

THE NEW BRITAIN EDUCATOR

A PUBLICATION OF NEW BRITAIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Raising student achievement through quality teaching



Dr. Doris Kurtz

Our primary goal in this district is to raise student achievement. There are many things that are important to helping us achieve that goal. Some of these are parent involvement, student motivation, adequate resources, rigorous and relevant curriculum, good student attendance and behavior.

While all of these are important, the most important factor that has the greatest influence on raising student achievement is quality teaching.

Therefore, the focus of this issue of *The Educator* is the district's Strategic Human Capital Management System, specifically on the quality of teaching. Extensive research studies have shown that the quality of education cannot exceed the quality of teachers. The quality of teaching is the single greatest variable that drives student achievement. Effective principal leadership is the second-greatest influencer. The goal of the district is to have a quality teacher in every classroom that exceeds the No Child Left Behind standard. This requires a strategic plan to ensure

this happens.

The centerfold of this issue graphically displays the district's Strategic Human Capital Management System. Also, included in this issue are the teachers of the year for every school and for the district. We are proud of the quality of our teachers. But as you can see in the accompanying graphic — *The New Britain Way* — one of the pillars in our "house" is "continuous improvement."

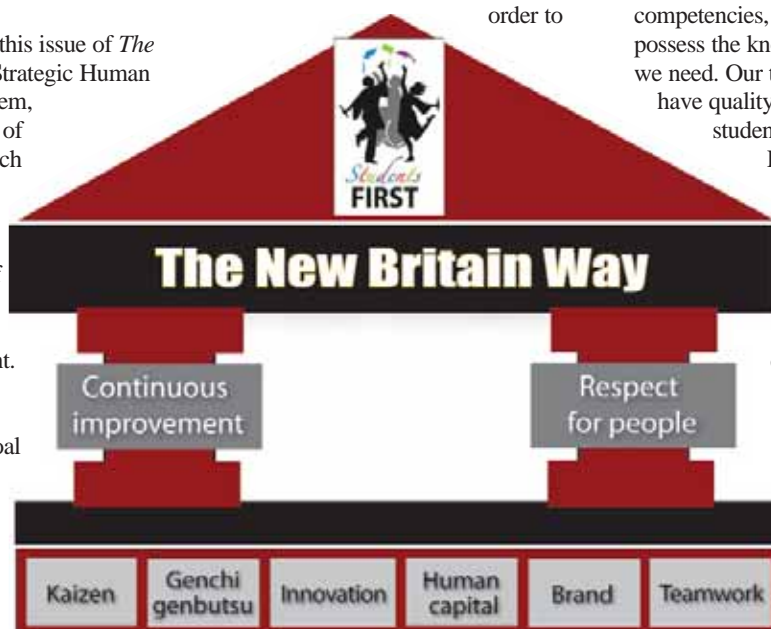
Part of our culture is to continuously strive for excellence. Continuously improving is what we are all about. We believe that in order to

improve student achievement the quality of the interaction between students and teachers must be improved. We commend our teachers for their hard work, dedication, and willingness to work hard to improve their instructional practice. The demands of the 21st century require all of us to continuously learn and grow. Our quest to improve student achievement is never ending.

The Strategic Human Capital Management System graphic on pages 6-7 begins with quality teaching competencies which have been determined by the district. Based on the quality teaching competencies, we seek to hire teachers who possess the knowledge, skills and attitudes we need. Our theory of action is that if we have quality teaching in every classroom, student achievement will improve.

From the recruiting, selecting, and hiring of teachers, through the mentoring, training, engaging, inspiring, and evaluating of them, ultimately, we seek a quality teacher in every classroom. If we do this systematically and systemically, we will achieve our goal of improving teacher and student performance.

Dr. Doris J. Kurtz is Superintendent of



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Focusing on human capital



Sharon Beloin-Saavedra

For the past few years, the Consolidated School District of New Britain has been focused on our human capital — our personnel. Learning in the 21st century is a process of growth for both educator and student. Professional development has been a key focus of our

District's improvement plan, with strong emphasis on academic growth, social emotional learning and the learning context of our classrooms.

In an effort to support the growth and development of both our staff and students, the Board of Education adopted a permanent shortened day in the school calendar, known as Kaizen Thursdays. These shortened days are dedicated to building capacity in our human capital. Kaizen Thursdays have produced improved understanding and utilization of data to assess, analyze and adjust instruction for

improved student outcomes.

In a district with limited financial resources, time is one of the greatest resources we can provide our staff. The value of collaboration time and teaming can be measured in the products produced such as common formative assessments, student intervention plans, and the implementation of academic acceleration (a CMT language arts intervention program).

The Board of Education is excited about the addition of a math component to academic acceleration and the increased usage of our River Deep computer supplemental math program. These intervention and supplemental programs are made possible by carving out time for professional development and building the capacity of staff to deliver on these programs.

To this end, Kaizen Thursdays are a critical component of the district's success.

Sharon Beloin-Saavedra is president of the New Britain Board of Education.

New Britain School Directory

Chamberlain Elementary

Jane Perez, Principal
120 Newington Ave.
860-832-5691

Diloreto Magnet School

Marina Perez Taverner, Principal
732 Slater Road
860-223-2885

Gaffney Elementary

Lisa Eells, Principal
322 Slater Road
860-225-6247

HALS

Elaine Zottola, Principal
30 Pendleton Rd.
860-826-1866

Holmes Elementary

Glenn Horter, Principal
2150 Stanley St.
860-223-8294

Jefferson Elementary

Nancy Sarra, Principal
140 Horse Plain Road
860-223-8007

Lincoln Elementary

Elaine Cabral, Principal
145 Steele St.
860-229-2564

New Britain High School

Michael Foran, Principal
110 Mill St.
860-225-6351

Northend Elementary

Elsa Saavedra-Rodriguez, Principal
160 Basset St.
880-223-3819

Pulaski Middle School

Vonetta Romeo-Rivers, Principal
757 Farmington Ave.
860-225-7665

Roosevelt Middle School

Leona Clerkin, Principal
40 Goodwin St.
860-612-3334

Louis P. Slade Middle School

Mark Fernandes, Principal
183 Steele St.
860-225-6395

Smalley Academy

Mario Cruz, Principal
175 West St.
860-225-8647

Smith Elementary

Paula Eshoo, Principal
142 Rutherford St.
860-223-1574

Vance Village Elementary

Sarah Harris, Interim Principal
183 Vance St.
860-225-8731

www.csdnb.org/schools.htm



Teesa McElroy, left, and Genesis Resto work on writing during at Chamberlain School.

Chamberlain Primary

2009 Teacher of the Year: Wendy Osipowicz



What makes our teachers special?

- ◆ They care deeply about all the students and staff in the school.
- ◆ They are focused on early childhood education and developing the whole child.
- ◆ They put “Students First.”
- ◆ They work together in teams to share knowledge and expertise.
- ◆ They are hardworking, dedicated, and enthusiastic.
- ◆ They are role models for their students.
- ◆ They go the extra mile to ensure the best for every student.
- ◆ They are willing to try new approaches and keep learning.

What are our educators doing to make themselves better?

- ◆ They embrace the idea of Kaizen-continuous improvement.
- ◆ They build positive relationships with their students.
- ◆ They get to know their students’ unique interests and talents.
- ◆ They provide warm, inviting classroom environments and encourage students’ natural curiosities.
- ◆ They learn how to help students become independent learners and good citizens.
- ◆ They analyze and reflect on daily practice to identify resources and strategies that will best impact student achievement.
- ◆ They continue their education by taking college courses and attending conferences, seminars and workshops.
- ◆ They accept change.

How have our efforts improved student achievement?

- ◆ They are making progress in reading, writing and math.
- ◆ They are improving scores on the Developmental Reading Assessment 2 test.
- ◆ They are able to apply their new learning in the classrooms.
- ◆ They are using technology in the classroom to support their learning.
- ◆ They are developing their communication skills.
- ◆ They are learning how to solve problems. They demonstrate confidence and are learning how to be thinkers.

DiLoreto Dual Language Magnet



2009 Teacher of the Year: Ruth Vazquez-Centeno

What makes our teachers special?

DiLoreto Dual Language Magnet School teachers are caring, highly qualified, hard-working, creative, and fun-loving individuals. Together, they create a magical, family-oriented educational environment founded on the belief and promotion of student ambassadors as “good, caring citizens.” They volunteer to develop and implement a multicultural curriculum, participate on school governance and issues management teams, and donate their time to district curriculum initiatives. Our teachers plan instruction together in highly effective teams. Keeping an open line of communication with parents is paramount to their success.

What are our educators doing to make themselves better?

The professional learning community at DiLoreto is involved in the cycle of continuous learning. Teams meet weekly to plan instruction together. Following the delivery of instruction, teachers assess their students’ learning and modify their instruction. They reflect on their successes and challenges together through looking at their students’ work and begin the cycle again. The administrators engage in professional development activities provided by central office. Our school’s leadership advisory team meets weekly to assess teacher and leadership effectiveness and plan differentiated professional development activities for the entire staff, integrating district initiatives.

How have our efforts improved student achievement?

Last year, teachers, parents and student ambassadors reported increased levels of satisfaction regarding their experience at our newly restructured school. Our teachers reported student progress at all grade levels on their common formative assessments. This led to increased excitement and motivation for both the student ambassadors and the faculty, and confidence in our motto, “the harder we work, the smarter we get!” DRA/EDL results showed progress, particularly in grade one. This indicator of progress is of particular interest to our learning community due to the fact that the restructuring literacy efforts were concentrated at that grade level.



Kindergarteners participate in the DiLoreto Dual Language Magnet School parade.



Alyssa Gonzalez performs with the Friends Club at Gaffney Elementary School.

Gaffney Elementary



2009 Teacher of the Year: Dawn Valentini

What makes our teachers special?

The most important quality that makes Gaffney Elementary teachers special is that they truly love their students. Their teamwork is immediately apparent, even among new members of the faculty. Opinions are respected and each teacher is dedicated to his or her job. This is evidenced by the extra time spent attending to student needs, whether it is minutes from their planning time assisting with academics or after-school time spent delivering a bed to a family who just moved. There is a wide variety of teaching experience from 20 or more years to brand-new teachers. The brand of the school is, "Showcasing Achievement through the Arts," and teachers make efforts toward expanding the connection between the arts and academic subjects.

What are our educators doing to make themselves better?

Teachers are continuously striving to become better educators each day. They listen to each other, and, especially through Kaizen Thursdays, they support one another through extensive teamwork. They keep an open mind and have a willingness to accept change. Teachers are using common planning times to look at student work and target their needs. Gaffney teachers feel strongly that Kaizen Thursdays have been extremely beneficial to them. Those days allow the faculty and staff to collaborate with each other as well as to gain professional development that improves teaching methods.

How have our efforts improved student achievement?

Over time, specific behavioral interventions and strategies learned through teaming have improved classroom behavior. Weekly (and even daily) changes in attention and productivity are apparent. As teachers model appropriate learning behaviors and teaming, the students increase their own learning behaviors and teaming abilities. With the extra attention recently given to reading instruction, individual classrooms have shown improved reading scores. CMT achievement in grade 4 has been at a steady increase. The proficient reading scores of grade 4 students at Gaffney increased nearly 12 percent last school year. Math increased 9 percent and writing increased more than 9 percent.

Holmes Elementary School for Science & Technology



2009 Teacher of the Year: Tammy Bacho

What makes our teachers special?

Our teachers:

- ◆ care for our families beyond the classroom;
- ◆ willingly give above and beyond with their hearts, time, and their own finances;
- ◆ want to hear from and speak with parents;
- ◆ want to see each child reach his/her greatest potential;
- ◆ work as a team to meet the needs of all our students;
- ◆ ensure that our children are safe;
- ◆ love science and technology and want our students to do the same; and
- ◆ make learning fun and differentiate instruction.

What are our educators doing to make themselves better?

They are:

- ◆ applying the latest and best research-based teaching practices within their classroom;
- ◆ utilizing Kaizen Thursdays to effectively analyze each student's progress;
- ◆ incorporating science and technology in their instruction in the classroom;
- ◆ approaching challenges as teams rather than individuals;
- ◆ training in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention Concepts;
- ◆ studying on the graduate and post-graduate levels;
- ◆ training in the computer-based Breakthrough to Literacy reading program;
- ◆ reading and incorporating Covey's "Seven Habits of Highly Effective People;" and
- ◆ reading and incorporating Maxwell's "21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader."

How have our efforts improved student achievement?

Our students have:

- ◆ made some dramatic yearly gains in reading, writing, and math;
- ◆ moved from proficient to goal on CMT scores;
- ◆ become competent at the computer and in science-inquiry skills;
- ◆ become better readers and writers by responding to literature on deeper levels; and
- ◆ become more cooperative learners and better problem solvers.



Ajanai Lana and Oscar Ramirez work on the stages of the moon at Holmes Elementary School.



Syress Mendez, left, and Alexander Rodriguez read at Jefferson Elementary School.

Jefferson Elementary



2009 Teacher of the Year: Dianne Powell

What makes our teachers special?

- ◆ Strong commitment to educating the whole child ... academically and socially
- ◆ The belief that self improvement and continuous learning is key for individual and team success
- ◆ A continuous focus on fostering social emotional skills for all
- ◆ Collaborative spirit and community presence
- ◆ Celebrating diversity and building bridges for cultural awareness
- ◆ The belief that all students add value to our community
- ◆ The belief that all students can succeed at high levels

What are our educators doing to make themselves better?

- ◆ Ongoing Sapiential Team meetings that analyze strengths and challenges that lead to improvement/achievement for all students
- ◆ A strong commitment to building effective teams
- ◆ Continuous improvement via self-reflective practice and team collaboration
- ◆ Academic teams which analyze student work and collaborate on research-based effective instructional strategies to reach all students
- ◆ Positive Behavioral Support team targets effective, proactive school wide supports to create a positive learning climate for all students.

How have our efforts improved student achievement?

- ◆ 25% reduction in student discipline referrals and bus referrals K-5
- ◆ CMT Cohort Comparison data for 2008 and 2009
- ◆ Increase from 49% to 68.5% at proficiency and above in math (from 3rd to 4th grade)
- ◆ Increase from 33.3% to 42.2% at proficiency and above in reading (from 3rd to 4th grade)
- ◆ Increase from 50.9% to 56.6% at proficiency and above in writing (from 3rd to 4th grade)
- ◆ Increase from 66.7% to 78.4% at proficiency and above in math (from 4th to 5th grade)
- ◆ Increase from 41.2% to 62.8% at proficiency and above in reading (from 4th to 5th grade)
- ◆ Increase from 64% to 78% at proficiency and above in writing (from 4th to 5th grade)

Lincoln Elementary

2009 Teacher of the Year: Karen Sisson



What makes our teachers special?

Lincoln’s teachers and staff are dedicated to maximizing each child’s learning by creating classrooms where positive relationships exist between teachers and students. Lincoln’s teachers instruct students in “The Lincoln Way” and hold daily morning meetings. Both of these activities: increase a student’s sense of belonging; increase a student’s social skills; and increase a student’s positive self image.

What are our educators doing to make themselves better?

Lincoln’s teachers are continually improving their skills through professional development. Teachers are advanced in their abilities to analyze student work and test scores in order to guide instruction. This year, teachers will be trained in Effective Teaching Strategies. Efforts will also be placed on improving skills in collaborating and working in teams. The goal is to increase each teacher’s abilities to individualize for students and increase productivity as a team.

How have our efforts improved student achievement?

Lincoln’s teachers are adept at analyzing student work, assessing progress, and meeting needs on an individual basis. This, combined with Lincoln’s five learning communities — Preschool, Mainstream Education, La Pensee Academie, Bilingual Education and Scholastic Academy — personalizes academic pathways and maximizes student achievement.

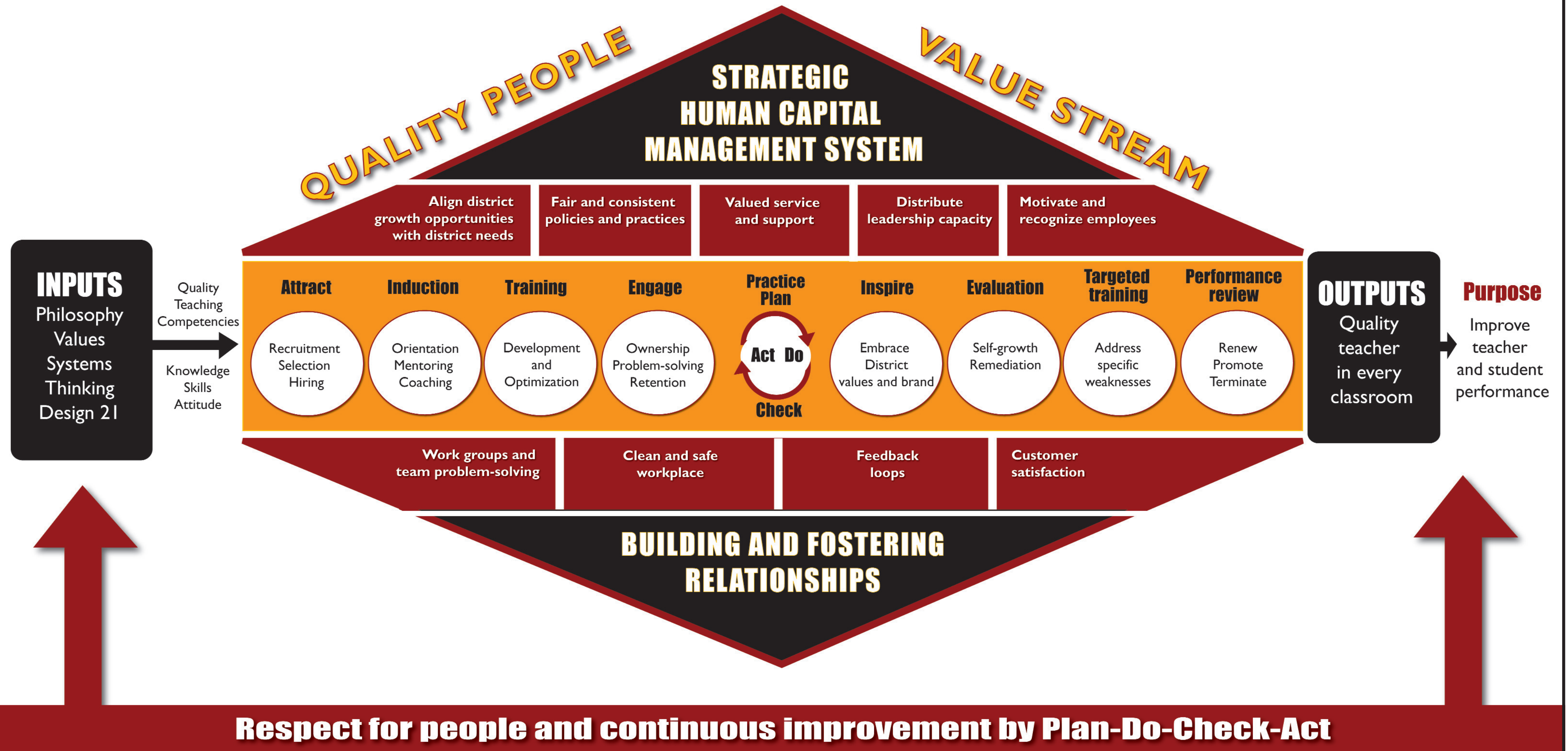
Percentage of Lincoln students performing at or above proficiency on CMT

	2008	2009	Difference
Reading Grade 3	42.0	41.1	.9
Reading Grade 4	28.4	75.0	46.6
Reading Grade 5	22.2	39.5	17.3
Math Grade 3	60.2	61.6	1.4
Math Grade 4	42.0	71.9	29.9
Math Grade 5	36.5	51.2	14.7
Writing Grade 3	53.9	58.6	4.7
Writing Grade 4	53.7	81.3	27.6
Writing Grade 5	42.9	51.2	8.3



Bo Clinch, a member of the fifth-grade graduating class of 1943, listens to shells with preschoolers Joshua Robinson-Hyman, center, and Brian Antonio at Lincoln Elementary.

The New Britain Way





Teacher of the Year Deb West, right, shares some ideas with colleague Amy DeAngelis at Northend Elementary School.

Northend Elementary



2009 Teacher of the Year: Deborah West

What makes our teachers special?

- ◆ Each grade level team of two work closely together in the pursuit of academic excellence for each child.
- ◆ Teachers get along well with each other and are willing to share ideas, opinions and materials.
- ◆ Teachers are dedicated and committed to "students first."
- ◆ Northend teachers are team players.
- ◆ Northend teachers display positive character traits such as confidence, patience, a true compassion for their craft, an understanding the different ways people learn, unwavering support for students and pride in accomplishments.

What are our educators doing to make themselves better?

- ◆ The staff is open to learning new methods of teaching. This is easily shared with the entire staff and incorporated into daily routines. There are discussions among school staff and other professionals regarding what is working and what is not working, and how to alter and improve to get the absolute best from students. We are continuously reading educational books and articles and sharing that knowledge with each other. We are great at utilizing our district resource staff to seek out information and materials, and improve on areas of concern.
- ◆ Teachers and administrators are focusing on data analysis; data teams; data-driven instruction; differentiated instruction; frequent monitoring of student progress and analysis of student work; and data walls.
- ◆ Many teachers have chosen to return to school to increase their own knowledge and stay current on updated teaching practices.

How have our efforts improved student achievement?

- ◆ Math scores in grade 3 improved by 17%. Students are reading and attending to task for longer periods of time.
- ◆ Kindergarten students last year met our CALI smart goals for letter recognition, sounds, and site words.
- ◆ Northend CMT scores increased by 5% or more in five areas.
- ◆ Students have mastered or attained course learning objectives.

Smalley Academy

2009 Teacher of the Year: Karyn Poff



What makes our teachers special?

- ◆ We go above and beyond.
- ◆ We are flexible.
- ◆ We care about our students.
- ◆ We are passionate.
- ◆ We work with an annually reinvented student body.
- ◆ Humor, perseverance, cooperation.

What are our educators doing to make themselves better?

- ◆ Continued Education/Collaboration
- ◆ Reflecting on the past
- ◆ Setting goals and objectives
- ◆ Research/Data Base
- ◆ Positive thinking
- ◆ Foster our profession's growth with interns and student teachers
- ◆ Consistent procedures
- ◆ Sharing responsibility
- ◆ Teamwork

How have our efforts improved student achievement?

- ◆ Improved discipline
- ◆ Orderly/safe environment
- ◆ Vertical and horizontal teaming



A member of the AVID program at Smalley Elementary School.



Smith School fifth-graders pose with the landscaping for which they raised funds last year.

Smith Elementary



2009 Teacher of the Year: Lynn Malachowsky

What makes our teachers special?

- ◆ Strong sense of community and collaboration: When we had challenges with bus behavior, teachers jumped right in to stay on a bus and supervise our scholars until it departed.
- ◆ They think “this is not a problem, this is a challenge,” and then work cooperatively to solve it.
- ◆ Children come first; our scholars are why we are here.
- ◆ Use their personal time and resources to provide materials and experiences for the scholars.
- ◆ They take pride in the successes of our children, no matter how big or small.
- ◆ A positive environment, a can-do attitude.
- ◆ They take time to reflect, plan, and communicate.
- ◆ Our staff will do what needs to be done and with a great attitude and team spirit.

What are our educators doing to make themselves better?

- ◆ Creative scheduling including events and programs such as drill team, drum corps, gym incentive groups, co-teaching, art history, art journals, cross country fun run, common planning time for teachers in a grade level.
- ◆ Attending extra professional development during the summer, book groups during the year, extra training after school, and Kaizen workshops.
- ◆ Participating in school-wide and district committees.
- ◆ Constantly assessing what we do and adjusting.
- ◆ Keeping in their mind that all scholars are the responsibility of all of us; this fosters innovative ideas, a close learning community, and a desire to strive for their personal best.

How have our efforts improved student achievement?

- ◆ There was a decrease in the number of scholars who were suspended last year.
- ◆ There were significant gains in our scholars learning from third to fourth to fifth grades — especially in writing where 83% of our scholars were at or above proficiency.
- ◆ DRA II scores went up — more children reading on grade level as the year progresses.
- ◆ This year we had the best opening of school ever. Scholars are on task, completing homework, making positive behavior choices, using the strategies to calm down, and are positively here to learn. They take more pride in themselves.

Vance Village Elementary: A MicroSociety School

2009 Teacher of the Year: Denise Raap



What makes our teachers special?

The teachers and support staff at Vance Village are incredibly talented and creative educators. They enthusiastically embrace new ideas and respond to change initiatives and challenges with optimism and a can-do attitude. Over the past few years, teachers have welcomed opportunities to establish small learning communities at Vance: Scholastic Academy and Project CHILD.

Vance teachers are professional, collegial, and work together to build relationships with students and families. One example of teachers’ commitment to children is the effort they make to be at school every day. Last school year, Vance Village had the highest percent of teacher attendance in the district; we also had the highest percentage of student attendance and parent involvement.

What are our educators doing to make themselves better?

Teachers and administrators at Vance Village are committed to continuous improvement. Based on results of The Teacher Survey of Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness, we identified two areas of professional development that would help to build individual and organizational effectiveness:

- ◆ Using assessment data to improve instructional practices.
 - ◆ Supporting a culture that promotes norms of collaboration and reflective practice.
- A professional development plan was designed to provide all certified staff with training in data-driven decision making, developing data teams, creating common formative assessments, and implementing effective teaching strategies.

We continue to focus on literacy and designing instruction that is rigorous, relevant, and culturally sensitive. Instructional teams meet weekly to review student work, design instructional units, and participate in book studies that facilitate discourse and support best practice.

How have our efforts improved student achievement?

Our efforts are producing very positive results and we continue to see growth in all academic areas. Most recently, the gains made at every grade level in every subject area on the Connecticut Mastery Test allowed us to make Safe Harbor status.



Second-grade students, from front to back, Liya Saccente, Orlando Perez, Chastity Rodriguez, and Kalyssa Muniz work on the computer.



The guitar ensemble at HALS Academy.

HALS Academy



**2009 Teacher of the Year:
Shannon Crooks-Ritskowitz**

What makes our teachers special?

Our teachers are strongly motivated to successfully work with gifted students and are dedicated to providing for their academic, creative and social needs. The teachers at HALS work collaboratively to create a learning environment which motivates students and enriches their learning. HALS teachers prepare students for the real world by focusing on 21st-century skills. They ensure that the students are happy, encouraged and safe.

What are our educators doing to make themselves better?

There are frequent formal and informal meetings and collaborations among faculty to discuss content, curriculum and programs. We continually strive to maintain staff cohesiveness and unity. There is a strong effort to incorporate reflective teaching practices and to improve instructional styles. There is a great deal of emphasis at HALS on self-reflection and peer reflection.

How have our efforts improved student achievement?

HALS students continue to achieve at high levels on CMT testing. They successfully compete at high levels in academic and artistic competitions on local, state and national levels.

Pulaski Middle

2009 Teacher of the Year: Baileys Irizarry



What makes our teachers special?

The teachers at Pulaski are strong collaborators who work together to make the lives of students academically and culturally rich. Teachers are student-centered and go above and beyond what they have to do to make our students' experience a quality one. One example of such collaboration is how quickly teachers jumped at the chance to run activity blocks for students this year. Teachers are planning to teach kids how to knit, build model cars, play chess, cook, read books and compare movie versions, kickbox and do yoga. These opportunities stem from both teacher and student interest, but it would never be successful without teachers being willing, flexible, caring and committed.

What are our educators doing to make themselves better?

We share leadership at Pulaski. We share new learning regularly. We seek out opportunities to understand the social and psychological development of the students in our charge. The leadership in the building is shared among teachers so that it is not concentrated within the administration. One of the key ways to facilitate growth in the teaching faculty is to encourage different perspectives, and when teachers participate in different professional development opportunities, they come back to share with colleagues. Collaboration is a part of our building culture and teachers share their learning with teachers in need. The administration also encourages teachers to pursue additional college coursework and works with teachers' schedules to accommodate it.

How have our efforts improved student achievement?

Pulaski students are exposed to multiple, creative instructional strategies. Teachers collaborating on different teams (instructional, grade-level, subject-area, Small Learning Community) creates consistency and fidelity of instructional practice so students are getting stronger in skill development. The relevance of learning for students is also increasing because they can apply concepts to real-world situations. The focus on CMT strand development has also shown student growth within specific strands on the 2008 CMT administration.



Jen Piltz, a student at Central Connecticut State University, watches the class during the AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program at Pulaski Middle School.



Sixth-grade math student Victoria Cahill at Roosevelt School.

Roosevelt Middle



2009 Teacher of the Year:
Angela Buccheri-Duran

What makes our teachers special?

The teachers in our building are special because they are embracing the changes that are occurring. They are striving to meet the expectations set forth for them by the principal and the district. Teachers understand that they have some hurdles ahead of them, but believe that together we can accomplish all that we set out to do. Already teachers have embraced the new staff members that were hired and adjusted to the new schedule and its many updates, and helped to create a more welcoming climate in our building. We understand, collectively, that we are the determining factor in our students' lives. We have a great school, with outstanding students and programs, and we want the community to know that as well.

What are our educators doing to make themselves better?

Collectively we are improving ourselves and making ourselves better educators by utilizing the latest training we received through Connecticut Accountability Learning Initiative (CALI) and applying strategies into our school through Common Formative Assessments. Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) are considered the assessment for learning, not assessment *of* learning. CFAs are relevant and help teachers to drive instruction. We are relatively new to the CFA process, but the staff is open to the changes to improve teaching and student learning.

How have our efforts improved student achievement?

Restructuring our school was one of the best things that could have ever happened to Roosevelt to help improve student achievement. Roosevelt is well on its way to gains in student achievement through the creation of our smaller learning communities, renewed commitment to the social and emotional well-being of students and hiring of teachers who are committed to a more reflective and innovative way to teach curriculum.

Louis P. Slade Middle



2009 Teacher of the Year: Betsy Waller

What makes our teachers special?

There are many qualities which make the teachers at Louis P. Slade Middle School special. These qualities are numerous and cover a wide spectrum. Among the most outstanding are:

- ◆ dedication to students
- ◆ choosing to teach in New Britain
- ◆ going above and beyond job description
- ◆ willingness to approach the “whole” student, not just academically
- ◆ knowledge of subject matter

What are our educators doing to make themselves better?

Teachers and administrators at Louis P. Slade Middle School continuously strive to make themselves better educators. Some of the many ways they make this happen are:

- ◆ professional development activities
- ◆ instruction in becoming “trainers of trainers”
- ◆ keeping current through memberships in professional organizations
- ◆ attending classes to attain higher degrees
- ◆ use of the RTI (Response to Intervention) to become more adept at working with difficult students
- ◆ adapting to changes in technology

How have our efforts improved student achievement?

These efforts by teachers and administrators have had many excellent results, including:

- ◆ improvement in student test scores on curriculum assessments
- ◆ improvement in CMT scores
- ◆ decrease in discipline referrals
- ◆ high number of students on the honor roll



Robotics students, from left, Anna Petrov, Tia Brown, and Jose Vazquez at Slade Middle.

New Britain High School



2009 Teacher of the Year and New Britain Teacher of the Year: Naomi Sigall



New Britain High School JROTC students show off the numerous awards they have won, including a certificate naming them an Honor Unit with Distinction (HUD) school: from left are Karolina Lipka, Nicole Chrusciel, Marielenna Ramirez, Nicole Lopez, Annmarie Brojek, and Jessica Larson.



What makes our teachers special?

- ◆ New Britain High School teachers are highly qualified with a great deal of expertise in their content area.
- ◆ New Britain High School teachers are committed to continuous learning and their own personal growth in order to better meet the needs of all of our students.
- ◆ New Britain High School teachers care a great deal about their students.
- ◆ New Britain High School teachers are committed to the success of their students.
- ◆ New Britain High School teachers are very creative and passionate about their students.

What are our educators doing to make themselves better?

The most important thing teachers and administrators are doing to improve their teaching is working together in teams. They are working together to learn from each other and learn from their students. They use student data and look together at student work to continuously improve instruction. These teams are all very focused on improving student achievement.

How have our efforts improved student achievement?

Because of these efforts we have seen a significant increase in the number of students graduating from New Britain High School. We are also tracking a great deal of growth in student achievement in the skills that we are measuring during our periodic common assessments. We are also seeing increases in student attendance and decreases in serious discipline issues.