Richmond School District
Sussex, Wisconsin

Transformative Learning
Action Plan
2011-2012

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Introduction and Overview

Outlined in this report is a plan to successfully develop and implement instructional strategies necessary to meet the diverse needs of today's learners. The action plan was developed using data collected from a comprehensive District evaluation conducted by November Learning LLC in April 2011. Additional data was collected via the use of a faculty self-assessment survey in which individual teacher proficiencies and competencies were identified as they pertain to the themes highlighted in the November Learning report. Both sets of data were used to:

1. Determine learning priorities
2. Create a differentiated and individualized staff training plan
3. Develop a comprehensive Transformative Learning (TL) Action Plan
4. Align the Transformative Learning Action Plan with the District's Strategic Plan
5. Coordinate the TL Action Plan with the CESA #1 Institute

The Action Plan details the strategies to be implemented in the categories deemed in need of improvement. The plan begins with several base assumptions. They are:

1. The District values external benchmarking in the form of outside experts evaluating District operations. External benchmarking provides objective feedback needed for decision-making purposes.
2. The Board of Education will budget funds needed to accomplish goals set forth in the Action Plan.
3. Professional Learning Communities (e.g. faculty meetings, in-service meetings, and weekly academic team meetings) will be devoted to the accomplishment of the Action Plan. Collaboration time, data driven SMART Goals, parent/community workshops and presentations, and an internal library (i.e. recorded teacher and student driven instructional practices directly linked to transformative learning themes and teacher reflection/feedback blogging) constitute the basis for the Richmond Professional Learning Community.
4. Richmond School District will continue to stress, in its instructional practices, both the 3 R's (Reading, wRiting, and aRithmetic) and the 7 C's (Critical thinking, Creative thinking, Communication, Collaboration, Cross-Cultural skills, Computing literacy, and Career skills). Richmond School District faculty and administration value the lessons learned from working with the team of evaluators from the November Learning organization. The on-site evaluation and final report provided Richmond faculty and administration the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of learner needs in the 21st Century, necessary and sufficient instructional and staff training practices, and a deep acknowledgement of the Richmond School organization and its desire to plan, implement, and achieve continuous improvements.
5. The TL Action Plan is a living document. It includes improvement themes that will require a multi-year commitment. The Action Plan should be reviewed and updated, annually.

As outlined in the November Learning Evaluation under Review and Recommendations, the focus areas of improvement include:

1. Reinforcing the District's vision to be embraced by all stakeholders
2. Increasing the technological capacity of the building
3. Creating a school-wide information literacy program
4. Developing a global communications program
5. Extending a culture of continuous professional development
6. Developing a parent education program focusing on information literacy, global collaboration, and student ownership of learning
7. Enhancing Library Media Center services to become the hub of 21st century learning at Richmond School

In an effort to fully evaluate the findings of the study, Innovation Team members disaggregated data, identified antecedent variables, and proposed improvement strategies. In this process, team members recognize that the faculty, administration, Board of Education, and PTOBC provide for and support a large number of progressive, research-based educational practices. The team also recognizes the importance of a differentiated staff training plan as faculty members currently demonstrate a mix of introductory level to advanced level application of concepts. While the Action Plan focuses on areas in need of improvement, on-going support and coaching will be provided to teachers at all levels of proficiency and competency in their pursuit of learning and applying new skill sets. The Action Plan utilizes four focus areas: 1) Focus, 2) Current Reality, 3) Actions to be taken, and 4) Evidence of accomplishment.

The "Focus" section identifies an improvement theme of significant need. The "Current Reality" section depicts actions currently in place prior to or since receipt of the November Learning Report. The "Actions to be taken" section outlines specific actions that staff and administration will take to implement improvement efforts. The "Evidence" section includes artifacts and/or documents that will provide tangible data that the Action Plan has been carried effectively implemented. Each of the four sections is prefaced with a paragraph that provides background information.

Category 1: 21st Century Interdisciplinary Themes

The 21st Century Interdisciplinary Themes focus on financial, health, environmental and civic literacy, and utilize performance based and curriculum based assessments while teaching/learning in a global context. Areas in greatest need of improvement include: increased instruction on financial literacy, exposure to global awareness through global learning projects, the effective use of performance and curriculum based assessments, and increased staff awareness of 21st Century themes and instructional practices.

Focus	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
Teach lessons that engage students in financial literacy activities.	Existing curricula in all grade levels provide basic, age appropriate information about financial literacy. However, an increased focus in this area is needed.	Staff and administration will evaluate existing curricula to determine where additional financial literacy lessons should be implemented. Staff will create and implement financial literacy lessons and activities.	Financial Literacy standards alignment /checklist Team meeting minutes Student data (e.g. surveys, assessments, artifacts, etc.)
Increase students' global awareness through global learning and publishing of student work	Learning and teaching practices centered around students working with content experts and peers via the Internet, publishing their work globally and using the feedback for learning purposes, are largely absent at Richmond School. This is a new and exciting learning opportunity for students, staff, and administration.	Staff will receive training on the development, implementation, and assessment of global learning projects. Staff members will utilize global learning and publishing tools. (Ex: ning, voicethread, animoto, weebly, wikis, skype, ePals, Diigo)	The Technology Implementation Matrix (TIM) will be used to chronicle training and implementation efforts. The TIM is an individualized plan to be used for staff development and evaluation purposes Team meeting minutes Student artifacts as published for global audiences
Utilize performance based and curriculum embedded assessments on student products	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. In 2010-11, data driven SMART Goals were introduced and utilized by faculty. These 2010-11 SMART Goals focused on problem-based learning and self directed learning.	Data driven SMART Goals will continue to be used by staff and administration with an emphasis on action plan focus areas. Administrators and teachers will collaborate at weekly team meetings, during faculty meetings, and at In-service meetings for the purpose of developing and sharing successful practices, assessing goal accomplishments, and preparing data.	S.M.A.R.T. Goal reports to administration and staff Internal library documents Team meeting, faculty meeting, and In-service Day documents

Focus	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
Increase staff knowledge of the 21st century framework and application of related concepts.	Staff members have been exposed to an overview of 21st century skills via administrator driven conversations at faculty meetings, when attending an August 2010 Consortium In-service with Dr. Ian Jukes, and when participating in a 2010 book study on Ted McCain's book, Teaching For Tomorrow. The 2010-11 Innovations Team evaluated sources for externally benchmarking District knowledge and skill sets. November Learning conducted a comprehensive evaluation of 21st Century learning at Richmond School and each teacher completed a related self-assessment.	Staff will develop a comprehensive knowledge and application of the framework for 21st century learning. (Resources: www.p21.org; www.fluency21.com; Curriculum 21: Essential Education for a Changing World) Grade level teams will develop and implement the 21st Century skills contained in this plan. Staff members will develop a 3-5 minute video capturing essential ingredients of their 2011-12 SMART Goals (development, implementation, evaluation). These videos will be used for staff development purposes and become part of the Richmond internal library.	Team meeting minutes Teacher evaluations and reflections Internal library documents and materials

Category 2: Learning and Innovation skills

The Learning and Innovation skills category includes: students collaborating and communicating with peers and community members, collaborating with teachers outside the classroom, and conducting problem solving both independently and in groups. The Richmond thinking skills curriculum will remain a District priority. This category also includes professional development opportunities for teachers including peer coaching and shared inquiry as part of the Richmond Professional Learning Communities (PLC) program. Current areas of strength lie in the consistent application of the Curry/Samara Model for differentiating instruction via the use of thinking skills, project and problem based learning, and character education via the Richmond Guidance program. Areas in need of improvement include: expanded communications between and among teachers and students collaborating beyond the classroom using email, chat tools, and video/voice conferencing software, integration of the digital model of Bloom's Taxonomy for technology based instruction, and creating personal learning communities using Twitter, Ning, Diigo, etc.

Focus	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
The faculty will incorporate specific strategies for expanding student/teacher/community communications for learning purposes.	Several teachers currently utilize wikis and blogs for instructional purposes. Additional training in the instructional applications of technology is needed.	The District will develop and implement a staff training plan in which teachers will become proficient in the use of Wikis, blogs, podcasts, Nings, Skype, Google Apps and social networking (Twitter, Facebook, Diigo, etc.) Teachers will expand their use of communication tools outside the traditional classroom structure. Teachers will track their professional training and their application and integration of communication tools in various learning environments. The Building Leadership Team will develop a series of communications including workshops, parent meetings, and internet communications for the purpose of educating the community on 21st Century Learning at Richmond School.	Inservice Training Schedule and Documents SMART Goals Teacher Evaluations and Surveys Parent Forum Documents and Surveys
Teachers and students collaborate beyond the classroom using: email, chat tools, video/voice conferencing and/or other tools.	Several teachers currently utilize social networking tools for instructional purposes. Additional training in collaborative applications such as Google Apps is needed.	Teachers and students will collaborate through the use of Google Apps and other appropriate social networking tools. Staff will be trained on the instructional use of Google Apps.	Inservice training documents Staff survey Teacher evaluation and reflection Administrator evaluation of Google Apps usage

Focus	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
Teachers will expand their use if thinking skills instruction and problem based learning in their lesson designs.	Richmond faculty have utilized the Curry-Samara thinking skills model for five years. Ongoing training is offered to all staff. New staff receive intensive training on the Curry/Samara Model. Richmond staff members introduced problem based learning in 2010-11 and have implemented the 4D problem solving model in their subject areas. In 2011-12, problem-based learning will be expanded. Teachers are evaluated (summative evaluation) based on their implementation of thinking skills and problem based learning strategies and instruction.	The faculty will continue to incorporate and enhance learning through the Thinking Skills Curriculum and the 4D's of problem-based learning. Staff will be trained in the use of an expanded form of Bloom's Taxonomy. It is referred to as the Digital Taxonomy.	Administration classroom walk-throughs and documentation of instructional practices Teacher summative evaluations SMART goals Internal library documents and materials
Teachers will utilize technology tools to differentiate instruction**.**	Individualized training and the "Tool of the Week" sessions are currently offered to all staff members as they pertain to SMART Board and Ipad instruction. Some faculty members utilize a variety of technology tools in individual classrooms (iPads, Netbooks, iPods, Laptops, and student response tools) The Measure of Academic Performance (MAP) has been used to collect data about student learning. It has not yet been utilized to shape instruction. This is an area of need to be addressed in the 2011-12 school year. Richmond incorporates the use of iPads and other technology tools to meet the individualized goals of students in the Special Education Program.	Teachers will increase their use of iPads, iPods, netbooks, laptops and other technology tools to meet student needs. Funding projects and training will be provided to staff with administrator approval. The Building Leadership Team will coordinate training sessions for faculty that emphasize data collection and analysis, instructional planning, and technology applications. Richmond administrators will train teachers in the collection of student learning data as well as the application of that data in the appropriate restructuring of learning environments	Staff survey results MAPs and WKCE Student achievement data

Focus	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
Teachers model the development and use of professional learning communities using Twitter, Ning, Diigo, etc.	Richmond staff members collaborate on a weekly basis at grade level team meetings. These meetings are based on the professional learning community model for staff collaboration. A limited number of staff members utilize social networking technologies for global peer collaboration.	Richmond staff members will participate in and contribute to the Richmond internal library. Richmond faculty will create and utilize a Twitter account, or similar social networking tool, to expand their professional knowledge through global collaboration. Training will be provided by experts or peer coaches. Staff will share relevant resources and findings at monthly faculty meetings.	Internal library documents and materials Staff survey results Faculty meeting discussions

Category 3: Information, Media, and Technology Skills

Richmond School made and continues to make substantial improvements in its development and use of technology to enhance the learning experience. In 2007-08, Smartboards were installed in all classrooms and a certified Smartboard coach was hired to provide on-going coaching and training for all staff. As a result, teachers report higher levels of engaged student learning and a desire to pursue additional strategies to promote transformative learning. The Smartboard coach now provides training with iPads, iPods, and other technology tools.

The District has increased its inventory and active utilization of computers from 140 in 2007-08 to 225 in 2010-11. Laptops on carts, netbooks, and iPads are now used on a daily basis in select regular and special education settings. During pre-approved learning activities, students have been allowed to bring mobile devices from home to be used as part of their learning process. In addition, the District utilizes web-based instructional programs such as the MyAccess Writing Program, and the Measurement of Academic Performance (MAP) progress monitoring system. All of the areas, however, contain elements in need of improvement. In addition, the Library Media Center will upgrade services including the use of advanced search techniques, skype, and global learning opportunities.

Focus	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
The Library Media Center will continue to serve as the hub for learning activities with an emphasis on technology tools and services.	The library provides access to electronic and print resources to students as individuals and within classroom groups. The library media center offers traditional services including categorized book checkout, periodical checkout, reference materials, a complete video library housed on a video server, and a professional library with two full time media specialists. Elementary students receive 40 minutes of library skills instruction each week. All students and staff receive direct research support and instruction customized to curriculum and based on curriculum maps. The LMC is available to students and staff before and after school everyday to utilize electronic and print resources and multi-media resources.	The LMC computer lab will be equipped as a global collaboration center (ex: computer with skype or other video conferencing software, webcam or digital video camera, software for recording video conference calls, and capability to connect to Smartboards. The library staff will receive training in the use of global collaboration sites in an effort to become global communication experts. The library staff will collaborate with teachers to facilitate connections to human resources beyond the walls of the school. (Ex: nings, iEARN, Skype, Taking it Global, ePals, etc.) Library staff will become familiar with the work of Joyce Valenza and Kathy Schrock (see November Learning Report) to aide in the creation of a LMC action plan.	Functional global collaboration center List of user-friendly global collaboration sites available for student and teacher use. Library Media Center action plan based on expert recommendations.

Focus	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
	The LMC houses a computer lab of 35 PC's. Students receive 40 minutes of computer skills instruction each week from a trained technology integrator. The LMC has technological tools available for checkout including: flip cameras, document cameras, digital cameras, video cameras, tape recorders, multi- media projectors, sound systems, speakers, microphones and Smartboard compatible senteos.		
Teachers and students utilize advanced search techniques to target specific information	According to the November Learning Report, some students have knowledge of domain names and advanced search techniques. Many others do not. In 2011, students enrolled in grades 6-8 learned about searching for quality information and validating information found on the Internet. However, both students and staff need to develop a broader understanding of advanced search techniques that lead to targeted information.	Media specialists will create a Google Custom Search Engine (K-3 & 4-8) for the purpose of collecting all the best sites teachers are using for research. Media specialists will become familiar with Alan November's book Web Literacy for Educators. Media specialists will provide staff training on Web Literacy. A core set of research tools and website validation practices will be adopted by faculty and media specialists and taught at appropriate levels school wide. A survey will be given to a sampling of students to evaluate their understanding of information literacy. (See quiz recommended in November Learning Report p. 22)	Links to Google Custom Search on Richmond homepage or class web page. Staff training documents Technology Integration Matrix Document containing the information literacy (research tools + website validation practices) scope and sequence across all grade levels. Student survey results Teacher Evaluations

Category 4: Life and Career Skills

Life and career skills focus on non-technology skill development that students will be required to successfully utilize while in school as well as in the work place. This category includes: teacher and student (peer) feedback throughout all learning activities, students taking an active role in short and long term goal setting, students participating in the development of assessment tools used to evaluate their work (rubrics, product descriptors and more), the flexible grouping of students for learning purposes, and assigning students as student leaders. Richmond School has successfully integrated hands-on, real-life problem-solving instruction for many years. Instructional teams acknowledge the importance of immediate peer and teacher feedback as central components of performance assessments. Areas in greatest need are: student participation in the development of assessment tools, student goal setting, and providing immediate peer and teacher feedback in appropriate learning activities.

Focus	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
Students participate in the development and use of assessment tools, including rubrics and product descriptors.	The majority of assessment tools used at Richmond are teacher-created. The foundation of performance based student assessments lies in immediate feedback from teachers and peers. Teachers and administrators need to embellish the use of student participation in the learning and assessment process.	Staff and administration will evaluate the degree to which student participation exists in grade and content learning. Together, students and teachers will develop and use assessment rubrics and product descriptors. Staff will devise and discuss additional methods to involve students in creating assessment tools.	Collaborative rubrics and product descriptors Team/Faculty meeting minutes
Teach students to create, implement, and evaluate short and long term learning goals	While Richmond School has a foundation in student goal setting and self-directed learning, additional work needs to be devoted toward the systemic use of student goals with student profiles and achievement data built into each student plan. Examples of current practices include: ● During the 2010-11 school year, 8th grade students presented their 4-year academic plans to their parents at a student/parent/ counselor meeting. ● Career Cruising (Web-based career assessment tool) utilized during guidance classes with middle school students. Prepares students for career related goals and maps out high school classes in order to pursue career goals ● Education for Employment Plan	Data driven SMART Goals will be introduced at developmentally appropriate levels to students in 2011-12 with a focus on Action Plan practices and MAP Assessment results. Grade level teams will develop appropriate practices for evaluation and recording student goals.	Student SMART goals; Team meeting minutes, teacher evaluations.

Focus	Current Realities	Actions To Be Taken	Evidence
Teachers organize both student and teacher feedback in appropriate learning activities	In 2009, Richmond School received the Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence, Lighthouse Award. At that time, project-based learning was highlighted as school strength. The immediacy of teacher feedback to student learning was a priority. Student/peer feedback is utilized on an intermittent basis at Richmond School and is an area in need of further development.	Students and Staff will utilize social networking tools (google apps, wikis, and blogs) to provide opportunities for immediate peer and teacher feedback. Training on instructional social networking will be provided to both staff and students by a certified trainer or in-house expert.	Teacher lesson plans Staff training documents Administrator evaluation of social networking usage