



Special School District

**Professional Development:
Academy I
Program Evaluation**

Ros VanHecke, Chair

Board Review: December 8, 2009



Professional Development Standard Program Evaluation

Executive Summary:

The Academy I program develops and supports new teachers during their first three years with the district. The 2007-2008 evaluation assessed how student data was used by Academy I teachers to change instruction and how Academy I Instructional Facilitators used student data to change professional development. This program evaluation describes the status of the program evaluation recommendations.

Strengths

- Academy I teachers have increased their use of data to drive instructional decisions.
- The *Continuum of Skill Set Development* is helpful in coaching conversations to assist teachers in goal setting around their professional learning.
- The Academy I program has been recognized as an exemplar program and will be collaborating with the National Center to Inform Policy and Practice in Special Education Professional Development.
- Teachers reporting meeting student goals have increased.
- Administrators and teachers are satisfied with the program and feel their professional learning impacts student achievement.
- Supervisor expectations support the Academy I program.
- Teacher implement skills taught when expectations are aligned to their expectations.
- First year retention rate has increased over 4 years and the transfer rate has been minimal.

Concerns

- Teachers need to learn to use progress monitoring tools identified in their schools and use data to drive goal setting and instruction.
- Further development and refinement is needed to effectively monitor teacher growth and program effectiveness over time.
- Teachers need enough time to collect and analyze student data and implement strategies aligned with their supervisor and district expectations.
- Teacher expectations and program initiatives are rapidly evolving and expanding.

Recommendations

- Align professional learning in the Academy I program with the instructional strategies and progress monitoring tools, and expectations in their specific teaching environment.
- Continue to focus on the quality instruction cycle (assess learning- plan- teach-evaluate teaching) and progress monitoring to make instructional decisions.
- Continue to refine data and tools used to monitor teacher growth and program effectiveness over time using Continuous Improvement (Baldrige) processes and tools. This would include: aligning Academy I skill sets to the revised Teacher Evaluation criteria, implementation of data teams and collaboration with Human Resources to support recruitment, hiring and retention of teachers.



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Program Evaluation Question(s)

What is the status of recommendations from the Professional Development program evaluation conducted in 2007-2008?

I. Program/Service Information

1. Name of Program or Services: SSD Professional Development: Academy I

2. Personnel Responsible for Evaluation and Program (list):
Ros VanHecke, Director of Planning and Development

3. Demographic Description of Program:
SSD has maintained a vigorous program for beginning teachers for more than 12 years. In the 2004-2005 school year, the Teacher Evaluation Process was revised and a formalized SSD Professional Development Process was developed. This process structured the journey of a teacher’s professional learning through focusing on content theme areas and strands with specific skill sets according to a teacher’s years of SSD experience. The overall structure is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. SSD Professional Development Strands

Strand	Target Audience <i>Teacher Group</i>	Theme Area: Student Behavior, Quality Instruction, Student Performance/Literacy
Induction Program	All New Hires	General Information: Employment, orientation to the district’s organization, expectations, procedures, and guidelines
Academy I	1 st – 3 rd Year Teachers	Fundamental skills across all three theme areas (Prescribed by SSD)
Academy II	4 th – 5 th Year Teachers	Use of data to increase student achievement (Prescribed by SSD with some latitude)
Research and Collaborative Learning	6 th Year or More Teachers	Collaborative work and research which supports SSD and partner district goals (Self directed with approval of supervisor)

The teacher induction and Academy I programs include professional development and mentoring which exceed the State of Missouri certification requirements for the beginning teacher. Our program for new teacher level hires is rigorous, focusing on critical teaching behaviors, specific instructional strategies, and decision-making based on student data. On-site support for teachers provides consultation, as well as coaching and feedback to guide teachers in the development of their professional skills.

4. Date of Evaluation (Year/Duration):
September 2008-June 2009



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5. Goal/Objective of Program/Services:

The goal of SSD Academy I Professional Development program is to develop and retain qualified teachers who provide effective instruction. This program is intensive and supports the teacher's ongoing learning and their implementation of effective, research proven instructional practices.

6. Brief description of relationship between program goals, CSIP and MSIP Standards:

The Academy I professional development is aligned with the SSD Rolling Plan and Comprehensive School Improvement Plan goal areas of Student Performance and Highly Qualified Teachers. In addition, MSIP standard 6.7 requires the use of student data to drive change in instruction and professional development.

II. Evaluation Criteria for Programs/Services Offered:

Achievement data (Teacher report of data and meeting student goals)

Observations and interviews by Instructional Facilitators

Staff perception (Teacher and Administrator Surveys)

Stakeholder Input

III. Description of Stakeholders Engagement in Program Evaluation:

Since the program evaluation in 2007-2008, stakeholders have been involved in the ongoing implementation and evaluation of the program. Stakeholders have included: instructional facilitators responsible for implementing the program and the recommendations, university professors, teachers in the Academy I program, mentors, and administrators. A formal, expanded group was formed in the spring of 2009 to broaden the stakeholder perspectives and analysis of the program. This expanded group of stakeholders met three times in the spring of 2009 (April 15, April 30, and May 13). The collective roster of stakeholders is listed in Table 2.



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Table 2: Stakeholders for Program Evaluation

Name	Role	Name	Role
Lisa Powers	Facilitator-Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports	Julianna Dempsey	Instructional Facilitator
Lindsay McCracken	Facilitator-Regional	Barb Macchi	Instructional Facilitator
Janet Crews	Partner District-Clayton	Kathie Wolff	Instructional Facilitator
Jan Keenoy	Partner District-Clayton	Carol Wolf	Instructional Facilitator
Nancy Suiter	Partner District-Parkway Coordinator	Mary Ellen O'Hare	Instructional Facilitator
Elizabeth Engelmeyer	Teacher –SSD building (Ackerman)	Pat Lane	Instructional Facilitator
Melody Wilkins	Teacher –SSD building (Northview)	Greg Hungerford	Instructional Facilitator
Dana Givens	Teacher-Customized Program	Stephanie Beckham	Instructional Facilitator
Emily Vander Pluym	Teacher-First Year Beginning	Kristin Zimmerman	Instructional Facilitator
Colleen Flickinger	Teacher-Map-A	Tina Maksche	Instructional Facilitator
Shannon Koster	Teacher-Professional Development Committee Chair	Karen Nahnsen	Instructional Facilitator
Annie Amos	Teacher-Second Year Experienced	Marci Louri	Teacher-Third Year Experience
Vicki McMullen	University Partner-Webster University	Sandy Berry	University Partner-St. Louis University
Becky Panagos	University Partner-Lindenwood University	Margaret Gray	University Partner-Fontbonne University
Jill Karr	Director-Central	Alan Wheat	Area Coordinator-Riverview
Ros VanHecke	Director-Learning and Assessment	Kelli Pender	Area Coordinator-Ferguson- Florissant (Customized Program)
Colleen Card	Effective Practice Specialist-Autism	Julie Schroeder	Area Coordinator-Kirkwood (Customized Program-mentoring)
Jeff Schneider	Effective Practice Specialist-Related Service	Kris Weingaertner-Hartke	Area Coordinator- Regional Professional Development
Adam Krenski	Effective Practice Specialist-Social/Emotional/Behavior	Joan Zavitsky	Associate Superintendent
Steve Taff	Effective Practice Specialist/Area Coordinator-Related Service	Brenda Brown	Area Coordinator-Hazelwood
Alyson Diaz-Kleine	Facilitator-Augementative Communication	Meghan Juergens	Area Coordinator-Ferguson-Florissant
Maggie Fitzpatrick Johnson	Facilitator-Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports	Sheri Kanterman	Area Coordinator-Parkway



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When the expanded group of stakeholders met, a focus group format was used to gather their input across three questions:

- *What information and content needs to be included in Academy I?*
- *How might Academy I provide professional development and job-embedded support differently?*
- *Where and when might professional development and job-embedded support take place and who might be included?*

Results of stakeholder input are incorporated in relevant sections below regarding follow-up status of recommendations from the previous program evaluation.

IV. Results

The Academy I program evaluation in 2007-2008 assessed how student data was used by Academy I teachers to change instruction and how Academy I Instructional Facilitators used student data to change professional development. The following section outlines the recommendations from the previous program evaluation and provides an update on the status of those recommendations.

1. The Instructional Facilitators will continue to refine the way that teachers are taught to collect and use student data to include multiple forms and uses of data (e.g. pre-assessment) to drive instructional decisions.
2. Instructional Facilitators will continue to refine the Continuum of Skill Set Development tool and use the data collected as one of multiple sources to further monitor beginning teacher skills and provide opportunities for continual growth across the continuum.
3. Student data will be disaggregated to identify students who made progress but did not meet criteria. The professional development will be revised to address the learning needs of the teachers and the students.
4. Learning and Assessment will identify multiple data sources and tools to measure the overall effectiveness of the Academy I program. Results from formative and summative evaluations of the program will calibrate expectations and pacing of Academy I skill development of teachers.
5. Isolate specific factors cited most frequently as negatively impacting teacher skills and include stakeholders (e.g. administrators, pre-service university representatives, and partner district representatives) in a process to address individual factors.
6. Collaborate with Human Resources to develop a system to monitor teacher retention over time and assess reasons cited by teachers who leave the district. Targeting schools with high turnover rates will also be beneficial.



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Data Use and Instructional Decisions

Recommendation 1: The Instructional Facilitators will continue to refine the way that teachers are taught to collect and use student data to include multiple forms and uses of data (e.g. pre-assessment) to drive instructional decisions.

The aforementioned recommendation was noted in the previous program evaluation due to concerns that some beginning teachers were not demonstrating evidence of using student data to inform instruction. Academy I has continued to focus on strengthening teachers' use of student data to make decisions. Refinements have been made to include additional skill development in data collection and analysis. Explicit instruction in how to collect and analyze data and additional on-site support (such as coaching, consultation, modeling and collaboration) have been given to assist teachers in developing effective ways to collect and use their student data to plan for instruction. Sample data collection forms have also been shared.

Throughout the course of Academy I, all beginning teachers are expected to submit pre, post, and progress monitoring student data to Instructional Facilitators. Each teacher documents their changes in instruction based on their student data. Classroom observations and coaching conversations are also used to verify teacher use of student data to drive decisions.

At the end of the year, these data are used to determine the percentage of teachers who are using student data to drive instructional decisions, which guides the continual improvement of the professional development. Table 3 shows the total number of all teachers in Academy I and the number using data to make instructional decisions.

Table 3. Teacher Use of Data

Academy I Group	06-07			07-08			08-09		
	Total	Using Data	%	Total	Using Data	%	Total	Using Data	%
Total	114	94	82%	208	187	90%	191	168	88%

The data show eighty two percent of the Academy I teachers in 2006-2007 demonstrated the use of data to make instructional decisions, through either their submission of data or the Instructional Facilitator's direct observation. Data for 2008-2009 Academy I teachers indicate eighty eight percent are using data to make instructional decisions. These data show an overall increase in teacher use of data to drive instructional decisions from 2006-2007 until now.

When the expanded stakeholder group gathered last spring, these data were shared with them. They were asked to provide additional feedback with regard to (a) how data was being used to inform teaching and learning and (b) perceived needs for beginning teachers. Stakeholders reported progress monitoring in partner districts is evolving and the expectations of teachers to collect and analyze data using a variety of tools including those within their partner districts are increasing. Stakeholders indicated teachers need to be able to use progress monitoring tools



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identified in their schools and use data to drive goal setting and instruction. Stakeholders noted these needs are compounded because teacher expectations, student performance, and specific progress monitoring tools vary across districts and teaching assignments. These variances provide the Academy I program a challenge to (a) align the progress monitoring tools and expectations with the participant's teaching environment and student needs and (b) revise the professional learning to reflect the initiatives and needs of the teachers specific to their teaching assignment.

Continuum of Skill Set Development Tool

Recommendation 2: Instructional Facilitators will continue to refine the *Continuum of Skill Set Development* tool and use the data collected as one of multiple sources to further monitor beginning teacher skills and provide opportunities for continual growth across the continuum.

Historically, the *Continuum of Skill Set Development* (Appendix A) was created to provide a visual framework for the development of the skill sets in Academy I. The *Continuum of Skill Set Development* describes different levels of practice or knowledge along many stages of development for each of the skill sets in the focus areas. Beginning teachers located the descriptors that best described their current classroom practice, targeted a specific skill area, and used the tool as a guide for self-reflection, assessment and professional goal setting. The information collected from each teacher provided formative data about teacher growth. The *Continuum of Skill Set Development* was initially used with first year beginning teachers during the 2006-2007 school year. This group of teachers (2006-2007) would be the first group to use the continuum over their three years in Academy I.

During the 2006-2007 school year, the Instructional Facilitators (a) field tested the continuum with the Academy I teachers in years two and three, (b) consulted with the New Teacher Center (Santa Cruz, California) and (c) refined the continuum language and provided exemplars for the descriptions. During the 08-09 school year, the continuum was evaluated by the Instructional Facilitators through a focus group format. They noticed that teachers became reluctant to complete the tool over the three years due to the amount of time it takes to complete it. The Instructional Facilitators indicated the tool was instrumental in conversations with teachers to illuminate professional growth, but it was not an effective tool to accurately assess skill development. As a result, the *Continuum of Skill Set Development* is no longer being used to monitor and measure teacher skill development. Instead it is being used as a vehicle in coaching conversations to assist teachers in goal setting around their professional learning.

As a result of our collaboration with the New Teacher Center, the National Center to Inform Policy & Practice in Special Education Professional Development (NCIPP) which works out of the University of Florida-Gainesville, has identified Academy I as a high quality induction program for special educators. The Academy I program will be studied to help NCIPP identify the quality components of an induction program for special educators. In turn, we believe this



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collaboration will result in the further development of our program and will assist us in our refinement and use of data sources and tools to effectively monitor teacher growth over time.

Disaggregated Student Data

Recommendation 3: Student data will be disaggregated to identify students who made progress but did not meet criteria. The professional development will be revised to address the learning needs of the teachers and the students.

The previous program evaluation noted that many beginning teachers were unable to meet specific student-based goals they had set. The Academy I program requires teachers to (a) identify a student or class goal, (b) determine strategies to accomplish the goal, (c) set up a data collection system and review dates, and (d) submit pre, post, and progress monitoring data to Instructional Facilitators for review and discussion.

Teachers in their first year of Academy I use data to determine a student or class goal, and identify the success criteria. These goals primarily focus on specific needs in the area of behavior (e.g., attention seeking, following rules, talking out, etc.). Student data is collected from a variety of sources such as student point sheets, observation data sheets, frequency data sheets, and student sticker charts. Teachers in their second and third year of Academy I set specific student goals. These goals are typically academic-oriented. Teachers assess students in specific academic skills. This student data is used as a baseline. Teachers set goals using these data and the anticipated growth expected based on research in the specific strategy. Student data for this group is reported and collected utilizing (a) formal and informal/teacher constructed pre and post assessments, and (b) progress monitoring tools which include skill acquisition data sheets, charts and graphs, work samples and progress monitoring probes.

Data is collected from the teachers which indicates if their student or class goal is met according to their individual criteria. Over the last three years, student data was disaggregated to determine why some students were not meeting their goals. Further inquiry found some teachers had difficulty in setting realistic student goals. As a result, programmatic changes were made to assist teachers in determining realistic student goals. Direct instruction and coaching were also provided related to setting student goals based on pre-assessment data and progress monitoring. In other instances, strategies needed to be implemented over a longer period of time to show student generalization of skills. These programs were extended to support teachers in their teaching and learning over a two year period of time. Table 4 shows the number of Academy I teachers successfully meeting student goals for the past three years.



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Table 4. Meeting Student Goals

Academy I Group	06-07			07-08			08-09		
	Total	Met Goal	%	Total	Met Goal	%	Total	Met Goal	%
Total	114	60	53%	208	160	77%	191	126	66%

Overall, the number of teachers who reported meeting student goals increased from the 06-07 school year. These data reflect some changes in the program. During the 07-08 school year, facilitators provided the appropriate student goals based on data and student growth rates. This led to 77% of the teachers successfully meeting the student goal. However, during the 08-09 school year, a change was made and teachers were taught to be more self directed in their goal setting. The student goal was determined by the teacher. This led to 66% of teachers successfully meeting the student goal in 2008-2009. The slight decrease may be due to the teachers' skill development in setting goals.

Overall, the disaggregation of student data has identified the need for professional learning in the area of goal setting. Data show teacher report of student success is improved when they are assisted in goal setting. Teachers who reported students who did not succeed noted they did not have enough time to implement the strategies, did not have student data, or felt other demands did not allow them to focus on the implementation of the expected strategies.

These conclusions were also emphasized by the stakeholders. When stakeholders were asked what content should be provided by Academy I, they indicated further learning in the quality instruction cycle (assess learning- plan- teach-evaluate teaching) and progress monitoring to make instructional decisions.

Assessing Program Effectiveness

Recommendation 4: Learning and Assessment will identify multiple data sources and tools to measure the overall effectiveness of the Academy I program. Results from formative and summative evaluations of the program will calibrate expectations and pacing of Academy I skill development of teachers.

Multiple data sources and tools to measure the overall effectiveness of Academy I were examined. These sources include: student performance data, teacher implementation of skills, the *Continuum of Skill Set Development*, and teacher retention. Formative student performance data has been used to coach teachers in their implementation of critical teaching behaviors and instructional strategies. However, student performance data varies over the 3 years and is difficult to use to compare teaching effectiveness over time. Teacher implementation of skills with fidelity is used as a formative measure as well. These data are used to help teachers analyze their teaching. However, teachers often focus on different Academy I skill sets each year. Thus, it is difficult to use these measures for overall effectiveness of the Academy I program. Both



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student performance data and teacher implementation data inform the development of the professional learning but not necessarily the overall effectiveness of the program.

As previously discussed, the *Continuum of Skill Set Development* tool was developed to monitor teacher skill development. The Instructional facilitators were anticipating this tool would capture the overall effectiveness of the Academy I program. Our hope was that we would be able to “track” teacher development over the course of three years. However, due to the lack of teacher completion due to time restraints discussed earlier and the limitation of teacher self assessment, the tool has not been a viable approach to measure the overall effectiveness of the Academy I program.

Teacher retention rates, which are discussed later in this evaluation under recommendation 6, have been used as a measure of effectiveness. SSD retention rates for teachers in their first year are 94% to 95%. This is very favorable. Further inquiry into the research (Hoy, Tarter, Hoy, 2006) shows a teacher’s sense of self efficacy is a significant contributing factor in academic performance and teacher retention. With this research in mind, the stakeholders decided to collect additional data related to teacher efficacy as well as customer satisfaction. A teacher and administrator survey was developed. All Academy teachers (1st – 3rd Year) were surveyed (Appendix B) and asked to respond to items related to the effectiveness and satisfaction with the Academy I program. The teacher survey was distributed to 315 teachers with 180 responding (i.e., 57 % return rate). SSD and partner district administrators supervising Academy I teachers were also surveyed (Appendix C). The administrator survey was distributed to 72 administrators with 54 responding (i.e., 75% return rate). Results of the survey are reported in Table 5.

Table 5. Teacher and Administrator Survey Responses (08-09)

	Total	Agree	%
Teacher Survey Item	Teachers		
My attendance in this staff development program has assisted me in improving my instructional performance	180	164	91%
The job-embedded support provided has had a positive impact on student learning.	180	162	90%
The job-embedded support provided has had a positive impact on my professional growth.	180	161	89%
Administrator Survey Item	Administrators		
Participation of staff in SSD’s new teacher induction program has improved their instructional performance.	54	53	98%
Participation of staff in SSD’s new teacher induction program has improved student learning.	54	49	91%
Overall, I am satisfied with the SSD induction program (Academy I).	54	47	87%

* Agree = Agree or Strongly Agree

As noted above, 91% of teachers and 98% of administrators responding to the survey indicated that participation in Academy I has improved their instructional performance. Specific questions



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were asked of each group. The Academy I teachers gave additional feedback on the job-embedded support provided. Examples of job-embedded support include portfolios, data analysis, data collection, coaching, and teacher collaboration. Ninety percent of the teachers indicated job-embedded support had a positive impact on student learning and 89% responded that job-embedded support had a positive impact on their professional growth. According to these results, 91% of the administrators responded that Academy I has improved student learning and 87% of the administrators are satisfied with the overall program. In summary, data show administrators and teachers are satisfied with the program and feel their professional learning impacts student achievement.

In a quest to calibrate expectations and pace the program, administrators were also asked to assign a priority value to the teacher skill that should be a focus for professional development for newly hired SSD teachers. Respondents rated each skill separately, so it was possible to rate more than one skill at the same level of priority. Table 6 shows the percentage of administrators who identified each of the skills as a top priority.

Table 6. Teacher skills administrator survey response (08-09)

Administrator Survey Item: Priority of teacher skills for professional development of newly hired SSD teachers	Total	Top Priority	%
Use of evidence based instructional strategies	54	29	54%
IEP/Special Education Process	54	27	50%
Classroom/behavior management	54	26	48%
Student engagement	54	22	41%
Lesson planning/lesson design	54	18	33%
Use of instructional technology	54	6	11%

** Priority = rated highest priority*

The extended stakeholder group also focused on three questions related focus and delivery of professional development. These questions and a summary of culminating responses are below.

What information and content needs to be included in Academy I?

Quality instruction cycle; student engagement; academic strategies; content needs to be based on skill sets and Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP); progress monitoring to make instructional decisions.

How might Academy I provide professional development and job-embedded support differently?

On-site professional development; peer observations; coaching; self-assessment through video; try instructional facilitators looping with the same teachers as they move through Academy I; look at different professional development structures; use the data teachers are already collecting as evidence of implementation.



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Where and when might professional development and job-embedded support take place and who might be included?

Professional development and job-embedded supports should occur in varied group sizes and different locations; half-day professional development. Work with Human Resources to develop a process for assessing skill level of new hires.

Both stakeholders and administrators identified instructional strategies to be a top priority. Stakeholders challenged the Academy I program to align the professional development to the expectations in the teaching environment and embed skill development into the teacher's natural environment. Stakeholder discussion recognized teacher expectations are rapidly evolving and expanding. The skill sets should be aligned to these expectations. Human resources commented that the Teacher Evaluation tool is being revised. The stakeholder group recommended the Academy I skill sets be revised to align to the Teacher Evaluation expectations after it is revised.

Factors Negatively Impacting Teacher Skill

Recommendation 5: Isolate specific factors cited most frequently as negatively impacting teacher skills and include stakeholders (e.g. administrators, pre-service university representatives, and partner district representatives) in a process to address individual factors.

The previous program evaluation surveyed teachers on the factors that impacted their skills. Since the last program evaluation, Academy I has focused on reducing the negative impact of some of these factors such as service-delivery models, competing initiatives, and availability of general education instructional materials. Instructional Facilitators and Academy I administrators have met with Directors and supervisors to customize programs for some of teachers. Within these customized programs, strategies and skills were taught within the context of the teacher's setting and job-embedded support was provided by the Instructional Facilitators. In addition to these customized programs, overall job-embedded support has increased to generalize the implementation of Academy I skill sets into the teacher's teaching environment. This has been beneficial in problem-solving systemic issues and identifying possible changes needed for effective instruction.

To assess current perceptions of factors that positively or negatively impact implementation of skills and content learned in Academy I, the teacher and administrator surveys that were discussed previously included this area of inquiry as well. As indicated earlier, all Academy I teachers (1st – 3rd Year) were surveyed and asked to respond. The teacher survey was distributed to 315 teachers with 180 responding (i.e., 57 % return rate). The administrator survey was distributed to 72 administrators with 54 responding (i.e., 75% return rate). Results of the survey are reported in Table 6.



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Table 6. Factors Impacting Teacher Skill

Factor Impacting Teacher Skills	2008-2009			
	Positive Impact		Negative Impact	
	Teacher	SSD Adm.	Teacher	SSD Adm.
	N=180	N=54	N=180	N=54
Expectations of supervisor	49%	NA	2%	NA
Expectations of partner district administrator	32%	NA	2%	NA
Pre-service preparation	29%	30%	3%	2%
Service-delivery model	44%	20%	2%	0
Availability of general education instructional materials	24%	15%	5%	7%
Availability of SSD instructional materials	43%	20%	2%	6%
Availability of instructional technology hardware/software	24%	19%	4%	6%
Availability of instructional technology skill building	20%	11%	2%	4%
Support from school-based mentor	33%	NA	5%	NA
Support from colleague	35%	NA	3%	NA
Scheduling of students in my classroom	23%	NA	6%	NA
Expectations of how instructional time is spent	26%	19%	3%	4%
Competing initiatives	15%	15%	6%	9%

Using the current data from the teacher and administrators survey, Academy I teachers cited expectations of supervisor (49%), service delivery model (44%) and availability of SSD instructional materials (43%) as the most common positive influential factors on their teaching. Factors cited most frequently by SSD administrators included pre-service preparation (30%), service delivery model (20%), and availability of SSD instructional materials (20%) as the most common positive influential factors on their Academy I professional teachers. With regard to factors perceived as negatively impacting instruction, the percentages were fairly small. However, the most frequent factors cited by Academy I teachers were competing initiatives (6%) and scheduling of students (6%). Two factors were cited by SSD administrators as negatively impacting teacher skills: competing initiatives (9%) and availability of general education instructional materials (7%). These data show the expectations of supervisors support the Academy I learning. Teacher response also shows when the service delivery model is conducive to the skill implementation expectations, this is a positive influence. Finally, the availability of materials is critical. “Competing initiatives” is a common factor that negatively influences the teacher’s skill development. The stakeholder focus groups also discussed these challenges. When considering their overall responses, they reiterate the need to reduce the negative impact by aligning the professional development to the expectations in the teaching environment.



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Teacher Retention

Recommendation 6: Collaborate with Human Resources to develop a system to monitor teacher retention over time and assess reasons cited by teachers who leave the district. Targeting schools with high turnover rates will also be beneficial.

Across the country teacher retention rate is used to inform a district in their practices related to hiring, retaining and developing teachers. National retention rate (which is typically the rate of retention after five years in the field) for special educators is 89%-90% (Boe, et al, 1997). SSD has reported retention data for a variety of reasons. Human Resources has a system to track retention and transfer rates for all employees. The Academy I program has used this retention data as an indicator of program effectiveness for several years. These numbers include all teacher level staff. Teachers who are enrolled in the Academy I program described throughout this program evaluation are a subset of this population. The rate of the retention of newly hired teachers after one year of work is shown in Table 7.

Table 7. One Year Retention Rate for Newly Hired Teachers

Category	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09
Number of Newly Hired Teachers	275	255	349	305
Number of Newly Hired Teachers Who Resigned	26	32	18	18
Retention Rate of Newly Hired Teachers	90%	88%	95%	94%

Data show first year retention rate has increased overall since the 05-06 school year. However, it cannot be compared to the national retention rate since SSD does not track new hire retention over 5 years of employment. Another data source was explored. Teachers are interviewed when they leave the district. According to the data from Human Resources, the top three reasons for leaving the district are: retirement, personal/family reasons, or a better opportunity in another district. These data are not disaggregated for new hires. Although the district overall retention rates as well as the first year new hire teacher rates are strong, the data is limited in its use to measure effectiveness of the Academy I program. Another component of the recommendation was to target schools with high turnover rates. The Instructional Facilitators noted that some districts and schools were continually hiring new teachers. For some of these districts, the Academy I program was customized. For others, the mentoring and embedded support was increased. Instructional Facilitator time was increased in working with the teachers. Human Resources has also been focusing on the stabilization of teacher assignments in these targeted districts. Transfer data has been used to track the number of openings due to transfers from each district. Data show the most frequent rate of teacher transfers are aggregately from the North (e.g., Riverview, Hazelwood, Ferguson Florissant, Jennings, Ritenour, and Normandy). However, the rate is minimal due to few positions to transfer into due to attrition cuts and less retirements. This data has not been disaggregated to track the transfer of new hires. If the retention rate and transfer rate is to provide data to inform the Academy I program, further



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collaboration with Human Resources will need to focus on disaggregating the data for new hires.

V. Summary

Strengths

- Academy I teachers have increased their use of data to drive instructional decisions.
- The *Continuum of Skill Set Development* is helpful in coaching conversations to assist teachers in goal setting around their professional learning.
- The Academy I program has been recognized as an exemplar program and will be collaborating with the National Center to Inform Policy and Practice in Special Education Professional Development.
- Teachers reporting meeting student goals have increased.
- Administrators and teachers are satisfied with the program and feel their professional learning impacts student achievement.
- Supervisor expectations support the Academy I program.
- Teacher implement skills taught when expectations are aligned to their expectations.
- First year retention rate has increased over 4 years and the transfer rate has been minimal.

Concerns

- Teachers need to learn to use progress monitoring tools identified in their schools and use data to drive goal setting and instruction.
- Further development and refinement is needed to effectively monitor teacher growth and program effectiveness over time.
- Teachers need enough time to collect and analyze student data and implement strategies aligned with their supervisor and district expectations.
- Teacher expectations and program initiatives are rapidly evolving and expanding.

Recommendations

- Align professional learning in the Academy I program with the instructional strategies and progress monitoring tools, and expectations in their specific teaching environment.
- Continue to focus on the quality instruction cycle (assess learning- plan- teach-evaluate teaching) and progress monitoring to make instructional decisions.
- Continue to refine data and tools used to monitor teacher growth and program effectiveness over time using Continuous Improvement (Baldrige) processes and tools. This would include: aligning Academy I skill sets to the revised Teacher Evaluation criteria, implementation of data teams and collaboration with Human Resources to support recruitment, hiring and retention of teachers.

Person responsible to champion action plan: Ros VanHecke

Timeframe for reporting updates to Board of Education: Biannually

_____ Date: _____
Signature of Administrator Responsible for Chairing Evaluation



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Appendix A

Continuum of Skill Set Development

Continuum of Skill Set Development

Theme Area: A. The teacher will use assessment data in the area of behavior to:

Skill Set #1: Use effective techniques to maintain positive behaviors by recognizing and reinforcing appropriate behavior.			
1	2	3	4
Uses on-going data collection to monitor the effectiveness of techniques in maintaining appropriate behaviors. Fades motivation systems based on data.	Uses data to determine effectiveness of techniques to recognize and reinforce appropriate behavior. Makes changes as needed based on data. Provides direct instruction in components of motivation system based on data.	Uses research and/or evidence-based techniques to increase appropriate behaviors (e.g.- 4:1 positive to negative teacher-student interactions, specific/positive feedback, motivation systems).	Recognizes and reinforces appropriate student behavior.
Skill Set #2: Use effective techniques to maintain positive behavior by making effective use of preventative strategies including sensory supports.			
1	2	3	4
Uses on-going data collection to monitor the effectiveness of preventative strategies in maintaining appropriate behaviors. Fades preventative strategies based on data.	Uses data to determine effectiveness of preventative strategies. Makes changes based on data.	Selects and uses a variety of environmental preventative strategies (e.g.- visual, auditory processing, movement, organizational, fine motor).	Designs physical classroom environment that is conducive to learning (e.g.- access to materials, seating arrangements).
Skill Set #3: Establishes, teaches, and maintains rules, routines, attention signal and schedules (Universals).			
1	2	3	4
Uses on-going data to maintain the effectiveness of rules, routines, and schedules across settings. Fades prompts and cues based on data.	Uses data to plan for and provide direct instruction in rules, routines, and/or schedules.	Uses data to review, revise and assess rules, routines and schedules to reflect research and/or evidence-based practices. Refers to rules, routines and schedules throughout school day.	Posts and communicates rules, routines, and classroom student schedules.
Skill Set #4: Use effective techniques to find and eliminate causes of undesirable behavior.			
1	2	3	4
Uses on-going data to maintain techniques to decrease undesirable behavior. Uses data to analyze effectiveness of replacement behavior. Makes changes based on data.	Uses data to determine effectiveness of techniques to decrease undesirable behavior. Provides direct instruction in replacement behaviors. Collects data on student's use of replacement behavior to determine effectiveness.	Uses research and/or evidence-based techniques to decrease undesirable behavior. Investigates possible replacement behaviors.	Recognizes that behavior is a form of communication. Investigates causes (antecedents) of undesirable behavior and implements an intervention.

Theme Area: A. (CONTINUED) The teacher will use assessment data in the area of behavior to:

Skill Set #5: Identify the essential components of a functional assessment and the resources to support the teacher in the team process.			
1	2	3	4
Leads a team through the functional assessment process.	Defines terms and components associated with functional assessment. Participates in conversations and contributes data as part of the functional assessment team.	Names the components of a functional assessment and related terms.	Understands that a functional assessment and behavior intervention plan are written for certain students who demonstrate challenging behavior as required by law.

Theme Area: B. The Teacher will use assessment data in the area of quality instruction to:

1) Assess student learning, use assessment results to plan, select learning experiences, deliver instruction & reflect on evidence of student			
1	2	3	4
Uses pre and post assessment data to gather evidence of student learning to plan and provide instruction.	Reflects on teaching and student performance data after a lesson to plan and provide instruction.	Collects and reviews data on student performance related to instruction.	Provides instruction to students.
2) Provide direct instruction in skills and strategies to ensure that students have access to and benefit from the general education curriculum			
1	2	3	4
Provides direct instruction using appropriate components of lesson design based on student data.	Provides direct instruction using some components of an advance organizer, body, and post organizer.	Provides instruction that includes an opening, teacher presentation, and closing.	Provides instruction to students.
3) Demonstrate techniques to promote maximum student involvement/learning.			
1	2	3	4
Selects and demonstrates student engagement techniques that are based on student data and outcome of lesson.	Uses research and/or evidence-based student engagement techniques to increase student involvement / learning. Poses questions to address all levels of thinking. Elicits varied types of responses from students (e.g.-say, write, do) throughout the lesson.	Poses application questions. Elicits responses from whole groups and individual students.	Poses knowledge and comprehension questions. Calls on student volunteers.
4) Integrates basic technology in the learning environment.			
1	2	3	4
Integrates basic instructional and/or assistive technology into instruction based on student data.	Uses basic technology as a means for providing instruction.	Uses basic technology as a tool for teacher productivity/communication. Supports student's learning needs through the use of assistive technology.	Complies with district procedures by using Encore and SSD e-mail. Participates in IEP team process to consider assistive technology for students.

Theme Area: B. (CONTINUED) The Teacher will use assessment data in the area of quality instruction to:

5) Identify cultural and diversity factors that contribute to student learning.			
1	2	3	4
Designs and provides instruction that connect to students' differences.	Selects appropriate instructional materials that respect students' differences.	Understands how ethnicity, class, gender, disability, and sexual orientation influence student learning and classroom climate. Promotes / models classroom interactions that respect students' differences.	Uses person first language. Builds relationships with all students (e.g.- uses students' first name, seeks information about students' background and diversity issues).

Theme Area C. The teacher will use assessment data in the area of literacy to:

1) Provides instruction in strategies and routines that address student needs in literacy / numeracy.			
1	2	3	4
Provides direct instruction in a variety of research and/or evidence-based strategies/routines that aligns with pre/post assessment data.	Demonstrates understanding of multiple research and/or evidence-based strategies/routines. Provides direct instruction in a research or evidence based strategy/routine based on student performance data.	Provides direct instruction in a research or evidence-based strategy/routine.	Provides instruction in literacy/numeracy.

Theme Area E. The teacher will use assessment data in the area of professional growth to:

1) Reflect on teaching and learning through job-embedded staff development, self-reflection and collecting teacher and student data.			
1	2	3	4
Uses multiple sources of evidence to support accuracy of reflections regarding teaching and learning.	Uses student data to reflect on teaching and learning.	Uses prescribed tools and protocols to reflect on teaching and learning.	Reflects on teaching.



Professional Development Standard Program Evaluation

Appendix B

Academy I: Teacher Survey

Academy I High Quality Professional Development Evaluation

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Academy I Professional Development 2008-2009

Page 1 - Question 1 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

Please select the staff development program you attended during the 2008-2009 school year. (Select One)

- Academy 1, Year 1: Classroom Supports for Instruction
- Academy I, Year 2: Effective Teaching-Proficiency in Sentence Writing
- Academy 1, Year 2: Effective Teaching-Reading Strategies for Elementary Students Grades 3-6
- Academy 1, Year 2: Effective Teaching-Literacy Strategies for Primary Students (K-2)
- Academy 1, Year 2: Effective Teaching-Instructional Strategies for the Math Classroom
- Academy 1, Year 2: Effective Teaching-Secondary Reading
- Academy 1, Year 2: Effective Teaching-Instructional Strategies for the Co-Teaching Classroom
- Academy 1, Year 2: Effective Teaching-Supports for Students with Social-Emotional Concerns
- Academy 1, Year 2: Effective Teaching-Pre-Emergent Literacy
- Academy I, Year 3: Thoughtful Teaching-Paragraph Writing
- Academy 1, Year 3: Thoughtful Teaching-Elementary Reading Comprehension
- Academy 1, Year 3: Thoughtful Teaching-Secondary Reading Comprehension
- Academy 1, Year 3: Thoughtful Teaching-Instructional Strategies for the Math Classroom
- Academy 1, Year 3: Thoughtful Teaching-Instructional Strategies for the Co-Teaching Classroom
- Academy 1, Year 3: Thoughtful Teaching-Support for Students with Social-Emotional Concerns
- Academy 1, Year 3: Thoughtful Teaching-Literacy for Students with Developmental Disabilities

Page 1 - Question 2 - Choice - Multiple Answers (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

What district(s) do you serve? (Check all that apply.)

- Affton
- Bayless
- Brentwood
- Clayton
- Ferguson-Florissant
- Hancock Place
- Hazelwood
- Jennings
- Kirkwood
- Ladue
- Lindbergh
- Maplewood-Richmond Heights
- Mehlville
- Normandy
- Parkway
- Pattonville
- Ritenour
- Riverview Gardens

- Rockwood
- University City
- Valley Park
- Webster Groves
- Wellston
- SSD Schools; Court Programs; Itinerants
- County-Wide

Page 1 - Question 3 - Choice - Multiple Answers (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

What level of students do you teach? (Check all that apply.)

- elementary (k-5)
- middle school (6-8)
- high school (9-12)

Page 1 - Question 4 - Choice - Multiple Answers (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

I attended Academy 1 staff development for the 2008-2009 school year during the following instructional days: (Check all that apply.)

- first semester
- second semester

Page 1 - Question 5 - Choice - Multiple Answers (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

Instructional delivery of staff development included: (Check all that apply.)

- class discussions
- group work
- guided practice
- hands-on
- modeling study groups
- lecture
- question and answer
- participant presentations
- make-and-take
- action research
- data analysis
- book study
- presentation
- Other, please specify

Page 1 - Question 6 - Rating Scale - One Answer (Horizontal)

[Mandatory]

My attendance in this staff development program has assisted me in improving my instructional performance:

strongly agree

agree

disagree

strongly disagree



Page 1 - Question 7 - Choice - Multiple Answers (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

This staff development program included the following job-embedded support(s): (Check all that apply.)

- portfolios
- data analysis

- coaching
- action research
- reflective journals
- teacher collaboration
- video tape reflection
- data collection
- model teaching
- small group cohort
- no job-embedded supports were provided
- Other, please specify

Page 1 - Question 8 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

On average, how many hours did you participate in job-embedded supports as described above?

- 0 hours
- 1-5 hours
- 6-10 hours
- 11-15 hours
- 16-20 hours
- 21-25 hours
- 25+ hours

Page 1 - Question 9 - Choice - Multiple Answers (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

When did your job-embedded support(s), or follow-up support take place? (Check all that apply.)

- outside contract time
- during contract time, but before/after school or during plan time
- during the instructional day
- Other, please specify

Page 1 - Question 10 - Rating Scale - One Answer (Horizontal)

The job-embedded support provided has had a positive impact on student learning:

strongly agree

agree

disagree

strongly disagree



Page 1 - Question 11 - Rating Scale - One Answer (Horizontal)

The job-embedded support provided has had a positive impact on my professional growth:

strongly agree

agree

disagree

strongly disagree



Page 1 - Question 12 - Rating Scale - One Answer (Horizontal)

[Mandatory]

I have established trust and rapport with my Academy I facilitator.

strongly disagree

disagree

agree

strongly agree



Please respond to this question if you are currently in Academy I, Year 1 only: My relationship with my Academy I facilitator offers an opportunity for reciprocal growth and learning.

strongly disagree



disagree



agree



strongly agree



My district, supervisor, and/or building administration support me in this staff development program by providing: (Check all that apply.)

- release time
 - release time with coverage
 - resources/materials
 - coaching/conversations
 - Other, please specify
-

Time and resources have been provided for practice and follow-up for skill development in my work with students in the following areas: (Check all that apply.)

- Student Behavior
- Quality Instruction
- Student Performance in Literacy / Mathematics
- Reflection

[Mandatory]

Technology: Please check the types of technology used by presenters during your staff development: (Check all that apply)

- internet
 - computer
 - SMART board
 - digital camera
 - computer lab
 - Other, please specify
-

[Mandatory]

As a result of this staff development program, please check the types of technology you are using with students: (Check all that apply)

- internet
 - computer
 - SMART board
 - digital camera
 - computer lab
 - software
 - Other, please specify
-

If you checked "software" on Question #17, please list the software used/currently using:

As a result of this staff development activity, please check the types of technology students are accessing/using: (Check all that apply)

- internet
- computer
- SMART board
- digital camera
- computer lab
- software
- Other, please specify

If you checked "software" on Question #19, please list the software used/currently using:

To what degree do the following factors impact implementation of the skills asked of you in your Academy I professional development?

	negatively	limited impact	no impact	somewhat impact	positively impact
Expectations of supervisor	<input type="radio"/>				
Expectation of Partner District administrator	<input type="radio"/>				
Pre-service preparation	<input type="radio"/>				
Service delivery model (i.e.,collaborative classroom, resource room, self-contained room)	<input type="radio"/>				
Availability of general education instructional materials	<input type="radio"/>				
Availability of SSD instructional materials	<input type="radio"/>				
Instructional technology software/hardware	<input type="radio"/>				
Instructional technology skill building	<input type="radio"/>				
Scheduling of students in my classroom	<input type="radio"/>				
Expectations of how instructional time is spent (i.e., teaching content vs.	<input type="radio"/>				

strategies vs. tutoring

Competing initiatives (i.e., Partner district expectations different than SSD)

Support from school-based mentor (applies to beginning teachers in their first year only)

Support from building level colleague (applies to teachers in their first year with district with teaching experience)

Page 1 - Question 22 - Open Ended - Comments Box

[Mandatory]

In what ways has this professional development program (instructional days, mentoring, support from instructional facilitator) supported your professional growth?

Page 1 - Question 23 - Open Ended - Comments Box

Please add any comments which would contribute to our future planning of this High Quality Professional Development program.

Thank You Page

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Professional Development Standard Program Evaluation

Appendix C

Academy I: Administrator Survey

Please rate the following professional learning processes/supports you feel would meet the needs of students and newly hired SSD teachers in your area of supervision:

	Least Effective	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Most Effective
Coaching	<input type="radio"/>									
Classroom observations	<input type="radio"/>									
Modeling	<input type="radio"/>									
Whole group learning	<input type="radio"/>									
Small group cohorts	<input type="radio"/>									
Full day professional development activities offered a few times per school year	<input type="radio"/>									
Partial day professional development activities offered several times per school year	<input type="radio"/>									
Professional development at SSD Learning Center	<input type="radio"/>									
Professional development at school/district site	<input type="radio"/>									
Web-based modules; conferencing; resources/supports	<input type="radio"/>									

Overall, I am satisfied with the SSD induction program (Academy I).

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please add any additional comments you would like us to consider as we continue our work to improve the SSD teacher induction program.

Thank You Page

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