

## Preliminary Report, Highlights: Walter C. Young Middle School, Broward County

**EYE ON CURRICULUM:** Curriculum changes have been made at Walter C. Young Middle School based on the needs of incoming students. In Broward County, reading is a requirement for all 6<sup>th</sup> grade students. However, a review of the performance of feeder schools resulted in a decision to provide opportunities for all students in grade 7 and students in grade 8 scoring below the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile to include reading in their schedules. Students in grade 8 not taking reading take a literature course giving all students an opportunity to continue to improve in this critical skill area. Articulation of curriculum needs at both the elementary and high school programs that serve Young Middle School students affords this type of decision-making.

**Results:** FCAT SSS and NRT: In grades 6,7,8 students scored well above district and state means in reading.

**Practices that Promote High Performance:**

- Vertical alignment of curriculum with schools feeding to and from the middle school
- Support and flexibility for curriculum changes reflecting identified needs
- Going beyond district requirements to enhance school programs and opportunities for students

**INDIVIDUALITY:** Students at Walter C. Young Middle School are respected as individuals with cultural sensitivity being facilitated in several ways. Student leadership is strong with PTA by-laws being changed to include an “S” to make it a Parent, Teacher, Student Association. Involvement in the PTSA allows students to participate and learn the process of expressing opinions and gathering facts in order to make decisions. A human relations council comprised of students has been formed with an annual summit being held as a venue for guest speakers to discuss equity with students. A *Pledge of Tolerance* was written by this group of students and is followed. School improvement teams are reviewed each year to make sure school demographics are reflected in membership. Recruiting of underrepresented stakeholders takes place if needed and membership is not finalized until the fall so that new parents, teachers, and students can be included.

**Results:** School grade: 2002 A; 2003 A.

**Practices that Promote High Performance:**

- Students respected as individuals and included in decision making
- Specific attention to insuring cultural sensitivity in a diverse school community
- School improvement team membership reviewed annually to ensure representation reflecting school demographics

**DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING:** Additional steps are taken at Walter C. Young to be sure specific needs of underachieving student are identified and addressed. In addition to using FCAT performance, the Stanford Diagnostic Test is given to students who score below the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile on the FCAT in reading and math. The Scholastic Reading Inventory and Diagnostic Assessment of Reading is also being used to pinpoint skills for remediation. Reading instruction continues at all grade levels. Early release days include instruction from a Reading Coach providing strategies for improving scores. An Academic Coaching Program also provides remediation to identified students.

**Results:** FCAT School Accountability Data: Grade 6 – 70% (math) and 63% (rdg) of students scored level 3 or above; Grade 7 – 71% and 64%; Grade 8 – 66% and 74%.

**Practices that Promote High Performance:**

- Additional steps to identify specific skills for remediation for underachieving students
- Early release days for in-service
- A specific Reading Coach to provide strategies to teachers for improving reading skills of students