

Preliminary Report, Highlights: Nova High School, Broward County

STRENGTH IN DIVERSITY: Nova High School programs meet the needs of a diverse group of students. Black, Hispanic, and Asian students comprise over 42% of the total student population. Teachers are hired to reflect this student body increasing responsiveness to students' needs. Multicultural and bilingual plans also reflect this sensitivity to diversity and promote positive experiences for students from all backgrounds. FCAT and ESOL camps providing tutoring are held on Saturdays supported by community donations and parent/teacher volunteers. In addition, the principal makes sure that each teacher on campus teaches at least one regular class to ensure that all students have access to the best teachers. Curriculum is analyzed and adjusted throughout the year based on student performance at all levels.

Results: 91% of students graduated in four years in 2002 compared to 65% at the district and 68% at the state levels.

Practices that Promote High Performance:

- Teacher demographics tied to student body demographics
- Specific attention to diversity through multicultural and bilingual planning
- Teachers teaching at least one regular level course to allow all students to experience the best
- Extra curricular opportunities for academic enhancement through Saturday "camps"

HIGH EXPECTATIONS/HIGH RESULTS: High expectations for teachers are reflected in student achievement and evident in the administration's focus on faculty at Nova High School. Administrators are in classrooms on a regular basis. The principal's philosophy of "inspected is respected and respected is expected" reinforces the value he places on what teachers do. Staff development dollars are given to department chairpersons to be used to best meet the professional development needs of the particular department. Being knowledgeable, passionate, and flexible are characteristics emphasized in hiring again reflecting high expectations. All staff are involved in decision-making and empowered to make instructional decisions as long as student outcomes are high. Money donated by Coca-Cola is used to recognize teacher efforts through luncheons and incentives. There are very few people on staff who do not have direct contact with students.

Results: School Grade: 2002 A; 2003 A.

Practices that Promote High Performance:

- Empowering departments and teachers to make decisions reflecting instructional needs
- High expectations for teachers
- Formal recognition of teacher accomplishments

TARGETED USE OF RESOURCES: Nova staff has developed an "Academic Prep Program" to make sure resources are allocated to students who need them most. Students scoring in the bottom 25 percentile on the FCAT in reading or math are in smaller classes and work with the same team of teachers throughout the day. Students are helped to develop skills allowing them to set academic goals and monitor their own progress. Fifty computers equipped with *Compass Learning* have been provided to assist with remediation for students in this program. The Academic Prep Program also encourages reading across the curriculum and is supported in part by additional reading materials provided by Barnes and Noble for use by all students. A vocational/career grant funds an additional counselor position to support students in the program.

Results: FCAT reading, math, and writing scores considerably above district and state levels.

Practices that Promote High Performance:

- Allocation of resources including additional support staff reflecting identified student needs
- Team teaching of students needing additional support to further align needs and curriculum
- Emphasizing reading across the curriculum