

Preliminary Report, Highlights: McIntosh Middle School, Sarasota County

EDUCATING THE “WHOLE” STUDENT: Staff at McIntosh Middle School, take a holistic approach to education, measuring student success by more than test data. The physical, social, emotional, and spiritual development of the student is also seen as important. This *Philosophy of Wellness* helps students to achieve their highest potential. A school effort, structured as a Coordinated School Health Program, supports this philosophy. Faculty, take a low-key approach to FCAT testing, confident in meeting standards given the rich curriculum in place. This approach elevates unnecessary stress and creates an educational environment that allows students to be successful. The School Improvement plan is unique in many respects and is considered a “living” document, flexible enough to meet the dynamic needs of staff and students. The school embraces the Standards of Excellent as prefaced by the District of Sarasota’s by-words, “every child, every day, whatever it takes”.

Results: School Grade: 2002 A; 2003 A.

Practices that Promote High Performance:

- McIntosh maintains a very flexible “living” School Improvement Plan
- Employing a Philosophy of Wellness to obtain the highest possible potential from each student
- Giving meaning to the words “every child, every day, whatever it takes”

UNIQUE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES: McIntosh Middle School offers several unique educational opportunities, especially those that celebrate diversity. The fine arts curriculum includes a highly maintained Holocaust Education component. A Miss Latina Program provides educational opportunities and enhancement services for female Latina students. A cutting edge Ornamental Horticulture program boasts a retail Floral Shop for use in business education. While McIntosh Middle also offers students the challenge of advanced courses, they believe in producing students equipped to deal with high school and the workplace beyond. A full 20% of all course grades are based on “*Employable Skills*”, i.e. attendance, timeliness, completion of tasks, adherence to dress code, maintenance of Student Agenda Handbook, all related to academic and life long success.

Results: Students who are motivated to learn: FCAT scores consistently above the state mean in all areas.

Practices that Promote High Performance:

- Unique educational programs, including those that incorporate the celebration of diversity
- A curriculum incorporating high interest programs, advanced course offerings, and life skills all aimed at student success
- Emphasizing Employable Skills as a component of each course and including feedback as part of the student’s grade

PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP: Through continued demonstration of concern for the students under his care, the principal at McIntosh Middle has earned the respect of staff, faculty and community. Careful attention is given as new faculty are hired, with an emphasis on character as well as credentials to ensure a good fit with school goals. Teacher surveys indicate a high degree of job satisfaction and teacher turnover is low. Students benefit from resources generated by the procurement of grants petitioned for by the principal, subject area departments and individual teachers. McIntosh Middle maintains a active *School Advisory Committee* (SAC) consisting of parents, community leaders, and business partners, to work primarily with staff in recognition of students. SAC also aids in determining allocation of A+ monies received on the heels of FCAT testing. The principal is aided in decision-making by the *Shared Decision Making Team* (SDMT), which is comprised of administration, students, teachers, staff, and parents. Their varied makeup affords the SDMT the luxury of multiple perspectives on issues confronting McIntosh Middle School.

Results: Teacher turnover less than 2%; High job satisfaction among teachers.

Practices that Promote High Performance:

- Attention beyond professional credentials when hiring new faculty
- Faculty and principal taking the initiative to seek funds beyond those allocated
- Involvement of community, staff and parent committees