




Plymouth Middle School
Annual Report
2009 - 2010



Principal's Perspective

During the 2009-2010 school year, Plymouth Middle School welcomed many new students and staff to our building. Two important building goals were to create an atmosphere of collaboration and to weave traditions from multiple schools into one cohesive new unit. Staff designed community-building activities to help students make a smooth transition to PMS.

To create common language and professional practice among staff, members of each department spent allocated staff development days and an additional two half-days working together. The outcome of the first departmental collaboration at each grade level was the creation of a comprehensive curricular unit plan tied to the MN Academic Standards, providing rigor for all students and addressing issues of equity.

The second departmental collaboration yielded two common formative assessments at each grade level. The first assessment teams created was a rubric-based performance assessment with quality indicators. The other began as a more traditional assessment, but rigor was increased with the inclusion of constructed response items.

We began implementing research-based, best practice AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) strategies which complimented the NUA (National Urban Alliance) strategies which we have been using for seven years. With greater fidelity and ongoing professional development, we will continue to utilize powerful AVID and NUA strategies to help us close our racialized achievement gap.

Although our MCA-II scores declined slightly in 2009-2010, we are confident that the collaborative structures we have put in place and an intense focus on best practice instructional strategies, will allow us to meet our targets in 2010-2011.

Goals and Results

With the merging of staff and students from across the district into two new middle school communities, Plymouth Middle School's goals for the 2009-2010 school year were to establish a cohesive and collaborative school culture while beginning implementation of PBIS and AVID instructional strategies, while increasing academic rigor for all students.

The PMS School Improvement / Staff Development Committee chose not to identify specific numerical targets related to MCA-II Reading, Mathematics and Science for the 2009-2010 academic year, as a result of the need to establish baseline data for our new population of students. The team, therefore, chose to set goals in a more global manner. One goal was to increase the numbers of students scoring in the "meets" and "exceeds" standards categories, while decreasing the racialized achievement disparity between white students and students of color.

Percent proficient MCA-II	School 2009	School 2010	State 2010
Reading*	66%	64%	69%
Math*	60%	56%	64%
Science*	37%	39%	48%

MAP: % making above average growth	School	National
Reading (grades 6-7, fall to spring)	55%	50%

*All students in grades 6, 7 and 8 enrolled at test time.

Prior to our collaborative work during the 2009-2010 academic year, none of our departments reported consistently collaborating around instruction or assessment. One hundred percent of departments collaborated to write common units and assessments during the 2009-2010 school year.

Departmental Practices prior to the 2009-2010 school year	Consistently	Sometimes	Rarely
Collaborated, in general	27%	53%	20%
Created common assessments	13%	60%	27%
Planned comprehensive units together	20%	47%	33%
Used priority standards to plan instruction	40%	60%	0%
Created performance assessments together	13%	60%	27%
Wrote constructed response items together	0%	40%	60%

In accordance with the district's identified priorities, PMS will continue to work toward a culture of collaboration and streamlined instructional and assessment practices, creating rigorous academic opportunities and conditions for success of all students.