

THEORY OF ACTION: AN ALIGNED INSTRUCTIONAL SYSTEM

Introduction

In order to implement and achieve the Vision and Mission of the Passaic Public Schools, the Board of Education is committed to creating and sustaining a high performing school district that educates all children and eliminates achievement gaps. It is with this belief that the Board of Education adopts the Theory of Action: *An Aligned Instructional System* to drive policies, budgets, and administrative strategies in order to transform the culture and positively impact the teaching and learning culture of the Passaic Public Schools into one of high performance in both academics and operations.

The theory of action builds on our beliefs and educational research about how children learn, the conditions that best promote learning, and the policies, management systems, and culture that best promote the commitments and high performance of our employees to serve a highly mobile student population in an economically and demographically diverse district. It also reflects our commitment to exceed accountability standards at all levels.

We recognize that all schools are not the same: the needs of children, the capacity of the workforce, and the demands of parents vary from one school community to another. Furthermore, we wish to create a performance rather than compliance work culture and unleash innovation to continuously improve teaching and learning and all school operations.

The Theory of Action addresses the following six areas:

Curriculum

A coherent and aligned curriculum will address every subject, for every grade, pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. The curriculum will include the content standards, or expected student learning objectives, and a scope and sequence by grading period. Such a curriculum will be inclusive of model lesson plans, teaching materials, and assessments, all of which are to be available for easy and timely access.

Through the Theory of Action for *An Aligned Instructional System*, our intention is to provide teachers maximum freedom to teach according to their teaching style and best professional judgment, consistent with high levels of student mastery of the district curriculum.

Assessment

Assessments are conducted, and the results are disaggregated through the data management system by subject, grade level, classroom, teacher, student group, and individual student. In addition, data are analyzed for each student, classroom, grade level, school, and district.

Interventions

Timely and effective interventions ensure all students have access to the curriculum and equitable opportunity for mastery and success.

Professional Development

All members of the Passaic Public Schools learning community will participate as active adult learners in comprehensive professional development system based on curriculum, instruction, assessment, and use of data to increase student learning and achievement.

Human Resources

To support a culture of high performance, the Passaic Public Schools must recruit, hire, and retain professional faculty, support staff, instructional leaders, and operational leaders. All policies, structures, and practices related to human resources must support this objective.

Student Information Systems

A comprehensive student information system must be developed and supported in order to collect critical student achievement data necessary to build a responsive instructional culture.

Change Management

An Aligned Instructional System represents the development of a systemic shift in all aspects of the district operations. It represents a shift into a tightly integrated instructional system that requires change across the organization. This policy will serve as framework for development of policy and budgets, as the district builds a coherent and aligned system around instruction. Such a change requires the support of all participants in the educational system: teachers, administrators, parents, and community leaders.

The Passaic Board of Education believes that adopting *An Aligned Instructional System* as a theory of action for change provides a foundation for the critical work necessary to support student learning.

It is essential that we recognize that this theory of action may require revisiting and revision on a periodic basis; it is required that we frequently evaluate our plans and expectations for the school system. This board will work to communicate and educate future board members to maintain the commitment to this vision, so that the children of Passaic are provided the education that will lead them to success.

Adapted from Center for Reform of School Systems (CRSS). Houston, TX. www.crss.org

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