

Preliminary Report, Highlights: Village Green, Miami-Dade County

High Free and Reduced Lunch 55% and Limited English Proficiency 30%

Acknowledging your strengths and addressing them and knowing your needs and supporting them is a formula that works for Village Green.

CONCENTRATE on READING: Reading is the instructional focus at Village Green and it drives professional development, teacher planning, even the school schedule. The school believes that Reading is the key to high performance. Village Green uses block scheduling to provide more concentration for young student readers and to accommodate the teachers' instructional styles. The school also uses add on assessments in Reading, including the Reading Program Assessment Tool and an Accomplished Learning Program that is also used for Math and Science. Many teachers have developed assessment instruments of their own. The Principal uses discretionary budget funds to support lower class size, for reading programs and reading personnel support and resources.

Results: Reading: Grade 3, 74% level 3 or above; Grade 4, 72% level 3 or above; Grade 5, 78% level 3 or above

Practices that Promote High Performance:

- Prioritizing staff development in Reading for all teachers, and the delivery of reading instruction
- Cross-referencing of students' writing and reading assessments, using pretesting and post testing
- Giving all departments in the school equal access to training, encouraging collegiality and opportunity

ADJUST for NEEDS: Almost 90% of the students at Village Green are Hispanic. 55% percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced lunch. School resources, including personnel, are sharply focused on student needs. When it was determined that third grade teachers needed extra help, money was freed up for additional personnel for tutoring and teacher support. The school recruits retired teachers to volunteer, who bring a high level of experience and expertise. Data-driven decision-making for curriculum choices and directions is standard operating procedure. Technology and teacher input is used to assess the effectiveness of the curriculum and programs. Horizontal and vertical scheduling is used in addition to improve instructional delivery.

Results: School grades: 2000, B; 2001, A; 2002, A

Practices that Promote High Performance:

- Enabling teachers and staff to practice student behavior management on an individual basis, according to policy, with consistency and practicality
- Sharing professional development insight and opportunities with and among staff, allowing staff choices
- Researching programs and professional development opportunities that support goals

TACKLE TECHNOLOGY: With an insistence on data-driven decision-making came a need for staff members to be technology-proficient when it came to interpreting data and using it to chart student achievement. The school did not feel that they were where they needed to be to properly support disaggregated data analysis. To counter that, in the last few years the Principal has prioritized professional development in technology use. That commitment is reflected in budget allocation, professional development, and increased hardware and software. The school pursued and received a major grant to upgrade technology and training. Although staff and parents report satisfaction with progress in this area, the school will continue to prioritize technological expertise.

Results: Grade 4, 108 students tested in FCAT, Writing: school average 3.8 compared to district 3.3 and state 3.4. FCAT Reading and Math scores above district and state.

Practices that Promote High Performance:

- Incorporating a technology focus and goals into school improvement and professional development plans
- Allowing latitude to choose professional development opportunities that introduce and strengthen skills
- Choosing curriculum and other programs that have technology components: benchmarking and analysis