



Greenwood Junior High School 2021-2022 School Improvement Plan

Needs Assessment:

Our Needs Assessment indicated having a large number of students who are not being academically successful. Prior to the Covid-19 Pandemic and the ensuing shutdown, GJHS was moving in the correct direction, seeing the number of students with failing grades steadily decrease over a 3.5 year period. 2016-2017 data indicated 46 7th grade students had one or more failing grades at the end of at least one semester. At the end of the fall semester of 2017-2018, 29 7th graders and 10 8th graders had failing grades in at least one class. After instituting a strategically designed advisory program and creating structured learning time (SLT) within a revised schedule, academic success among 7th graders in the fall of 2018 resulted in a reduction of students with failing grades. Only 13 7th grade students had failing grades, while only 17 students school-wide had F's. Continuing on this trend of positivity, at the end of the 2019 fall semester Greenwood Junior High had 10 7th grade students with F's. Then the pandemic hit and schools had to be shut down. During the Fall of 2020, GJHS saw a drastic increase in our students that were being unsuccessful due to the loss of learning caused by the pandemic. At the end of the Fall semester, GJHS had 27 students with F's, making up a total of 68 F's school-wide.

During our needs assessment, GJHS found that not only were more of our students failing, but we also had more student absences when we returned. When looking at the attendance rate comparison, GJHS shows 400 more student absences this year than last year at the date. GJHS students' building attendance rate pre-pandemic was 96.30%, during this time GJHS is at 95.60%. This equates to close to 6 more kids missing per day.

When students miss school they miss priceless opportunities for growth in education and create more learning gaps. According to a 2012 study by Attendance Works, "attendance, even as early as first grade, can be predictive of graduation rates. When students fail to achieve, they run the risk of being retained in the grade level and/or forfeiting eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities such as athletics, band, choir, and others. John Hattie (2009) has identified the practice of holding students back as having a negative effect on overall student achievement, so this is to be avoided if possible. However, when students don't build the prerequisite skills to be successful at the next level they run the risk of increasing the gaps in their learning, and therefore they must be retained.

Goal:

The goal for Greenwood Junior High is to increase student achievement as measured by attendance, classroom grades, core common assessments, reading levels, and ACT Aspire Summative Data. In doing so GJHS will close the learning gaps made by the pandemic and absences, and decrease the number of students making failing grades in core academic subjects, that run the risk of retention or a growing achievement gap in the future grades.

Implementation:

The action plan for GJHS has several components, listed below:

1. Students will be assigned to academic advisors who will assist them in being accountable for their learning.
2. GJHS will reintroduce Finals and Finals Exemption Policy to help increase attendance.
3. GJHS will run a special activity schedule on an as needed basis:
 - a. Focused Reading Time/Other Opps. (book clubs, reading rooms, etc)
 - b. Tutoring and remediation with classroom teachers
 - c. Any other special events and opportunities that may come about
4. GJHS will focus on minimal disruptions to the classroom environment.
 - a. Add more time to each class period to ensure more time on task
 - b. Teachers will have more time to differentiate learning for students
 - c. More time will allow for more opportunities to fill learning loss.
5. When GJHS runs an SLT/ILT schedule, it will be used to attack certain skills and address specific needs.
 - a. Students will be assigned to Structured Learning Time (SLT) or Independent Learning Time (ILT) based on need.
 - b. Students will be placed based on Common Classroom Assessments to address weaknesses in key standards.
 - c. This time will also be used to help promote school culture and social-emotional learning.
6. GJHS will establish a culture of reading.
 - a. All Teachers will be Science of Reading trained before the beginning of the 2021 school year.
 - b. Continue to pursue opportunities to allow access to books for students: continue to communicate with English teachers on building class libraries, continue investment in the school library, and continue to build our digital library.

Evaluation:

GJHS will measure success with the quantity of students who are failing classes, reading below grade level, attendance rate, and common assessment data. Focusing on these data points will help us continue to pursue excellence in education.

Another measure of success will be an increase in student performance as reflected by ACT Aspire Summative testing. Historically, our scores have been high and in relation to the state we have always scored well, but we believe in a growth mindset and always growing and improving. One area specifically that will be focused on is our reading subtest and the growth opportunities in relation to reading.

Note:

From March 2020 to the present, education has changed in many ways due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Positive changes include improved teacher skill in online instruction, teacher proficiency in the use of technology, and student flexibility in the delivery of instruction. Greenwood Jr. High also made adjustments to scheduling to provide for optimal social distancing and teacher planning which proved to be favorable for both teachers and students in a number of ways. Some of these adjustments may find a permanent place in planning. The negatives were simple and overwhelming. Attendance and academic grades were at an all-time low. An increasing number of students had failing grades, poor attendance, and overall lack of engagement. Some students chose to go to school virtually to avoid being contact traced and quarantined away from activities while neglecting their studies. These are areas where continual improvement will be planned, monitored, and adjusted in the coming years.