

Maupin Elementary Priority Planning

Improvement Priorities

1. Create and consistently implement challenging curriculum and learning experiences that provide equitable opportunities for students to develop learning, thinking and life skills that lead to success at the next level.
2. Develop and implement a comprehensive, collaborative process by which school personnel use data from multiple assessments of student learning to monitor and adjust curriculum, instruction and assessment. Monitor and adjust the process to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment and it is aligned with the school's purpose and direction.
3. Develop and implement a systematic process that guarantees teachers and support staff are trained in the evaluation and interpretation of data and use findings to determine verifiable improvements in student learning, including readiness and success at the next level. School personnel should consistently monitor data from multiple sources (e.g., cognitive and non-cognitive; comparison and trend) to evaluate the effectiveness of programs as well as to identify teacher professional development needs.
4. Develop, communicate, implement and monitor a school wide instructional process that clearly informs students of learning expectations and requires teachers to use high-yield instructional strategies. Require and monitor the consistent use of exemplars to guide student learning. Administer frequent, formative assessments that align to content standards and use the results to address the individual needs of students. Use instructional strategies that enable students to self-reflect, collaborate, develop critical thinking skills, experience individualized instruction and maximize technology as an instructional resource and student-learning tool.
5. Establish and commit to an academic culture that guarantees 1) shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning; 2) challenging educational programs and equitable learning experiences; 3) a strong commitment to instructional practices that promote active student engagement, depth of understanding and the application of knowledge and skills and 4) high expectations for professional practice.

Preliminary Work

1. After social media posts with inaccurate information regarding the status of the magnet, Assistant Superintendent, Joe Leffert, Board of Education Member, Diane Porter, and Principal, Maria Holmes, met with staff members on February 20, 2017 at 4:00 PM, and with parents on February 21, 2017 at 6:00 PM. The purpose of the meetings was to provide accurate information. Both meetings were held at Maupin. The following statements were emphasized at both meetings:

a. Catalpa Magnet funds have been placed on hold pending the results of the KDE/AdvancED audit. This hold was placed in order to be responsible stewards of district funds. It would be irresponsible to enter into contracts regarding Catalpa Magnet training, etc. until the audit results were released and the Superintendent and JCPS Board of Education made a determination regarding the audit results.

b. In an effort to be transparent with families interested in the magnet program, these lines were added to the Catalpa Magnet parent letters: "We want to inform you that Maupin Elementary is currently designated as a Priority School by the Kentucky Department of Education. Based on our Priority status, changes may occur that impact the magnet program for the 2017-2018 school year."

c. Other meetings will be held after the audit results are delivered to solicit parent and staff feedback on next steps.

There were many other questions that could not be answered, as the results of the audit and any implications were still pending. Questions of primary concern were: 1) Will parents/students in the magnet program be given an alternate timeline/choice of schools for the 17-18 school year if the Magnet is dissolved? 2) Will teachers/staff be given an alternate timeline/choice of transfer requests if the Magnet is dissolved after the close of the transfer window?

There were approximately fifteen (15) families and fourteen (14) staff members at the 6:00 PM meeting, which was held on short notice.

2. Audit results were released on Friday, March 3, 2017. The auditors found that the principal, Maria Holmes, has capacity to lead the turnaround effort. The auditors found that the SBDM council did not have the ability to continue its roles and responsibilities. The auditors established the five (5) Improvement Priorities detailed in the first section of this document. Mr. Leffert, Mrs. Porter, and Mrs. Holmes invited all Maupin staff members to a meeting on Friday, March 3, 2017, at 4:00 PM. Mr. Leffert, Mrs. Porter, and Mrs. Holmes invited Maupin parents to their choice of a meeting at either Noon or 6:00 PM on Monday, March 6, 2017. All meetings were held to discuss the results of the audit regarding the capacity of the principal and SBDM, and the Improvement Priorities.

Adam Kessler of the 15th District PTA and five (5) parents attended the Noon meeting.

Seven (7) parents attended the 6:00 PM meeting.

Staff members and parents were provided a 'Feedback Form' and encouraged to communicate via the form and/or email with Mrs. Holmes and Mr. Leffert in an effort to solicit stakeholder feedback.

3. As of March 13, 2017 eight (8) students have returned magnet application packets for the 2017-2018 school year.

Fiscal Implications

1. As a priority school, Maupin will receive \$393,357 for the 2017-2018 school year to address student learning deficits with Reading Recovery teachers and additional adults in the classroom to implement literacy and numeracy interventions. These funds will also support mental health needs of students.
2. An additional \$482,375 has been placed on hold. These funds were allocated for the Catalpa Magnet, which has failed to meet the academic needs of students and is in direct conflict with the Improvement Priorities.

Considerations

1. The Catalpa Magnet philosophy is in direct opposition to the Improvement Priorities. The examples below are numbered to correspond with the Improvement Priorities included at the beginning of this document.

1. Catalpa Magnet classrooms do not implement a challenging curriculum in terms of Kentucky Core Academic Standards (KCAS). Catalpa Magnet classrooms are inconsistent with classrooms that do focus on KCAS. The philosophy of the Catalpa Magnet includes but is not limited to the following; a) the child has freedom to determine his/her own learning, b) KCAS standards moved to other grades despite accountability model, c) textbooks and other print material are limited, use of computers is discouraged in primary grades, d) reading is not taught until second grade.

2. Catalpa Magnet classrooms do not use data and assessment collaboratively with other teachers in the building. The Catalpa Magnet classrooms vary within themselves concerning the use of data and assessment. Having classrooms with the Catalpa Magnet and those focused on KCAS makes it impossible to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment for curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

3. Catalpa Magnet classroom teachers participate and focus on PD aligned with the Waldorf-inspired (Catalpa Magnet) philosophy. The degree to which these teachers participate in PD focused on data analysis and implications vary from classroom to classroom. Some classrooms present no evidence that data analysis influences instruction, while some Catalpa Magnet classrooms exhibit some evidence of data analysis and implications for learning. The Catalpa Magnet includes Two (2) weeks of Kentahten training which does not include interpretation of quantifiable data. It is common for teachers to loop with students, with no time to strengthen content knowledge and pedagogy of a particular grade level and corresponding standards and benchmarks. Again, reading is not taught until second grade and Kentahten training is based on Waldorf methods rather than teacher needs.

4. Having the Catalpa Magnet program in the school prohibits the use of a school wide instructional process. Some Catalpa Magnet teachers have refused professional books purchased for teachers to improve practice, citing the program as the reason for refusal. Some Catalpa Magnet teachers refuse to participate in Professional Learning Community groups designed to improve instruction and achievement. The Catalpa Magnet philosophy does not include the use of technology, and in most of these classrooms, technology has been removed. Observations to date have shown no evidence of teachers in the Catalpa Magnet using high-yield strategies.

5. With the Catalpa Magnet model in place, it is impossible to establish an academic culture across grade levels. The philosophy embraced by the model can be summarized as allowing the learning to occur naturally; with most academic standards (including literacy and numeracy) being left to teachers in grades 3-5. This philosophy is in contradiction to research on the importance of Early Literacy instruction.

2. The Catalpa Magnet model conflicts with Vision 2020 in several key areas. Those areas also linked directly to improvement priorities are in bold and underlined:

Strategy 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, **1.1.4, 1.1.5, 1.1.6, 1.1.7**

Leading Indicators **1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9**

Strategy 2.1.2, 2.1.3

Leading Indicators 1, 3

Strategy 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3

Leading Indicators 2, 3

Strategy **3.3.3**

Leading Indicators **1**

To align with Vision 2020, we must support the removal of the Catalpa Magnet model at Maupin Elementary. One example of the conflict between Vision 2020 and the Catalpa Magnet is the Third Grade Reading Pledge. Research supports early literacy instruction. The Catalpa Magnet is in direct conflict with the research, Vision 2020, and the Improvement Priorities.

Research shows that for every year of lost instruction, it is virtually impossible to recover or 'make up' the learning, translating into a permanent loss of learning opportunity (Sanders & River, 1996; Wright, Horn, and Sanders, 1997). Research also shows that in the best of circumstances (experienced, effective classroom teacher, conducive learning environment, etc.) we can hope that students will gain approximately 1.5 years of learning in a given school year (Hanushek, 2002). Students with ineffective teachers (or in Maupin's case, the absence of teaching literacy, numeracy, and standards) actually decline (Auguste, Kihn, and Miller, 2010). Research further indicates that students who are behind do not catch up to their normally developing peers (Stanovich, 1986), resulting in a state where the poor stay poor. Children who receive phonological awareness training in kindergarten are more likely to make appropriate progress toward reading (Gillon, 2002). This happens because these students form mental connections between letters and sounds that create memory maps connecting words to sounds and to meaning (Ehri, 2002). Perhaps even more startling, is the statistic that a child who is a poor reader at the end of first grade has an 88% chance of being a poor reader at the end of fourth grade (Juel, 1988).

When all of these findings are considered, we have a system at Maupin that will most likely result in students entering 3rd grade with approximately two and a half years of reading deficit

*Research synopsis comes from the work of Dr. David Paige, Bellarmine University for above references and further research-based support for early literacy instruction. Thanks and appreciation to Dr. Theresa Magpuri-Lavell for providing this document.