

Priority and Transformation Schools

New JCPS Board Members Orientation

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POINT 1

For a comprehensive review of priority and transformation schools, new JCPS Board of Education (BOE) members are referred to the documentation associated with the work session on Nov. 15, 2016. In addition, it is recommended for BOE members to review the KDE-AdvancED district audit from April 21, 2016. Particular attention need to be given to the Improvement Priorities.

<http://education.ky.gov/school/prischedrecov/Documents/Jefferson%20County%20Public%20Schools%20Diagnostic%20Review%20Report-%20Final.pdf>

POINT 2

When understanding priority school work, it is important to note that academic and non-academic outcomes are correlated with context (input) and process variables. It is also important to distinguish symptoms from root (structural) causes underlying some of the problems associated with priority schools.

Many of these problems are rooted in poverty, high student mobility, high student truancy, and high teacher turnover. In priority schools, there is a high concentration of new principals and teachers coupled with large number of English Language Learners and students with disabilities.

POINT 3

The work in priority schools is only one side of the coin. The other side is the work with the transformation schools—schools tracking toward priority status. In this regard, this work requires a bi-focal, responsive and proactive approach, involving all levels of the school system and external stakeholders.

POINT 4

Our work is at the intersection of data and action. We monitor all kind of data, identify a sequence of data points, and quickly respond to avoid negative trajectories become a trend or a pattern. Some data is reported monthly and some is reported quarterly. We don't wait till the end of the year to respond.

POINT 5

Key actions are taken to support stakeholders directly working with students in classrooms—teachers (Priority Teacher Institute) and goal clarity coaches (Professional Learning Community). However, the work doesn't end there—we are also developing leaders in priority schools with the National Institute for School Leadership (NISL). The district's divisions and departments ensure the much-needed “differentiated support” in systemic and systematic way, using the Priority School Office as a liaison between the central office and schools.

POINT 6

Our priority school work is a mixed method approach that balances accountability and support. By looking at data (quantitative and qualitative), dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs is created and a research-based practice is co-developed with the school leadership, and then first steps are identified and monitored.

This change model is inspired in the adaptive (rather than technical) change, with requires using the principles of adult learning: involvement, experiential learning, on-the-job implementation, and a pragmatic approach that focuses on results.

POINT 7

The priority work is done collaboratively with Cabinet, Assistant Superintendents, Chief Academic Officer/Academic Leadership Team, KDE (Educational Recovery Staff), and AdvancED, focusing on Improvement Priorities associated with five Standards of educational quality.

<http://www.advanc-ed.org/sites/default/files/documents/SchoolStndsNolevels.pdf>

We are expecting another state audit at the district level by March 2018.