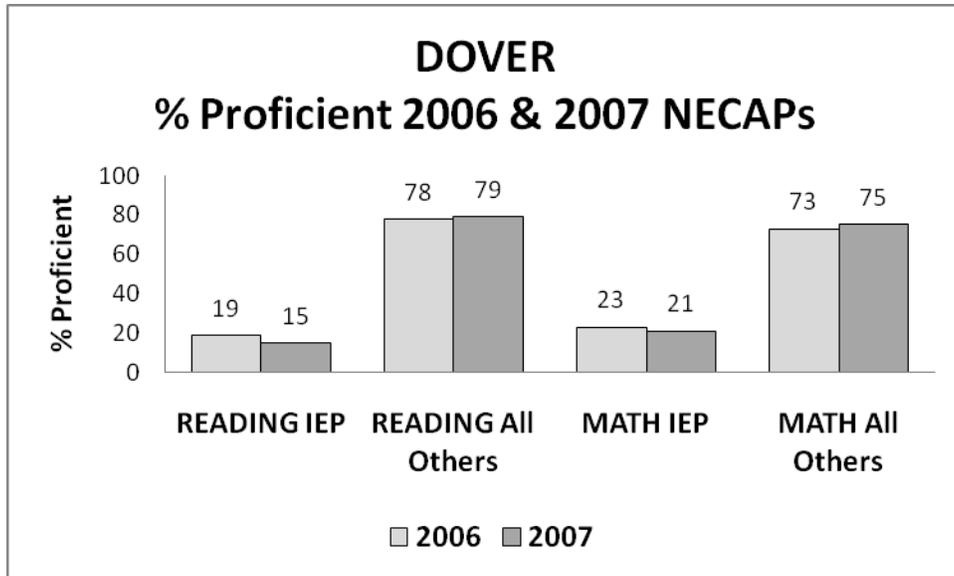


Figure 2

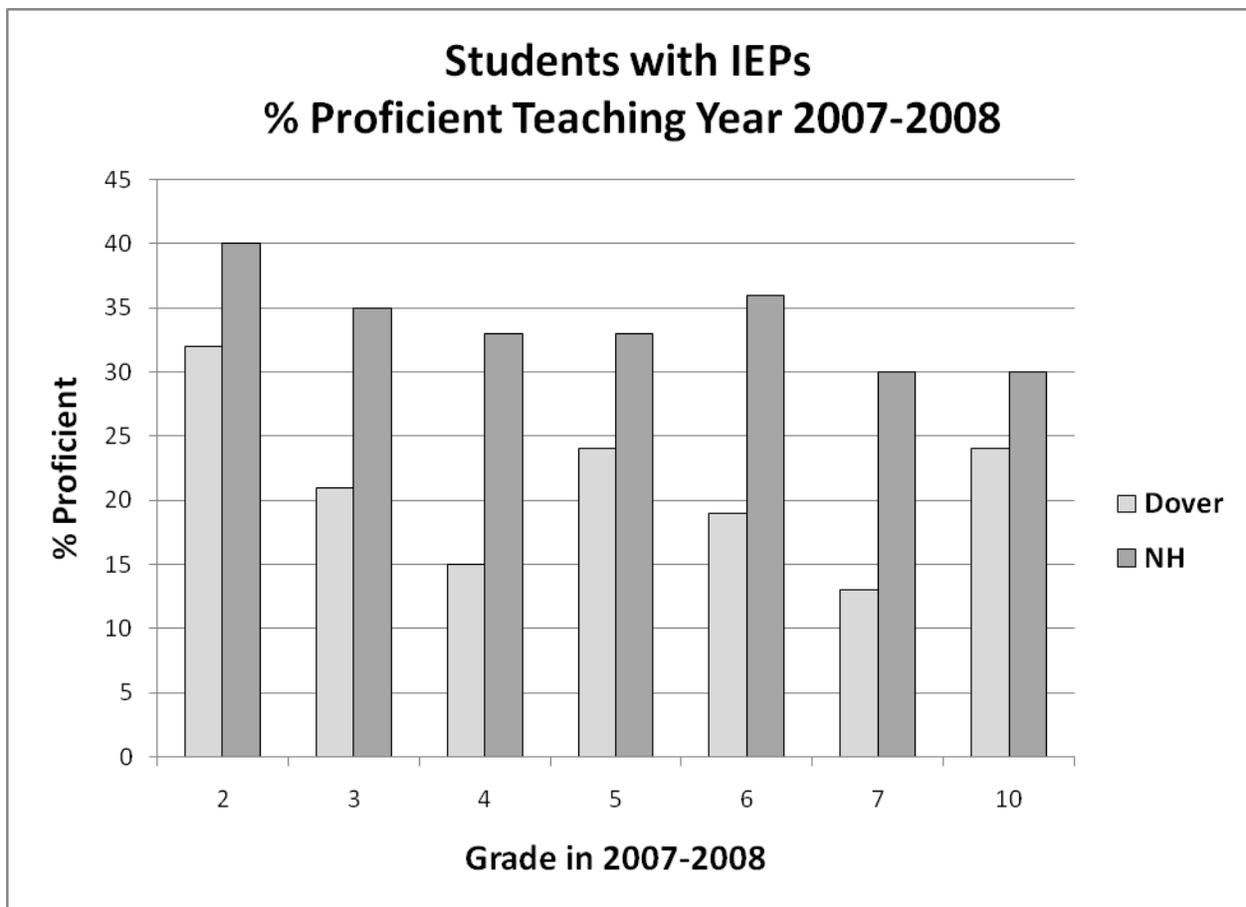


Figure 3

These graphs clearly illustrate that students with IEPs in Dover are not closing the achievement gap with their non-disabled peers nor are they matching the trend among all NH students with IEPs. The percent of students scoring proficient or above for Dover students with IEPs is significantly below the state average of all NH students with IEPs.

Contributing Factors to the Achievement Gap

Using a Data Driven Dialogue, the FM Achievement Team reviewed NECAP Reading and Math results for 2006 and 2007 (see Appendix). NECAP Cohort Comparison data was also created and shared with the team (see Appendix). Our FM facilitator shared some “grade” data for IEP students compared to state average (see Appendix). Some predictions and “surfacing assumptions” generated before looking at the data includes:

- Math achievement will be higher than Reading achievement
- Grade level performance will vary from school to school
- Reading scores will decrease as you move up grades
- Math scores will decrease as you move up grades

After analyzing the data, the following data statements were offered:

1. If you eliminate scores from WPS, district scores would be higher
2. With the exception of 5th to 6th and 6th to 7th, Reading scores appear to have decreased
3. There is a minimum difference between Reading and Math
4. No pattern of differences between Reading and Math by grade.
5. Math Proficiency rates went up more consistently than Reading proficiency rates
6. Teaching year is used for AYP but Testing year is used for “participation”
7. Significant variability in Reading proficiency rates across grades from 13% proficiency in 8th grade to 32% proficiency rate in 3rd grade

The FM Achievement team did not have a way to compare NECAP data with other data sources used by school data teams, such as the PALS literacy data, Common Math Assessment data, Writing Prompt rubric scores, or DRA (Direct Reading Assessment) scores. Although the “Assessment Builder” program of Performance Pathways has been purchased, it has not been fully implemented. School data teams are using Performance Pathways and the summary sheets from district assessments to analyze

trends and identify weaknesses for instructional focus. However the lack of a common data “language” was identified as an obstacle in investigating factors contributing to the achievement gap.

Subcommittees

The FM Achievement team used the tool “Assessment Continuum of Schoolwide Improvement Outcomes” to identify areas important in focusing our work into subcommittees. As a result of our ratings and discussion, we decided to concentrate on the following areas: Curriculum/Assessment/Instruction; Parent and Family Engagement; and Data Based Accountability or “Data”. These committees met within and outside FM Achievement team meetings. Using a “root cause analysis” process, each committee developed hypotheses and identified information to investigate and “dig deeper”.

Curriculum/Instruction/Assessment

This committee identified inquiry questions related to Standards Based Curriculum and Instruction, including:

- How has the reading review team addressed our alignment with state and district performance standards?
- How is our district insuring grade level mastery of ALL students with the GLEs?
- What are the curriculum materials/interventions that are being used with special ed students in reading and math? Who is providing the instruction and intervention?
- How is the PALS data being used? Are students indentified and is their progress monitored?
- How do we know that our literacy practices are effective in reaching special ed students?
- What data is being used to monitor growth?

This committee was composed of key district leaders involved in creating a language arts curriculum (Dover Growing Readers), completing a scope and sequence for teaching of essential skills (C.O.R.E.), and researching scientifically based intervention programs aligned with our general curriculum. Research reviewed to help the committee answer inquiry questions included work from University of Oregon’s “Characteristics of Effective Core Curriculum”, Fountas and Pinnell, Isabel Beck, Reid Lyon, “Reading Next”, and University of Florida Literacy Center. They formulated the following hypothesis to explain the achievement gap:

- There are no systematic interventions

- There is not a process to establish who receives interventions
- Intervention strategies have not been implemented with fidelity (no progress monitoring)
- The district has not clarified who will provide interventions, what the interventions will be and who will receive them (how will students qualify for interventions?)

After review of the district's curriculum and instructional practices, the committee's final hypothesis and action steps for further planning were:

The lack of a systemic intervention model creates learning gaps and hinders student's academic progress.

1. Identify intervention menu across district
2. Identify intervention protocol for selection
3. Implement interventions with fidelity including progress monitoring
4. Clarify the intervention - who, what, when, and where

The improvement plan data statement suggested by this committee is to increase percent proficiency in Reading and Math by 5% over previous year's scores for all students (NECAP) and increase percent proficient by an additional 5% for SES and SPED cohorts. The key strategy to accomplish this outcome is to develop a systematic intervention model. Anticipated outcomes include early identification of learning issues and assignment to appropriate interventions and progress monitoring of core curriculum learning through common formative assessments every two to three weeks. Implementing this strategy will result in changing district practices. Students will be monitored more frequently, students will receive timely intervention, and teachers will receive professional development in using data to inform instruction.

Data

The Data committee generated the following inquiry questions after review of the data:

- Why is there a gap in the achievement between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers?
- What are the results of breaking up students into subgroups by diagnosis?
- What curriculum pieces are missing for students?
- How is data collected and used at each school?

The committee considered what data was available to help answer these questions and determined that additional information was needed. A Teacher Survey was created and posted on Survey Monkey. Teachers were asked the following questions:

Why does an achievement gap exist between our SPED population and our General Ed population?

What are your top three instructional strategies to use with all students?

What curriculum pieces are SPED students missing?

Survey results were analyzed and categorized to look for themes. Teachers identified a lack of planning time, ineffective use of resources, and inconsistent instructional design and service delivery as impacting student achievement and contributing to the achievement gap. An interesting finding was the report that students missed reading instruction most frequently when receiving special education services outside the classroom. Based on these survey responses, the committee formed the following tentative hypotheses:

- ***There is a lack of common of instructional purpose and expectation (final hypothesis)***
- There is a lack of communication and common planning time among paraprofessionals, special education teachers and general education teachers
- Inefficient use of personnel
- Lack of special education staff to provide in class support and/or services

The Data team attempted to turn these hypotheses into data statements, but did not get beyond the first hypothesis statement. The discussion was sidetracked by disagreement about what data to use, how to restate the hypothesis in measurable terms, and what to focus on for closing the achievement gap. Some members felt the “focus” had already been determined by the DINI committee and addressed in current PD plans. For example, common training with regular and special education in Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) is taking place as a strategy to forge “common purpose and expectation”. The committee decided to stay with the first hypothesis and chose this as the focus for further improvement planning.

In preparing for the improvement plan, the committee suggested that paraprofessional and special educator schedules should be examined and data standards established to indicate response to general instruction and intervention. This would involve collaborative planning time between general education, special educator, and paraprofessional to look at data and plan interventions. Given the limited time, “smart” goals would be important. Both formative and summative assessment would need to be reviewed. The school data teams and principals would need to see that each element is implemented. The “reteach and enrich” block offers promise since it utilizes frequent assessment.

The data statement created by the Data committee sets student learning goals of increasing the Reading proficiency percentage of students with disabilities from the baseline of 26% (NECAP 2008) to 31% in NECAP 2009 and 36% in NECAP 2010. This will be achieved by ensuring that all students receive the same core instruction in general curriculum and that all students have the opportunity to participate in interventions targeted to specific areas of need. Students with large achievement gaps will be targeted for supplemental instruction. It is anticipated that this will increase achievement for all learners and narrow the achievement gap for students with disabilities. For this to occur, some changes in district and school practices will be required, including using data from formative assessments to identify students for re-teaching the essential standards and basing intervention planning for students with disabilities on diagnostic assessment and data review.

Parent and Family Engagement

This committee generated many inquiry questions in initial brainstorming about the meaning of the achievement gap data. Members wondered about the effect of transition plans on student achievement, particularly if parent involvement in plans would bring higher success. Would improved parental involvement and outreach help close the gap? How do we get families involved and engaged in helping to close the achievement gap? How can we share data in a more effective and meaningful manner between schools, parents, and the community?

The committee determined that the existing state survey information was not specific to Dover, so they decided to create focus groups led by facilitators outside of the district to interview parents, teachers, and administration. With the assistance of the FM facilitators, volunteers were found to lead focus groups in the schools and conduct telephone surveys with parents randomly chosen. Here are the questions posed by the volunteers:

Parents

1. How are you currently involved in your child/student's school?
2. How effective is the communication regarding your child/student's performance?
3. What suggestions do you have for improving the communication between you and the school?
4. What can be done to improve family engagement?
5. What aspects of the School do you want to be more engaged in?
6. How effectively is your child/student engaged in the school?
7. How can it be improved?

Teachers/Specialists/Paraprofessionals/Administrators

1. How would you describe the current role of parents at your school?
2. What should be the role of parents at your school?
3. What do you consider to be an effective means of communication between parents and the school?
4. What suggestions would you make to improve communication with parents?

It took several months to coordinate and complete the focus group discussions and surveys. At the FM Achievement team meeting in March, focus group summaries were reviewed and analyzed for themes. The committee found the common theme from teachers and parents was the use of EDLINE. The responses seemed “polarized” – respondents rated EDLINE as “great” or “needing improvement”. Parent involvement was also reported as ‘all’ or ‘none’. Parents are either very involved, sometimes too involved, or not at all. The committee concluded that training was needed for parents in how they can be involved in the schools and for teachers in how to work more effectively with parents. The team rewrote the hypothesis statement to:

Designing a comprehensive system of effective communication which provides opportunities for parental involvement and parent education will narrow the achievement gap

The data statement the committee formed related to this hypothesis involved raising the percentage of parents who activate their EDLINE accounts. Later inquiry into the current “baseline” revealed that this statistic is not available. Multiple family members can sign onto EDLINE. There currently is no way to track or “count” EDLINE usage, according to the IT Director. The committee strategized that increasing *opportunities* would increase parental involvement and parental education. Several activities were identified for the improvement plan, including: offering EDLINE training to parents; standardize the format of EDLINE across schools; information session for parents at fall Open House on the importance of NECAPs; survey parents at Open House on their needs and then follow up with Outreach workshops throughout the year.

INVESTIGATING FACTORS IMPACTING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Demographic Changes

The FM Achievement team acknowledged the Title I analysis conducted earlier in the year by the director, Paula Glynn. By investigating enrollment trends, she determined that by the end of school year 2007, almost a third of students in fourth grade did not begin elementary school at WPS. In addition to a high transient population, including a high rate of students who are homeless, WPS houses the second largest low income housing project in the state. In 2007, WPS had lower rates of proficiency in Reading and Math than other district elementary schools. However, Reading rates improved

significantly in 2008 (NECAP 2008-2009 Teaching Year) with particular improvement in the performance of the economically disadvantaged. WPS receives supplemental funding from Title I and therefore has more resources than other district elementary schools. This last year Title I tutors were used to provide individual and small group interventions in Reading. The additional resources appear to have been effective in raising reading achievement.

Percent Proficient NECAP (Teaching Year)		
	2007-2008	2008-2009
READING	68	73
MATH	61	59

Table 4

Redistricting for school year 2007-2008 changed the demographics for Garrison Elementary School (GES) and Horne Street School (HSS). Approximately one hundred children moved from HSS to GES, lowering the number of economically disadvantaged and educationally disabled students at HSS. A decline in percent of students scoring proficient and above in Reading at GES and increase in percent of students scoring proficient and above in Reading at HSS may be due to this redistricting. Redistricting did not seem to affect percent scoring proficient in Math. In fact, Math proficiency rates declined in all elementary schools.

Percent Proficient on NECAP (Teaching Year)				
	GES		HSS	
	2007-2008	2008-2009	2007-2008	2008-2009
READING	80	77	72	74
MATH	83	81	75	73

Table 5

Relatively little change in the percent scoring proficient and above in Reading and Math was demonstrated at the middle school or high school (see

Percent Proficient on NECAP (Teaching Year)				
	DMS		DHS	
	2007-2008	2008-2009	2007-2008	2008-2009
READING	78	77	64	63
MATH	73	73	25	25

Table 6

Current Achievement Data

District performance on the 2008 NECAPs resulted in inconsistent performance of subgroups across the district. Dover School District made AYP in reading but remains a DINI Year 1 in Reading and will be a new DINI Year 1 in Math. WPS advances to Year 2 in Reading and is a new SINI Year 1 in math due to the IEP cohort not making

AYP. The economic disadvantaged subgroup showed improvement. At HSS, both the IEP and economic disadvantaged subgroups showed gains in Reading and Math. The IEP subgroup made AYP with Safe Harbor in Reading and Math. HSS remains a SINI Year 1 in Reading. GES made AYP in Reading and Math with improvement in reading demonstrated by the IEP subgroup (Safe Harbor). The IEP subgroup also made AYP in Reading and Math at DHS with Safe Harbor, but the economically disadvantaged group did not make AYP. DHS remains a SINI Year 4 in Reading and a new SINI Year 1 in Math. At DMS, the IEP and Economic Disadvantaged subgroups did not make AYP in Reading. In Math, the IEP subgroup also did not make AYP but the Economic Disadvantaged subgroup did show improvement and made AYP with Safe Harbor. DMS advances to SINI year 3 in Reading and SINI year 4 in Math. The DINI/SINI status of Dover schools is summarized in the table below:

AYP STATUS OF DISTRICT SCHOOLS FOR 2009-2010		
	READING	MATH
DOVER DISTRICT	Remains DINI Yr 1	New DINI Yr 1
GES	Made AYP	Made AYP
HSS	Remains SINI Yr 1	Made AYP
WPS	Advances SINI Yr 2	New SINI Yr 1
DMS	Advances SINI Yr 3	Advances SINI Yr 4
DHS	Remains SINI Yr 4	New SINI Yr 1

Table 7

One of our FM Achievement Team members, Nicole Gallagher, investigated the trends in performance of the IEP and Economic Disadvantaged subgroup (see Figure 4 below). This graph illustrates improvement in the percent of students scoring proficient and above in Reading for all groups and improvement in Math for SES and IEP cohorts.

Dover % Proficient 2006-2008

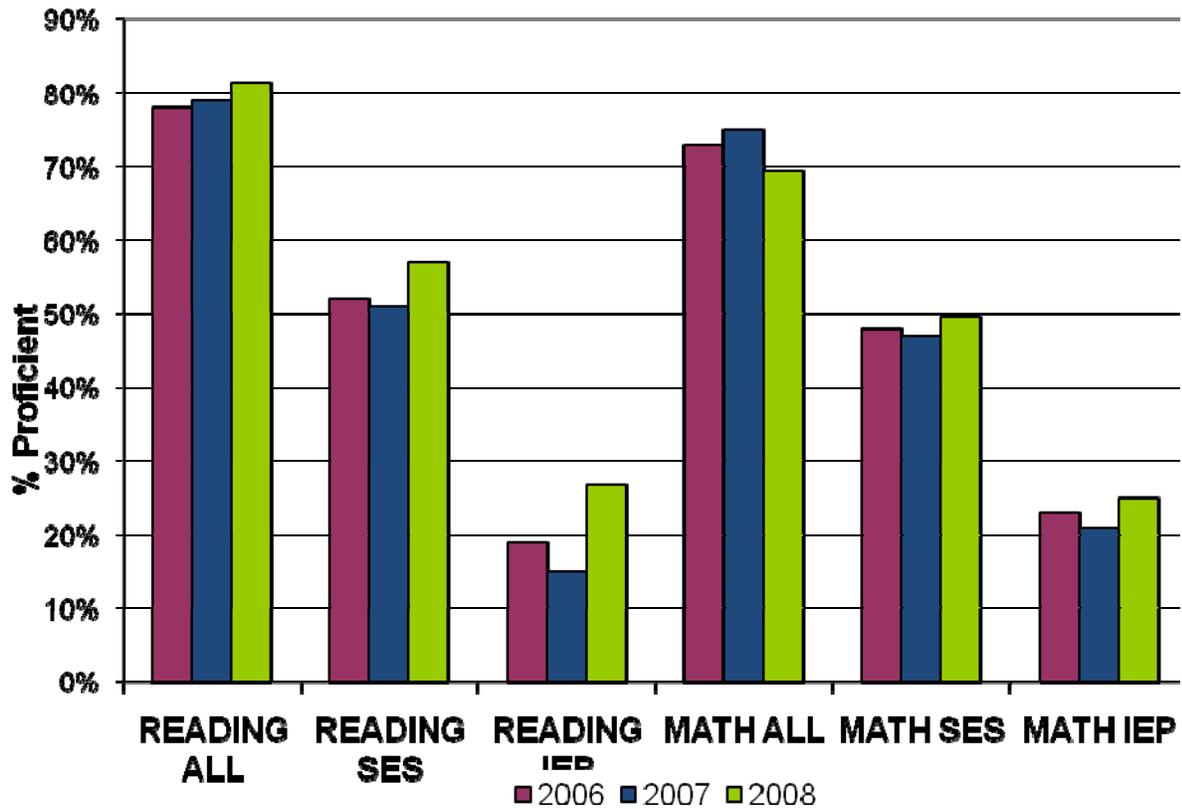


Figure 4

IEP Compliance Review

Introduction

The compliance component of the NHDOE Focused Monitoring Process includes both an internal and external review of Special Education data directly linked to compliance with state and federal Special Education rules and regulations. Data gathered through the various compliance activities is reported back to the school's Achievement Team, as well as the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education. This is for the purpose of informing both the district and the NHDOE of the status of the district's Special Education processes, programming and progress of students with disabilities, as well as the alignment of Special Education programming with the curriculum, instruction and assessment systems within the school district.

Data Collection Activities

As part of the NHDOE Focused Monitoring Process a Special Education compliance review was conducted in the Dover School District. Listed below is the data that was reviewed as part of the compliance review, all of which are summarized in this report.

- Review of random IEPs
- Review of LEA Focused Monitoring Compliance Application including:
 - Special Education Policy and Procedures
 - Special Education staff qualifications
 - Program descriptions
- Review of all district Special Education programming
- Review of Out of District Files
- When appropriate, review of student records for students with disabilities who are attending Charter Schools
- Review of parent feedback collected through the Focused Monitoring data collection activities
- Review of requests for approval of new programs, and/or changes to existing programs

IEP Review Process, Conducted on March 30 and 31, 2009

As part of the compliance component of Focused Monitoring, the NHDOE worked in collaboration with the Dover School District to conduct reviews of student IEPs. The IEP Review Process has been designed by the NHDOE to assist teams in examining the IEP for educational benefit, as well as compliance with state and federal Special Education rules and regulations. The review is based on the fact that the IEP is the foundation of the Special Education process.

As required by the IEP review process, general and special educators in the Dover School District were provided with a collaborative opportunity to review 12 IEPs that were randomly selected to determine if the documents included the following information:

- Student's present level of performance
- Measurable annual goals related to specific student needs
- Instructional strategies, interventions, and supports identified and implemented to support progress toward measurable goals
- Assessment (formative and summative) information gathered to develop annual goals and to measure progress toward annual goals
- Accommodations and/or modifications determined to support student access to the general curriculum instruction and assessment
- Identification of who will gather assessment data, where/when it will be gathered and how data is recorded
- The revision of goals and/or objectives/benchmarks to the general education curriculum, instruction and assessment practices when students are not demonstrating success, when appropriate

- Three-year look back at the student’s progress toward key IEP goals and the documented evidence of student gains

The intended outcome of the IEP Review Process is not only to ensure compliance, but to also develop a plan for improved communication and collaboration between general and special educators, parents and students in the development, implementation and monitoring of IEPs.

BELOW IS THE SUMMARY OF DISTRICT LEVEL FINDINGS THAT RESULTED FROM THE IEP REVIEW PROCESS CONDUCTED IN THE DOVER SCHOOL DISTRICT:

District Summary of IEP Review Process

	Yes	No
Is there a relationship between the student’s needs resulting from his/her disability and the goals?	9	3
Are the annual goals measurable (i.e., contain criteria for measurable and achievable progress)?	8	4
Is there evidence the student is making progress?	11	1
Does this year’s goal reflect last year’s progress? e.g., more complex goal(s), address needs commensurate with the progress and present levels of performance.) (Longitudinal IEP Review)	11	1

Number of IEPs Reviewed: 12

Table 8

Conclusions/Patterns Trends Identified Through IEP Review Process

How has this process informed future plans for improving the writing of student IEPs?

1. Staff members report that the IEP review process provided clarification and guidance regarding the development of annual measurable goals. Additional guidance and professional development in annual goal writing will be provided by the district.
2. Teaching staff will add a more comprehensive summary of assessment data to the profile portion of student IEPs.
3. The practice of document information for programming, progress monitoring and provision of services will be reviewed.
4. Team members will utilize multiple forms of data when developing IEPs, including but not limited to state, district, classroom and individual assessment results.
5. The present levels of performance will be utilized in and align with the development of annual measureable goals.

6. Staff members will reconvene regularly to consider programmatic changes when reading or math interventions are not resulting in improved achievement.

Describe how individual student performance information is conveyed from grade to grade/school to school:

1. Grade level teachers meet with case managers and attend IEP meetings.
2. A data binder travels with students as they progress from grade to grade.
3. Grade level teachers meet with case managers and sending teachers prior to the start of the school year.

How will the district further explore the factors that have impacted poor scores for individual students on state assessments?

1. IEP teams will assure appropriate accommodations are selected and implemented for individual students.
2. Staff members will review practices related to the development and implementation of accommodations and modifications for state, district and classroom level test taking.

Strengths and suggestions identified related to IEP development/progress monitoring and services:

Strengths:

1. Staff members in the elementary schools communicate frequently and work collaboratively to ensure student success.
2. High expectations for students with complex needs were noted by visitors.
3. Support providers, instructional staff and paraprofessionals work well together.

Suggestions:

1. Supplement quarterly updates with narrative information.
2. Document interventions; methods, frequency, duration and results.
3. Develop a consistent schedule that allows for formal collaboration time.

Strengths and suggestions related to the overall education system

Strengths:

1. Staff members throughout the district were candid and reflective of their practices and appeared eager to target areas of needed improvement.

Suggestions:

1. Provide time for, and a structure for, general and regular education collaboration.
2. Provide more scheduled time and guidance/facilitation for collaborative data inquiry and progress monitoring.
3. Insure students who require targeted assistance are receiving it in a timely and consistent manner.

Citations of Noncompliance

1. ED 1109.01 (a) Required IEP Compliance, Contents of IEP

Of the 12 IEPs reviewed, 4 lacked measureable annual goals. All IEPs must include measurable annual goals.

Of the 12 IEPs reviewed, 4 did not include all areas of non-proficiency in the present level of performance. Additionally, these IEPs did not include goals related to all non-proficient areas nor did they provide rationale for not including such goals.

Of the 12 IEPs reviewed, 6 did not contain parent concerns for improving the student's education.

Two of the twelve IEPs did not include evidence that assessment data was utilized in the development and monitoring of the IEP.

2. ED 1109.10 Monitoring and Evaluation of IEPs ED 1109.02 IEP Accountability

At the high school and middle school level, documents indicated that several students had not advanced or had regressed academically. The district needs to ensure that processes are in place to establish accountability in convening IEP teams and revising IEPs for those students who are not demonstrating progress.

DETERMINING EFFECTIVE PRACTICES AND WRITING A PLAN

Summary

The FM Achievement team investigated three areas the team determined was contributing to the achievement gap between students with disabilities and all others: standards based curriculum, assessment, and instruction; parent/family engagement; and use of data for accountability. We found that students with disabilities did not have the same opportunity to participate in grade level instruction because they were pulled out of class for special education services or served in class on lower grade level standards that matched their functioning level. Although special programs were available in the district, special education services for the most part consisted of re-teaching the general curriculum instead of specially designed instruction around individual student area of deficit or need. Few reading intervention "programs" were

being utilized with at-risk non-disabled or disabled students. Literacy data collected within the elementary schools (e.g. PALS. DR,) was used by the reading specialists to plan remediation for students at risk but was not systematically used to plan use of building resources in addressing all students falling behind. Special educators collected data on IEP goals but these goals were often not tied to grade level standards or grade level common assessments. The responsibility for monitoring academic growth in the grade level curriculum for students with disabilities was not clearly defined or understood and therefore often “fell between the cracks”. Special education and regular education planning appeared to be on parallel tracks with few opportunities for collaboration. Although each school could report a group of highly involved parents, parent engagement and involvement in the achievement of all students appeared to be weak. Further inquiry suggested that parents lacked skill and knowledge in using EDLINE. Parents appeared to have few opportunities for supporting the academic achievement of all students.

Improvement Plan

Student Learning Goals

<i>Baseline / Current Status</i>	<i>1 year Goal</i>	<i>2 year goal</i>
On 2008 NECAP Reading, 26% of students with Disabilities scored Proficient or above	On 2009 NECAP Reading, 31% of students with disabilities will score proficient or above	On 2010 NECAP Reading, 36% of students with disabilities will score proficient or above
On 2008 NECAP Reading, 63% of all Dover students scored proficient or above	On 2009 NECAP Reading, 76% of all Dover students will score proficient or above	On 2010 NECAP Reading, 81% of all Dover Students will score proficient or above
On 2008 NECAP Reading 56% Students with Economic Disadvantage scored proficient or above	On 2009 NECP Reading, 61% students with Economic Disadvantage will score proficient or above	On 2010 NECP Reading, 66% students with Economic Disadvantage will score proficient or above

Hypotheses:

- There is a lack of common instructional purpose and expectation.
- The lack of a systematic intervention model creates learning gaps and hinders student academic progress
- Designing a comprehensive system of effective communication which provides opportunities for parental involvement and parent education will narrow the achievement gap

Strategies:

1. All students will receive the same core instruction in general curriculum
2. All students will have the opportunity to participate in interventions targeted to specific areas of need
3. Students with large achievement gaps will be targeted for supplemental instruction

4. The Dover School District will increase opportunities for parent involvement and parent education.

Objectives

1. Anticipated outcomes from implementing the proposed strategies and activities:

Increased achievement for all learners and a narrowing of the achievement gap for students with disabilities.

2. *Anticipated changes in district or school practice as a result of implementing this strategy:*

- **Shared training in tiered interventions for special educators, reading teachers, and literacy facilitators**
- **Using data from formative assessments to identify students for re-teaching the essential standards**
- **Special educators will use scientifically based intervention programs to target areas of need based on diagnostic assessment and data review**

ACTIVITIES	TIMELINE	ESTIMATED RESOURCES	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	MONITORING & EVALUATION /TIMELINE
Identify reading intervention menu across the district; identify reading intervention protocol for selection using available data sources	Sept 2009	-DINI set aside -IDEA entitlement and Recovery funds -FM grant -Reading specialists -Literacy Facilitators	-Literacy Coordinators -SPED Coordinators -Pupil Pers Serv Dir -Curr/Ass/Inst Dir -Title I Dir -Principals	Formative Assessment data/every 2-3 wks Writing prompt data/quarterly Pre/post intervention data/bi-weekly data collection NECAP results for 2010/Mar 2010 PALs data/Sept, Jan, June DIBELS/bi monthly Benchmark assessments K-6/3-4 weeks Attendance at PD opportunities/ea opportunity
Choose a progress monitoring system ; provide professional development in its use ; begin collecting PM data	Oct 2009	-Literacy Tutors and Interventionists -New curriculum materials -Technology consultation		
Clarify details of providing reading interventions- who, what, when, where at each school	Jan 2010	-Formative Assessment consultation from West Ed -Paul Wolf Writing Coach		
Implement and monitor interventions for fidelity	Jan 2010	-Literacy Institutes during summer break -"Data Camp" for administrators		
Training and	Jan 2010			

support in developing 5 question reading probes of essential grade level standards (CFA-R)				
Roll out “reteach and enrich” interventions based on CFA-R	Jan-June 2010			
Provide prof dev on diagnosis of reading deficit and design of intervention matched to need	Sept 2009			
Provide prof dev in use of specific reading intervention programs	Sept-June 2009-2010			
Realign data profile and protocol for intervention and reteach/enrich	June-Aug 2010			
Edline training to parents	Dec 2009	Local funds	-Principals -IT Dir	Attendance at sessions/as delivered
Standardize Edline format on each building’s website	Aug 2009	Local funds	-Admin Team -IT Dir	List of common elements and pattern of display/once in Aug
Parent sessions on importance of NECAP at Open House	Sept 2009	Local funds	- Principals -School Counselors -SPED Case mgrs	Open House agenda/Sept
Parent Survey at Fall Open House asking about needs ; follow up parent workshops addressing needs	Sept –June 2009-2010	Local funds	-Admin Team -School Imp Teams	Open House Agenda/Sept Summary of Survey Response/Oct

Table 9

IMPLEMENTING, MONITORING, AND EVALUATING

This plan will be implemented and monitored by the following teams and staff members:

- DINI Monitoring Team
- FM Leadership Team
- Curriculum/Assessment/Instruction Director
- Pupil Personnel Services Director
- Special Education Coordinators
- Title I Director
- Literacy Coordinators
- Principals

At weekly administrative team meetings, administrators will report on activities within their domain related to the FM plan. A log of activities will be recorded from these reports by the Pupil Personnel Services Director detailing dates, activity detail, and person(s) involved. When activities are completed, the date of completion will be entered into the log. Student achievement data will be collected at each building and summarized by the Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction department with assistance from principals and literacy facilitators. School and district data will be shared with the Administrative team and used by the Literacy Coordinators and Special Education Coordinators to plan individual intervention and by the administrators to plan system improvement. Monthly DINI/FM team meetings will report to the district on progress, including student achievement results. In this way, data will be regularly reviewed and utilized in making decisions regarding school and district improvement.

Multiple sources of data will be available to document implementation of the plan, including:

- Common Formative Assessment data
- Writing prompt data
- Pre/post intervention data
- NECAP results for 2010
- PALs and DIBELS data
- Benchmark assessments K-6
- Attendance at PD opportunities and Open House

The ultimate evidence of effectiveness of the plan will be improved results on the 2010 NECAP in Reading. Other important sources of evidence will be pre/post intervention comparison and benchmark data.

APPENDIX

A. Data Sources

B. Improvement Plans

C. Subcommittee Work

a. Parent/Family Engagement

b. Curriculum/Assessment/Instruction

c. Data for Accountability

D. Communication

E. IEP Compliance Review

F. Dover School District Corrective Action Plan

