



Richmond School District Sussex, Wisconsin

Blue Ribbon Schools Action Plan

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Introduction and Overview

Outlined in this report is a plan to accomplish Blue Ribbon School's Lighthouse Eligibility status in each of the areas recommended for improvement in the Blue Ribbon Schools assessment process. Richmond School met Blue Ribbon School Lighthouse Eligibility status in six of the nine established categories, including:

- Category 1 Student Focus and Support
- Category 2 School Organization and Culture
- Category 3 Challenging Standards and Curriculum
- Category 7 Leadership and Educational Vitality
- Category 8 School, Family, and Community Partnerships, and
- Category 9 Indicators of Success

Richmond did not meet eligibility in three categories:

- Category 4 Active Teaching and Learning
- Category 5 Technology Integration
- Category 6 Professional Community

The Action Plan details the strategies enacted to address the categories deemed in need of improvement following the Blue Ribbon School Survey process and on-site visit by the Blue Ribbon School officials in February 2008. The plan begins with several base assumptions that the Board of Education and administration completed prior to submitting this report. They include:

1. Hire individuals needed to provide technology integration and professional development in support of the Action Plan
2. Budget funds needed to accomplish goals set in the Action Plan
3. Create new partnerships with parent groups, such as the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), community businesses, and area educational agencies in support of the new District Vision and Beliefs Policy.

Richmond School District faculty and administration value the lessons learned from working with the team of evaluators from the National Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence Organization. The on-site evaluation gave Richmond faculty and administration the opportunity to analyze the survey data and gain a deeper understanding of the school improvement research that undergirds the Blue Ribbon Schools assessment process. It also gave faculty and administration a chance to develop a deeper understanding of the Richmond School organization, its strengths and areas in need of improvement, and the perceptions of its various stakeholder groups.

While technology integration surfaced as the dominant theme in the needs assessment process, communications pertaining to existing policies and practices also surfaced as an important focus. As a result, along with the three targeted areas: Active Teaching and Learning, Technology Integration, and Professional Community, “communication” is also cited as an area of focus throughout the plan.

A Building Leadership Team made up of selected faculty and administration was organized in April 2008 to evaluate the Blue Ribbon Schools survey data, identify appropriate improvement strategies, and design a dynamic system for communicating and educating individuals associated with the school. Each area identified in need of improvement in the Blue Ribbon Schools survey process was then delegated to an action planning “sub-team” that met to disaggregate and further analyze the survey data, hypothesize antecedent variables, and propose improvements. The sub-teams evaluated the dimensions of the targeted areas from three perspectives: 1) Current Reality, 2) Actions to be Taken, and 3) Evidence.

The “Current Reality” section depicts actions already in place prior to or since the Blue Ribbon Schools survey process. The “Actions to be Taken” section is the heart of our plan designed to address the three focus areas. The “Evidence” section illustrates artifacts or documents that will provide tangible data that the Action Plan has been carried out or accomplished. Each of the three focus areas is prefaced with a paragraph that provides background information for the plan to follow.

Category 4 of Lighthouse Eligibility: Active Teaching and Learning

The Active Teaching and Learning theme is the first of three categories in the Blue Ribbon School Lighthouse schematic in which Richmond School did not meet eligibility. In this category Richmond had six items out of fifteen that were rated as “school strengths,” while three were deemed in “need of improvement.” When faculty and administration analyzed this category, it was clear that the school was exemplary in holding and achieving high academic standards, while also emphasizing higher level/critical thinking skills, but needed additional focus in the area of student-initiated learning. Richmond students are top performers in the state (according to www.schooldiggers.com) in meeting and exceeding the standards of learning established by the Wisconsin Department of Education. However, Richmond School should expand inquiry-based and problem-solving learning experiences designed to optimize student engagement, as well as student choice activities and student-initiated projects. The action plan below addresses this phenomenon. The action plan also includes two additional survey items that fell just short of the “school strength” rating, for a total of five action items in this category.

Issue	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
<p>4.A.5 The School provides hands-on, investigative experiences for all students in a variety of class settings.</p>	<p>Staff and administration devoted three summers (2002-2005) to developing hands on and investigative activities to integrate into the science curriculum. Examples include a roller coaster simulation, suspension bridge-building project, as well as numerous live insect and agricultural projects. In addition, every grade level has incorporated Full Option Science System (F.O.S.S.) units into selected curriculum topics and implemented independent student projects, such as the grades 6-8 Science Fair. The annual Science Fair is specifically designed to involve students in investigating science phenomenon.</p> <p>Social studies curriculum is also enhanced with class-wide re-enactments of historical events, times, and cultures (e.g. Egypt Project, Medieval Knights Project, etc).</p> <p>While overall instruction and learning at Richmond have moved in the direction of hand's on, investigative learning experiences, an increased focus in this area is needed.</p>	<p>S.M.A.R.T. Goals (S.M.A.R.T. means specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and time-bound) have been used by the Richmond faculty since the 2005-06 school year. The 2008-09 school-wide S.M.A.R.T. Goal will focus on expansion of inquiry-based, problem-solving learning experiences for students, as well as increasing student engagement through greater emphasis on student choice and student-initiated projects.</p> <p>The newly adopted math curriculum, planned for implementation in the 2008-09 school year, will emphasize hand's on and problem-based learning experiences through the use of manipulatives, software simulations, and web-based video streams. An e-textbook will also be utilized to create interactive learning experiences via the school's 23 new SMART Boards.</p> <p>The Building Leadership Team will develop a menu of hands-on, inquiry-based and problem-based learning experiences, by grade level and content area, for teacher use and implementation.</p> <p>The Building Leadership Team will develop a series of communications designed to educate and inform parents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S.M.A.R.T. Goal reports to administration • Building Leadership Team documents • Student/Staff Interactive Discussions w/minutes • Mid-year and year-end student staff surveys • Report to Board of Education June 2009 • School Improvement Plan

Issue	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
<p>4.B.1 The school provides opportunities for students to complete independent projects in a variety of courses.</p>	<p>Over the last three years, Richmond faculty have begun implementation of grade level and content specific strategies designed to facilitate independent projects. This initiative, entitled the Curry/Samara Model for differentiating the curriculum through thinking skills, is also used to facilitate the use of “product descriptors” that provide students access to a self-assessment system for monitoring their efforts in designing and carrying out independent projects.</p> <p>Annually, the School Counselor meets with grades 5-8 students to set individual learning goals. Student designed learning experiences are included in this process.</p> <p>Staff and administration need improved communication and reflection time to focus greater emphasis in this area.</p>	<p>In fall 2008, the administration and teachers will conduct a literature review on the topic of independent projects. The Building Leadership Team will also introduce a menu of recommended independent projects for implementation by content area for all grade level teachers.</p> <p>During the remainder of the 2008-09 school year, the Richmond Differentiation Coach will collaboratively assist teachers in the development and implementation of independent learning projects.</p> <p>In May 2009, the Differentiation Coach will present a report to the Building Leadership Team identifying improvement efforts as well as areas in need of continued support. 2009-10 goals will be developed from this report.</p> <p>Parent communication pertaining to this topic will be integrated with 4.A.5 communications.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Leadership Team documents, minutes, and discussions with faculty • Grade level team meeting minutes • Student/Staff surveys • Building Leadership Team minutes • End-of-year Board of Education report • School Improvement Plan

Issue	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
<p>4.B.2 The school provides ways for students to be involved in decisions regarding their own learning experiences.</p>	<p>The Curry/Samara Model for differentiating the curriculum provides frameworks for student choice and decision-making. This framework is used at all grade levels K-8.</p> <p>The Curry/Samara Unit Matrix Design Framework, piloted during 2007-08, will be expanded during the 2008-09 school year to further support student choice and decision making.</p>	<p>As part of the literature review process for developing a school-wide framework for independent projects, a Student Goal Setting template will be developed for use at all grades. This template will be aligned with the S.M.A.R.T. Goal template used by staff and administration to guide their own learning and professional development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Leadership Team minutes • Student Goal Setting template • Faculty meeting discussions • Mid-year and year-end Staff/Student Survey results • School Improvement Plan
<p>4.B.4 The school provides opportunities for students to be engaged in real-life, problem-solving experiences.</p>	<p>Richmond School District utilizes simulations, field trips, technology applications, and hands-on experiences in support of real-life learning.</p> <p>The Richmond “Peace Garden” allows students and teachers the opportunity to work together planting flowers, vegetables, bushes, and trees. The Peace Garden is used by each grade level for special projects such as planting a bush for a deceased family member of a student enrolled in the school.</p> <p>Annually, and under the direction of the School Counselor, district staff implement all-school programs such as Career Day, Fine Arts Day, Passport to Friendship, The Diabetes Walk, Jump Rope for Heart, and</p>	<p>The Building Leadership Team will educate the Richmond community on the topic of real-life problem solving learning experiences.</p> <p>Faculty meetings, team meetings, committee meetings, and written communications to parents (e.g. Classroom Newsletters, Richmond Website, and Weekly Administrator’s Corner) will communicate student participation in real-life, problem solving learning experiences.</p> <p>The Building Leadership Team and Differentiation Coach will develop, implement, and archive samples of student based real-life problem solving learning experiences.</p> <p>Integrating more real-life problem solving learning experiences into math via</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Leadership Team minutes • Artifact binder of student samples • School Improvement Plan

Issue	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
	<p>Careers on Wheels.</p> <p>Each student at Richmond School is assigned a “Buddy.” Upper grade buddies care for their primary grade counterparts while attending all school events and help acclimate new students to the cafeteria, the Library Media Center, and concerts.</p>	<p>SMART Board video streaming, e-text simulations, and interactive lessons will also be a natural outcome of the new math curriculum adoption.</p> <p>Parent education and communication pertaining to this topic will follow the plan proposed for 4.A.5 and 4.B.1.</p>	
<p>4.C.3 Library/media and information gathering and analysis skills are coordinated and integrated into the instructional program.</p>	<p>The Library Media Center instructional and support staff survey faculty each September to identify curriculum and instruction needs as they pertain to library media services and resources. These needs are used as the basis for goal setting and programming decisions.</p> <p>Library Media Center instructional and support staff collaborate with grade level teachers on a weekly basis to strategize the manner in which library skills will be integrated into instructional themes (e.g. using Curriculum Maps and various websites to enhance lesson designs).</p>	<p>During the 2008-09 school year, library skills updates will be included in grade level newsletters, which will improve communications between and amongst classroom teachers, Library Media staff, parents, and students.</p> <p>Library Media Center staff will continue to present weekly lessons to students in grades K-5. In addition, weekly lessons will be offered to students in grades 6-8 to enhance present programming.</p> <p>The Library Media Center will be open before school from 7:30 a.m. until 8:10 a.m., during regular school hours, and after school from 3:15 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. daily. After school availability will also be open to parents and community members.</p> <p>The Library Media Center staff will survey library users in January and May 2009 to collect data for determining goal accomplishment and initiate goal development for the following school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom Newsletters • Library Media Center quarterly reports to the Building Leadership team. • Library Media Center end-of-the year report to the Board of Education • School Improvement Plan

Issue	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
		<p>year. This report will be presented to the Building Leadership Team for inclusion in the year-end report to the Board of Education.</p> <p>The Library Media Center will provide quarterly reports to the Building Leadership Team. These reports will provide data pertaining to coordination efforts, increased accessibility to the Library Media Center, additional services, as well as communication efforts.</p>	

Category 5 of Lighthouse Eligibility: Technology Integration

The core mission of the Richmond School District Technology Committee is to increase student learning, to enhance students' ability to effectively and constructively interact in a technological world, and to give students a core of experiences that will enable them to become effective consumers of information. The goals of the Richmond School District Technology Committee fall into four main categories: 1) student learning and information literacy, 2) staff competency and development, 3) technology leadership, and 4) communication. At the heart of this plan is the intent to integrate information and technology resources into the core of the curriculum as well as the core of learning; enabling every student and staff member to engage fully in work characteristic of the 21st Century global citizen.

Over the last three years these goals have translated into many positive actions being taken in the area of technology at the school. There is still much work to be done. Consequently, technology is a major area of focus in the Blue Ribbon Schools Action Plan.

Issue	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
<p>5.A.1 The school incorporates technology applications (hardware as well as instructional software) into the instruction program.</p>	<p>During the 2007-08 school year, a Technology Director, a Technology Integrator, and a Business Education teacher were hired by the Richmond School Board.</p> <p>The newly established Richmond Software Selection Committee met regularly to determine instructional software needs.</p> <p>The Richmond Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), in coordination with the Richmond Board of Education, purchased 140 new computers during the 2007-08 school year.</p> <p>In January 2008, the Board of Education adopted a K-8 technology applications curriculum aligned with state standards and high school entrance expectations.</p>	<p>The District will install four additional computers and a SMART Board in the Library Media Center in fall 2008. This installation will provide additional opportunities for students to engage in learning via the use of current technology.</p> <p>The District Technology Integrator will coordinate technology applications with classroom teachers throughout the 2008-09 school year.</p> <p>Library Media Center staff will receive three days of training in the use of SMART Boards, SMART Board interactive lesson design, and SMART Board applications (such as video streaming), for the purpose of supporting faculty utilization of SMART Boards and other technology applications.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting summaries will be shared with the Building Leadership Team. • Notes from Technology Club for Teachers Instructional Coach • Building Leadership Team end-of-the year report • School Improvement Plan

Issue	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
	<p>In June 2008, the Board of Education approved the purchase of 23 SMART Boards acquired through joint agreement with the Richmond Parent Teacher Organization (PTO).</p>	<p>Each teacher utilizing SMART Boards during the 2008-09 school year will receive training and curriculum development time.</p> <p>Teachers receiving SMART Boards will also have daily access to technology integrator coaching.</p> <p>A Technology Club for Teachers will be implemented during the 2008-09 school year. Bimonthly workshops will be conducted by technology staff with a focus on sharing successful instructional strategies, problem solving technical challenges, and developing strategies to increase student engagement with the technology.</p> <p>The Building Leadership Team will provide on-going consultation with the Technology Club. Resources and services will be made available as needed to further support teacher preparation.</p> <p>The Building Leadership Team representatives working with the Technology Club for Teachers will provide on-going updates. Trends, services, and problem solving will be included in the year-end report to the Board of Education.</p>	

Issue	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
<p>5.A.3 Teachers and students have time to use the Internet and other technology for a variety of purposes, such as writing, research, and problem-solving.</p>	<p>Richmond School and its enrollment of 500 students have experienced a year of change regarding technology and instructional improvements. By replacing 140 computers, adding technology staff, and implementing a new K-8 curriculum, we embrace our promising future and welcome new challenges and opportunities for improved learning.</p> <p>First year implementation of these new technologies resulted in high levels of student achievement, as well as meaningful problem identification. Issues to be resolved for the 2008-09 school year include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expanding technology integration into grades 6, 7, and 8, 2. Providing additional staff training in technology applications, and 3. Scheduling computer labs more flexibly to facilitate integration. 	<p>During the 2008-09 school year, middle school teachers will utilize an integrated master schedule in which language arts teachers will co-teach lessons with the computer applications teacher. Two days out of every week will be devoted to integrating technology applications to the current study theme.</p> <p>The Technology Integrator will expand services from grades K-5 in 2007-08 to K-8 in 2008-09.</p> <p>Richmond faculty will receive on-going technology support and training via the 2008-09 in-service day workshops.</p> <p>During the 2008-09 school year, a “Technology Club for Teachers” will be scheduled twice per month. Teachers and coaches will share instructional strategies, explore new ideas, and reflect on current applications.</p> <p>2008-09 monthly Faculty Meetings will contain three central themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sharing technology applications in the classroom, 2. Reflecting on student learning needs that can be better met via technology, and 3. Considering ideas to increase student engagement and direct interaction in the learning process through the integration of technology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Schedule documents • Teacher reflections on co-teaching • Notes from Technology Club for Teachers instructional coach. • School Improvement Plan

Issue	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
<p>5.A.6 Students learn how to choose from a rich array of technology learning tools to examine, publish, illustrate, and communicate their results.</p>	<p>With keyboarding instruction starting in kindergarten, students are expected to integrate technology into grade level learning goals early in their school careers. In addition, weekly sessions with the district's Technology Integrator for students in grades K-5 provide a systematic framework for students to learn and apply a rich array of technology into learning.</p> <p>In 2007-08, students enrolled in grades 6-8 received regularly scheduled computer applications instruction framed in a newly adopted technology applications curriculum. While informal integration occurred between and amongst the business education teacher and grade level content teachers, it was learned that Richmond School needs a fully integrated systems approach in which students learn and apply appropriate tools for examining, publishing, illustrating, and communicating their results.</p>	<p>Technology integration services that proved very successful at the K-5 level last year will be expanded to include grades 6-8 during 2008-09.</p> <p>A school-wide Publishing Center is planned for implementation during 2008-2009. It will be staffed by students in grades 6-8 who select it as an elective course. Software has been purchased to enhance publishing capabilities. Students in all grades will utilize the center for writing, illustrating, and publishing books and other projects. Selected student publications will be cataloged and integrated into the library collection for general check-out.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library section dedicated to featuring student-created work • Report on the new Publishing Center to the Board of Education, Spring 2009 • School Improvement Plan

Issue	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
<p>5.A.8 The school provides students with opportunities to develop technology skills that support learning, personal productivity, decision-making, and daily life.</p>	<p>With the addition of a Technology Coordinator, a Technology Integrator, and a Business Education teacher, new diagnostic, instructional, and staff training components were added to the technology applications program in 2007-08.</p> <p>A Technology Literacy Assessment identifying staff proficiency levels was conducted in September 2007.</p> <p>Students enrolled in grades 6-8 were given the high school entrance Technology Proficiency Examination in May 2008.</p> <p>Assessment data were used to set goals and provide staff training, instructional programming, and K-5 technology integration.</p> <p>New to Richmond School in the 2007-08 school year, was an after school Technology Club. This club is designed to have students teach senior citizens how to use technology to improve the quality of their lives. Students serve as senior citizen mentors as they teach them about the Internet, email, eBay, and PeaPod.com. Student mentors met weekly with their senior mentees.</p>	<p>The administration and Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) will budget necessary and sufficient resources for the joint purchase of SMART Boards, the purchase of additional computers, staff training, and curriculum writing.</p> <p>With the addition of six more computers and 23 SMART Boards, students will have increased opportunities to use technology for their personal learning and problem solving purposes.</p> <p>Twenty three of twenty five academic teachers will receive SMART Boards in fall 2008. During the 2009-10 school year, the remaining academic teachers and all specialist teachers will receive SMART Boards and accompanying training.</p> <p>The twenty three academic teachers receiving SMART Boards will receive 20 hours of training and guidance in preparing learning experiences focused on integrating SMART Boards into instruction.</p> <p>The Building Leadership Team and Scheduling Committee will coordinate activities that measurably increase access to technology as well as improved instructional services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Leadership Team key objectives, committee meeting minutes • Student and Staff Technology Literacy Assessment documents • Year-end report to the Board of Education • School Improvement Plan

Issue	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
<p>5.B.2 Technology has increased the efficiency of school operations and provided a database for school improvement.</p>	<p>Richmond uses a number of software applications for student management: attendance, grading, etc. However, the District does not have a data management system for tracking student achievement, assessing trend line, and monitoring progress.</p>	<p>During the 2008-09 school year, the Richmond Software Selection Committee will evaluate the possible purchase of a data management system that will warehouse data, provide immediate access to student performance trends, and create reports for the administration and Board of Education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A plan for a proposed data management system by spring, 2009. • School Improvement Plan
<p>5.B.3 The administration and teacher’s use of data analysis has resulted in informed decision-making and increased management efficiency.</p>	<p>Richmond School utilizes technology based student assessments including STAR Math, STAR Reading, Read 180, and Read About. These tools, when combined with the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination-Criterion Referenced Test, provide opportunities for staff to utilize data for school improvement planning.</p> <p>Annually, Richmond faculty and administration conduct a Data Retreat. Participants evaluate performance data for each student as well as program trends and effectiveness. The data are utilized by each teacher when planning learning goals and objectives in the fall.</p>	<p>In July 2008, a math intervention program called “Education Software Solutions” (EDUSS) was purchased and installed as another tool for diagnosing student learning and planning instructional interventions. Staff training on the EDUSS program is planned for October 2008.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrator and Technology Committee reports to the Board of Education • Electronic Progress Monitoring data on each student provided by web-based assessments. • School Improvement Plan

Issue	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
<p>5.B.5 Teachers work together to foster continuity in technology use for improved instruction.</p>	<p>Grades K-5 teachers meet weekly to develop and implement plans for utilizing technology to improve instruction. The Technology Integrator also meets weekly with K-5 grade level teams to provide additional service and advice. The Technology Integrator archives technology learning activities for future use.</p> <p>The 2005-08 District Technology Plan, approved by the Department of Education, provided a framework for teachers and administrators as they planned technology based learning experiences.</p>	<p>2008-09 faculty meetings will include discussions on how staff work together to improve learning via the use of technology.</p> <p>Teacher in-service sessions have been scheduled and approved by the Board of Education. They will focus on the use of technology to improve learning.</p> <p>The Building Leadership Team, District Administrator, and Curriculum Coordinator will assess the degree to which technology integration is occurring in all classrooms.</p> <p>The 2008-09 school-wide S.M.A.R.T. Goal will emphasize the effective use of technology tools to improve student learning, partnered with active learning. (See 4.A.5)</p> <p>The 2008-11 District Technology Plan includes specific goals and objectives for staff training and application of technology to learning. This plan will be implemented beginning in September 2008.</p> <p>The Technology Club for Teachers and the reorganization of Faculty Meetings will greatly enhance sharing opportunities for teachers as they integrate technology into their curriculum and instruction planning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Leadership Team meeting minutes • Reports to the Board of Education and Technology Committee • Mid-year and year-end staff surveys • Teacher Observation/Evaluation documents • S.M.A.R.T. Goal reports to administration • State assessment pertaining to Technology Plan implementation • Building Leadership Team assessment of goal accomplishments pertaining to teacher use of technology to improve instruction • Year-end report to the Board of Education • School Improvement Plan

Issue	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
<p>5.B.6 Teachers apply advances in technology to enhance the learning process, engage learners, and truly integrate students' learning.</p>	<p>Richmond School recently purchased 146 new computers. In 2007-08 Richmond School hired a Technology Coordinator, a Technology Integrator, and a Business Education teacher.</p> <p>Richmond faculty utilize a wide-range of technology-based learning centers. The quantity and quality of these projects will measurably increase during the 2008-09 school year.</p>	<p>Each teacher receiving a SMART Board will receive 20 hours of training and on-going support in the classroom via the Technology Integrator.</p> <p>District in-service days will focus on technology training and applications of technology to create more interactive learning environments.</p> <p>The Technology Club for Teachers will focus on support and reflections for improving learning via the use of technology.</p> <p>The State approved District Technology Plan will provide an additional framework for meeting goals and objectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student assignment artifacts • Teacher S.M.A.R.T. Goal reports • School Improvement Plan
<p>5.B.7 The school provides teachers with sufficient training in the effective use of technology to enhance teaching and learning.</p>	<p>The 2007-08 school year uncovered new challenges and opportunities for teachers to use technology in their classrooms. The Technology Integrator provided numerous strategies for improving the quality of instruction via the use of the technology in grades K-5.</p> <p>The Business Education teacher provided daily instruction for 6-8 students resulting in 100% of 8th grade students exceeding high school entrance expectations.</p>	<p>During the 2008-09 school year, teachers will receive differentiated training based on their individual skill sets. InfoCor Inc., our SMART Board support company, will provide on-site training for beginning, middle, and advanced use of SMART Boards. Teachers and support staff will be offered the chance to participate in advanced SMART Board training at the "Sally Ride Academy," an area provider of teacher training.</p> <p>The Technology Integrator will provide workshops and daily classroom support during 2008-09 for teachers utilizing SMART Boards and other technologies.</p> <p>Teachers and administrators will receive training in the use of progress monitoring and universal screening tools in October 2008.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff training documents • Technology Committee reports to the Board of Education • Teacher/administrator reflections during faculty meetings • Mid-year and year-end District Goals report to the Board of Education • School Improvement Plan

Issue	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
<p>5.B.8 Teachers receive follow-up to stay current with changing technologies.</p>	<p>The 2007-08 school year provided necessary information pertaining to upgrades in teacher training and applications of training. Newly hired technology staff provided various levels of support. However, no comprehensive and differentiated teacher training program existed.</p>	<p>The purchase of new computers and SMART boards, a differentiated staff training program, and the on-going support of a technology “coach” in the classroom will provide the tools that teachers will need to improve learning via the use of technology.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff training documents • Technology Committee reports to the Board of Education • Teacher/administrator reflections during faculty meetings • Mid-year and year-end District Goals report to the Board of Education • School Improvement Plan
<p>5.B.9 Teachers effectively incorporate technology tools into their teaching strategies.</p>	<p>By April 2008, grades K-5 teachers reported that the Technology Integrator provided quality and timely support for incorporating technology into their curriculum and instructional practices.</p> <p>Grades 6-8 teachers reported improvements in their students’ use of technology while writing research papers due to the new curriculum and instruction provided by the Business Education teacher.</p> <p>A comprehensive system that provides vertical and horizontal technology applications is needed.</p>	<p>District Goals, S.M.A.R.T. Goals, The District Technology Plan, The District Professional Development Plan, The Blue Ribbon Schools Action Plan, and Teacher Performance Evaluations will focus on how teachers effectively incorporate technology into their teaching practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology Committee reports/minutes • Building Leadership Team assessments and reports • S.M.A.R.T. Goal reports to administration • Teacher evaluations • End-of-year District goal report to the Board of Education • School Improvement Plan

Issue	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
<p>5.B.10 Every teacher knows how to use data to personalize instruction. In other words, teachers have the ability to interpret data to understand student progress and challenges, drive daily decisions, and design instructional interventions to customize instruction for every student's unique needs.</p>	<p>Each summer, Richmond School conducts a Data Retreat. Data from standardized tests combined with local assessments are used to identify data trends. Teachers, consultants, and administrators evaluate student performance data which is then used to drive instructional and programmatic decision-making. Once analyzed, data are communicated to the entire faculty at the opening of school Faculty Meetings. Data are used by each grade level or content team to assess student needs and plan instruction.</p> <p>DIBELS, STAR Math, STAR Reading, Read About, and Read 180, provide staff with on-going progress monitoring of student performance. All students new to the district and those identified with learning challenges participate in one or more of the above listed assessments.</p> <p>The newly developed 2007-08 Response to Intervention (RtI) initiative was used to provide appropriate interventions for students. It included a team-based problem-solving process, a pyramid of interventions, a universal screening process for identifying individual student needs, and a progress monitoring system for tracking student progress during interventions.</p> <p>Additional communications and staff training in RtI are needed.</p>	<p>With the acquisition of the EDUSS Intervention Program, trend analysis and instructional intervention planning are projected to reach a new level of effectiveness and efficiency.</p> <p>Teachers will meet weekly in grade level teams and with administrators to evaluate student performance data and plan instructional interventions.</p> <p>All staff will receive additional training in RtI and the use of progress monitoring data to improve learning during the 2008-09 school year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade level team meeting minutes • Technology Committee reports to the Board of Education • School Improvement Plan

Category 6 of Lighthouse Eligibility: Professional Community

The Professional Community theme is the third category to address in applying for Blue Ribbon Schools Lighthouse Award Eligibility. Richmond School began work in the area of Professional Learning Community (PLC) four years ago. The initiative was launched in the summer of 2004 when two faculty/administration leadership teams attended consecutive week-long PLC workshops to learn about the PLC model for school improvement. Following this, a building PLC team was formed to develop the processes necessary to bring the initiative to fruition at the school. To date, Richmond faculty and administration have made measured progress toward implementing the major components of the model. During the 2007-08 school year a school, parent, and community partnership was developed for the purpose of creating a new vision and set of beliefs for the District. The new vision emphasizes the importance of partnerships, academic achievement, and developing the whole child to be a life-long learner. Further, our beliefs reflect what we collectively and individually commit to while fulfilling the vision for the school. From these core elements of Professional Learning Community flow annual goals. The District via a partnership of teachers, parents, administrators, and Board of Education members set annual District goals. Administration and teachers then create professional goals aligned with the S.M.A.R.T. Goal format. Every teacher also belongs to a team that creates “team goals.” Administrator and teacher teams meet weekly (PLC Time) to discuss student learning, plan interventions, analyze student achievement data, and problem-solve instructional challenges.

While many elements of a Professional Learning Community are in place at Richmond School, additional work is needed, as evidenced by the fact that five items out of nineteen survey questions were rated as in need of improvement. The chart below details the specific strategies that will help Richmond faculty and administration take next steps in the area of Professional Community.

Issue	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
<p>6.A.2 A culture exists that encourages and rewards staff who plan and implement new strategies to improve the school.</p>	<p>Since the 2006-07 school year, mini grants have been used to reward teachers for implementing innovations in classrooms. Teachers who need additional tools, equipment, or services receive them via the mini-grant program.</p> <p>During the 2007-08 school year, faculty meetings were catered with appetizers. Luncheons for planning teams were also provided. Richmond shirts were purchased for all staff during the 2007-08 school year.</p> <p>10% of the District budget was dedicated to staff development in 2007-08.</p>	<p>Formal acknowledgements and commendations for excellence in teaching are again planned for 2008-09. Staff feedback indicated that food, chocolate, and shirts/sweaters containing the Richmond Logo were most appreciated as rewards for quality teaching.</p> <p>2008-09 rewards include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Catered faculty meetings 2. Richmond shirts for all staff 3. Luncheons for project planning teams. <p>The Building Leadership Team will survey the faculty as to ways in which they would like to receive rewards and acknowledgements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Leadership Team meeting minutes • Staff Survey results • School Improvement Plan

Issue	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
<p>6.A.6 The school plans frequent opportunities for the teachers to reflect on current practices and student performance.</p>	<p>In preparation for the 2007-08 school year, teachers and administrators organized the four days prior to the opening of school to meet teacher needs. All opening of school activities focused on articulating special education plans, teacher training, classroom set-up, and student profiles. Teachers reported this was the best start of school in 35 years.</p> <p>At the same time, all faculty meetings and in-service sessions were preplanned to ensure that time was allocated for each District initiative. When preplanning was concluded, the Richmond faculty voted and approved the plan.</p> <p>The Richmond faculty and administration concur that highly motivated teams require time to implement, assess, and reflect on practices designed to meet student needs. While the master schedule has been constructed to allow for weekly collaborative planning sessions for grade level teams (PLC Time), as well as weekly grade level meetings with administration, more teacher reflection time remains a need at Richmond School.</p>	<p>The Richmond Staff Development Team will continue the practice of surveying staff on their professional development needs and interests each year. They will continue to communicate results.</p> <p>During the 2008-09 school year, all faculty meetings will contain reflection discussions and activities.</p> <p>The Building Leadership Team will hold monthly discussions with grade and content teams for the purpose of reflecting on current practice and student performance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Leadership Team meeting minutes • Faculty meeting minutes • Staff Development Committee minutes • School Improvement Plan

Issue	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
<p>6.B.3 The school provides sufficient preparation for all staff to implement successfully new or revised curriculum.</p>	<p>Weekly grade level collaborative planning sessions (PLC Time), monthly early release days, and regularly scheduled in-service sessions are dedicated to curriculum implementation, training, and problem solving. After school sessions are also planned on an as-needed basis.</p>	<p>An ad hoc committee will be created to study and propose ideas for additional professional development time. This committee will begin work in the fall of 2008 and will report to the Building Leadership Team in January 2009. Viable ideas will proceed to the Staff Development Committee for integration into the 2009-10 Staff Development Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ad hoc committee agendas and minutes • Staff Development Plan • School Improvement Plan
<p>6.C.3 The school provides ongoing professional growth activities for veteran teachers, as well as specific developmental support for those teachers with new responsibilities or who are experiencing problems with their current teaching assignment.</p>	<p>Annually, the Richmond Staff Development Team presents faculty need assessment results to the faculty. This data, combined with student performance data from the annual Data Retreat, is used to create a continuum of staff development needs. The faculty and administration then vote on which professional development activities the District will commit to.</p> <p>Richmond School District utilizes a Mentoring Program for new teachers and those teachers experiencing problems.</p> <p>Richmond School employs a “Coaching” model in which technology integration, thinking skills, and gifted and talented services are provided to all staff on an as needed basis.</p> <p>Richmond School utilizes an “Integrated Services System” for responsibly including students with special needs into mainstream classrooms. Special education teachers and support staff provide support for regular education teachers and students on a daily basis.</p>	<p>The 2008-09 Staff Development Committee will survey staff on the topic of differentiated staff development needs. This information will be used to plan the manner in which in-service sessions, faculty meetings and/or summer staff development activities will be prioritized and implemented.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Development Committee survey results • Building Leadership Team planning documents • School Improvement Plan

Issue	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
<p>6.D.3 The school recognizes excellent teaching.</p>	<p>The Richmond faculty and administration acknowledge that Richmond teachers and support staff do not condone a type of special recognition that could be perceived as creating competition or preferential treatment.</p>	<p>The Building Leadership Team will survey staff to determine the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What kinds of professional practices should be considered for special recognition? 2. Do Richmond teachers and support staff want special recognition, and if so, in what format should that recognition occur? 3. Who should provide the special recognition (e.g. students, fellow staff, the PTO, the Board of Education, and/or the administration)? <p>The term “school” suggests that the entire school community enjoined in a partnership should recognize excellent teaching.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Development Team needs assessment • Building Leadership Team minutes • Mid-year and year end staff survey results • School Improvement Plan