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**Pennsylvania Department of Education**

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COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
333 MARKET STREET  
HARRISBURG, PA 17126-0333

**Student Services Report**  
**Friday, August 01, 2008**

**Entity:** South Western SD  
**Address:** 225 Bowman Road  
Hanover, PA 17331-4213  
**Phone:** (717) 632-2500

**Contact Name:** Dr. Barbara Rupp, Superintendent

## **Organization Description**

The South Western School District is located in southern York County and includes Penn, Manheim, and West Manheim Townships. The school district surrounds the Borough of Hanover and encompasses 55 square miles. The district includes four K-5 elementary schools: Manheim, West Manheim, Baresville, and Park Hills. Grades 6-8 are housed in the Emory H. Markle Intermediate School. South Western High School provides a comprehensive high school program for students in Grades 9-12. The district has a total population of approximately 4100 students.

The elementary program for Grades K-5 is organized to develop basic skills in a variety of areas, including reading, writing, spelling, math, science, and social studies. Physical education, art, vocal music, instrumental music, and library instruction are offered by a staff of specialists. A comprehensive guidance program helps to meet the social and emotional needs of all students.

The educational program at Emory H. Markle Intermediate School is designed to meet the needs, interests, and abilities of students during early adolescence. At the intermediate level, instruction is delivered through a team teaching approach. A broad variety of courses and activities is available for each student to bridge the continuum between the elementary experience and high school. In addition to yearly instruction in the core subject areas, students are provided experiences with technology, the fine and practical arts, world languages, and environmental education. In addition to the curricular offerings, a program of interscholastic athletics and intramural activities is available to the intermediate students.

South Western High School currently offers over 150 courses to meet the needs of college preparatory and general education students. Honors courses and advanced placement courses are available for students in the areas of English, social studies, mathematics, and science. Programs of studies are also available in business education, family and consumer science, technology education, and fine arts. Students interested in early entry into the labor force may choose the diversified occupation program during their senior year. Students interested in specific trades have the opportunity to attend the York County School of Technology on a full time basis. In addition to the comprehensive curricular offerings available to each student, a broad array of extracurricular and co-curricular activities is available. The successful completion of 28 credits and a graduation project are needed for graduation.

The District provides early intervention programs and special education programs for students who face special mental or physical challenges that affect their ability to benefit from regular education programs. The vast majority of programs for exceptional students is located in, and operated by, the South Western School District, including classes for students identified with learning disabilities. The Lincoln Intermediate Unit provides other special classes to meet the needs of pupils with a wide variety of exceptionalities. A

program for academically gifted students provides enrichment and challenging opportunities for students.

The South Western School District provides ongoing professional development opportunities for its staff. The South Western Center for Professional Development offers courses each semester which provide teachers the opportunity to earn graduate credits through local universities. In addition to the graduate level programs, a variety of seminars and workshops is offered which match district goals and priorities. In this manner, the professional staff constantly upgrades its skills to meet the ever changing needs of the District's students. The District's staff development effort has the ultimate goal of improving the educational program to increase student learning and achievement.

## **Core Purpose**

### **Mission**

The South Western School District is dedicated to providing a continually improving educational environment, through a cooperative effort with the family and the entire community, in which all students are encouraged and expected to achieve their full potential, to express themselves clearly, to think reflectively, and to interact responsibly in preparation for lifelong personal growth.

Adopted October 24, 1990

Revised March 25, 2002

### **Vision**

Our vision at South Western is that we will be a school district that is continuously improving through incorporating best practices proven to promote student achievement. In addition, we will work with the families of our students and with our community to help students develop the knowledge, skills, and values they need for lifelong personal growth.

### **Shared Values**

#### District Beliefs

All students are unique, can be successful and are entitled to a quality education that will help each to reach his or her greatest potential.

- Every staff member has the responsibility to be a model of effective communication, cooperation, and lifelong learning.

- Quality education requires the cooperation and support of students, parents, staff, and the community.
- Responsible behavior is nurtured in a learning environment that provides opportunities for students to make and be held accountable for their decisions.
- Quality education provides a myriad of learning opportunities that helps each student develop confidence, teamwork, and compassion for others.
- The school environment must always be safe and promote the ideas of respect for others, a strong work ethic, and self-discipline.
- The utilization of new methodologies and technologies is essential to providing students a quality education in a constantly changing world.
- Effective teaching addresses individual differences, promotes self-esteem, and encourages students to maximize educational opportunities.

**Current Student Services**

Service
Counseling services
Psychological services
Contracted drug and alcohol counseling
Health services
Elementary Kids Groups
Elementary guidance lessons
Career education
Homeless student services
Mentor program
Alternative education programs
504 planning and implementation
Surrogate parent services
Student Assistance Programs
Instructional Support Programs
Safe and Drug Free Schools program

## **Needs Assessment**

Student Services includes the following areas of school functioning:

1. Psychological Services
2. Nursing
3. School Counseling
4. Social Work

A needs assessment was conducted by analyzing the following data:

1. School Board Monthly Reports of Psychological Services, School Counseling, and Nursing
2. Senior Student Survey
3. Yearly District Parent Survey
4. Staff Survey Developed for the Students Services Strategic Planning
5. Student Services Strategic Plan Committee Reports
6. Strategic Planning Demographic, Contextual, Perception, Achievement, and additional Supporting Data documents

## **Needs**

There are many students who are at-risk for dropping out, for school failure, for having psychological and psychiatric difficulties that affect school academic, behavior, and/or social performance. Students need to be known and appreciated to be successful at school. They also need the availability of a diversity of supports to ensure their well-being (e.g., groups, individual attention, individual planning, mentor, etc.).

1. There needs to be K-12 universal screening activities conducted to ensure that at-risk students are identified and tracked through their school careers.
2. There needs to be more support for students including school counseling groups or mentors, truancy elimination, behavioral planning, and social skills instruction. Students who do not qualify for an IEP or a 504 plan, but are at-risk nonetheless, need individualized attention, support, and encouragement.
3. There needs to be more home and school connections, particularly for at-risk students. Home visits and communications are needed for at-risk students.
4. There needs to be parent awareness and training activities so that parents are supported, and can be a support to their children in relation to school
5. Administrators and staff need more information regarding how to support at-risk students, including knowing how to develop individual plans for each student (e.g., Truancy Elimination Plans)
6. Administrators and teachers need to know interventions to use for students not achieving to their best ability, so as to avoid inappropriate referrals for psycho-

educational evaluations. Research based interventions are needed in regard to academic, behavior, and socialization skills. The needs assessment indicated that school demands and peer pressures are the most challenging aspects of school for students. The school district needs to find ways to intervene with students in this regard.

7. A mentor program for at-risk students needs to be investigated for secondary low achieving and at-risk students.

8. Teacher and counselor responsibilities and scheduling need to be examined to ensure that expectations and additional responsibilities given coincide with the goals of the school district, including to identify and serve all students (including low achieving and at-risk students), and that teacher and counselor activities and responsibilities include the collection and analysis of data, and using this data to make programmatic and instructional decisions.

9. The number of support staff need to be examined to ensure that each student receives the support he or she needs.

10. Childhood obesity is a problem for students.

## **Action Plan – Narratives**

### **Developmental Services**

#### **A. Counseling**

At the elementary level, counselors conduct Guidance Lessons for all students. They also hold Kids Groups to help students with social and emotional needs. Other major activities include career assessment and awareness, academic counseling, orientations, monitoring of student progress. At the middle school level, counselors provide individual support and classroom lessons. Groups have been provided and targeted to students with specific needs (e.g., girls group). At the high school, individual support and career guidance is provided. A Grief Group is conducted for students who need this service. Counselors are involved in building wide behavior support plans and implementation. Safe and orderly schools are a key component of high achieving schools.

#### **B. Health Services**

Each of the four elementary buildings has one assigned LPN. Additionally, there is one Certified School Nurse who coordinates health services at the elementary level. There is one Certified School Nurse and one LPN at the middle school and at the high school. Nurses provide health education for staff and students.

#### **C. Psychological Services**

The district has two full-time psychologists. They provide assessments. They also provide consultation to teams regarding students with academic, behavior, and social

difficulties. They lead the IST processes at all levels. Additionally, one school psychologist provides a support group for students who are at-risk for school failure, drop-out, and/or behavioral difficulties. The school psychologists lead behavior support teams at each building.

#### D. Social Work

The school district does not have a social worker. However, the school district has developed a partnership with York County Children and Youth Services. There is an on-site Children and Youth caseworker who assists the district with drop-out prevention and truancy elimination activities. The caseworker participates in home visits. The caseworker also attends meetings to assist parents in obtaining needed services for their families and children.

#### **Diagnostic, Intervention and Referral Services**

Diagnostic, intervention, and referral process occur on an ongoing basis at each school with teams of individuals comprising of teachers, administrators, and student services staff. Team planning occurs weekly to develop individual plans for students who have academic, behavior, and social needs. Student Assistance Program, Instructional Support Team, and other teams are available to provide diagnostic, intervention, and referral services to students and parents.

#### **Consultation and Coordination Services**

A casemanagement system is used to monitor and support students with 504 plans and IEPs. Consultation to teams and individuals is provided by nurses, school counselors, and school psychologists. Partnerships exist with Children and Youth Services and other county agencies to ensure that students and families receive the support that they need. Training occurs on an ongoing basis in regard to supporting students' academic, behavior, and social needs.

#### **Student Assistance Program**

There is a Student Assistance Program K-12. New staff members receive comprehensive training in this program. Teams at each building are comprised of teachers, administrators, psychologists, counselors, nurses, and instructional support teachers (elementary). Meetings are held regularly. Students are provided with counseling for drug and alcohol issues (contracted). Students are tracked throughout the SAP process. Parental involvement is an important part, but is not mandatory. Student progress is monitored after referrals are made, and while interventions are provided. Community agencies are often contacted to assist students and families.

## **Communication**

1. District newsletter, newspaper, parent nights, curriculum development committees, meetings with parents, website information are methods used to disseminate information about instructional programs. Parents and students can access these opportunities in the same fashion.
2. Career nights, mailings, career assessment information, meetings with parents and students, website information are methods used to provide information about careers and assessments.
3. Letters regarding individual students, health alerts, website information, required and recommended communications with parents (e.g., Chicken Pox) are used to communicate with parents regarding health need information of their children.
4. Information is provided to parents and students regarding surveys and related rights. School board policies are available on the district website. Related information is available in student handbooks. Additionally, notice is provided via local newspapers and the school district newsletter.
5. Action planning includes a critical component: the involvement of families and students. These activities not only support the school district's instructional goals, parent involvement is a key goal for the school district.
6. Parent involvement is communicated via the district newsletter, requesting parent involvement in committees, and inviting parents to trainings with staff. Information is included in the district website. For example, parents and community members are invited (via the district website) to become mentors for students who are at-risk for dropping. District publications include the importance of parent involvement in decision making. Parents are involved in planning for individual programs for students as well.

## STUDENT SERVICES ACTION PLAN

**Goal: 03. Graduation Rate**

*Description:* We will increase the percentage of students who graduate from South Western High School.

**Strategy: Increasing the Graduation Rate**

*Description:* We will increase the graduation rate by 1.5% each year over the next six years.

*Activities:*

Activity	Description
Investigating and Implementing a Universal At-Risk Screening Device	<p>Key indicators of future school failure, drop-out, and truancy difficulties need to be identified for every student. Some of these indicators include problems with motivation to learn and pro-social behaviors.</p> <p>Universal screening devices are available which will assist in collecting such data.</p> <p>After identifying at-risk students in these domains, and using academic assessment data, educators and parents will have the information needed regarding whom to target for what types of interventions. Student services programs exist as resources for students who are deemed to be at-risk.</p>
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation
Dion Betts	Ongoing

**Goal: 05. Increasing Student Physical Well-being**

*Description:* Staff, parents, and students need to know the dangers of obesity. Schools can assist children and families learn about such dangers and to help in educating individuals about health nutrition.

**Strategy: Analyzing Data Regarding Childhood Obesity**

*Description:* Body Mass Index screening data will be analyzed to determine which parents, staff, and students need to be identified for awareness and training.

*Activities:*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>
Investigating and Disseminating Methods to Ameliorate Childhood Obesity	Students, parents, and educators need to know how to help children lead healthy lives, both during school and after graduation.  Students who are obese, or at risk for obesity, need to learn healthy eating and physical fitness methods.
<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline for Implementation</b>
Dion Betts	Ongoing

## **Strategic Planning Process**

Volunteers for the strategic planning process were selected to represent the various stakeholders of the district. The assistant superintendent was appointed by the superintendent to serve as the strategic planning coordinator. Teacher volunteers were solicited and affirmed by their fellow teachers. All administrators and board members who volunteered to participate were invited to join the steering committee. All parents and community members were notified through the district newsletter that the district desired applications of interested parties. All parents and community members who applied to participate were included on the steering committee. The high school principal selected the students from among the student council.

The first meeting of the strategic planning committee was held on February 5, 2008. The committee began by reviewing the goals and accomplishments of our previous strategic plan, our district mission statement, and the characteristics of high performing education systems. We spent our next two meetings reviewing a variety of achievement, demographic, perception, and contextual data as a way to analyze our strengths and areas of need. Some areas of strength identified by the committee include the following:

- Advances in reading and math proficiency, as measured by the PSSA at some grade levels
- Strong writing scores at the middle and high schools
- Parent support for school activities
- High participation at elementary and middle school parent-teacher conferences
- A variety of connections between the schools and the community
- Many professional development opportunities for teachers
- Increased diversity in our student population

Areas of need revealed through data analysis included a drop in reading and math achievement at the beginning of each school year and when students transition from one level to the next within the district; a lower graduation rate than some of the other districts in York County; and an increase in the number of students needing remedial services.

When setting goals for the strategic plan, the committee tried to look at ways to build upon our strengths while also finding ways to address areas of weakness. Through data analysis and our discussions, the following four goal areas were identified for the district's plan:

1. Meeting the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners

Ensuring that students have the life and career skills needed to be successful in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, including exposure to world languages.

2. Creating a vision for student success

Having higher percentages of students proficient in reading, math, and writing as measured by PSSA, and increasing district SAT scores.

3. Increasing the graduation rate by 1.5% each year over the next six years

4. Increasing parent involvement

The committee then divided into subgroups to draft action plans in support of each goal area. Action plans were shared with the entire committee for feedback and revisions. The plan was presented to the Board on August 13, 2008. It was made available to the public for thirty days. The plan received final approval from the Board on September 24, 2008.

**Strategic Planning Committee**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Membership Category</b>	<b>Appointed By</b>
Andrea King	South Western S.D.	Ed Specialist - School Nurse	Nurses
Andrea LaManna	South Western S.D.	Ed Specialist - School Counselor	Counselors
Dion Betts	South Western S.D.	Administrator	Superintendent
Frank Stanko	South Western S.D.	Ed Specialist - School Psychologist	Psychologists
Mary Hahn	South Western S.D.	Parent	Teachers
Melissa Bush	South Western S.D.	Ed Specialist - School Psychologist	Psychologists
Samantha Gebhart	York County Children and Youth Services	Community Representative	Assistant to the Superintendent
Sherrie Sponseller	South Western S.D.	Parent	Assistant to the Superintendent
Susan Mace	South Western S.D.	Regular Education Teacher	Principal
Tammy Fritz	South Western S.D.	Special Education Teacher	Teachers
Toshia Brodbeck	South Western S.D.	Special Education Teacher	Principal

### **Assurance for the Collection, Maintenance, and Dissemination of Student Records**

By checking each of the boxes below, the local education agency assures compliance with the requirements of 22 PA Code Chapter 12 and with the policies and procedures of Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). PDE will specify, in writing, policies and procedures to be followed. Requests for any deviations from these regulations, policies, and procedures must be made in writing to PDE (electronic mail may be directed to ra-chapter12@state.pa.us).

The Local Education Agency (LEA) assures the following:

- The LEA has a local plan, including policies and procedures, in place for the collection, maintenance, and dissemination of student records in compliance with §12.31(a) and §12.32
- The plan shall be maintained in compliance with §12.31(b) and made available to PDE in compliance with §12.31(c)

### **Assurance for the Operation of Student Services and Programs**

By checking each of the boxes below, the local education agency assures compliance with the requirements of 22 PA Code Chapter 12 and with the policies and procedures of Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). PDE will specify, in writing, policies and procedures to be followed. Requests for any deviations from these regulations, policies, and procedures must be made in writing to PDE (electronic mail may be directed to ra-chapter12@state.pa.us).

The Local Education Agency (LEA) assures that there are local policies and procedures in place that address:

- Free Education and Attendance (in compliance with §12.1)
- School Rules (in compliance with §12.3)
- Discrimination (in compliance with §12.4)
- Corporal Punishment (in compliance with §12.5)
- Exclusion from School, Classes, Hearings (in compliance with §12.6, §12.7, §12.8)
- Freedom of Expression (in compliance with §12.9)
- Flag Salute and Pledge of Allegiance (in compliance with §12.10)
- Hair and Dress (in compliance with §12.11)
- Confidential Communications (in compliance with §12.12)
- Searches (in compliance with §12.14)
- Emergency Care and Administration of Medication and Treatment (in compliance with 35 P.S. §§ 780-101 - 780-144)

The LEA acknowledges that the above policies shall be maintained locally and be made available to the public upon request. The policies are not to be submitted to the Commonwealth except upon specific request by PDE.

In addition, the LEA assures the following:

- The Student Services Report complies with §12.41(b), §12.41(c), and §12.42 (consistent with the Early Intervention Services System Act (11 P.S. §§875-101 - 875-503))
- Consistent with §445 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C.A. §1232h), parents or guardians are informed regarding individual survey student assessments and provided a process for refusal to participate (in compliance with §12.41(d))
- Persons delivering student services shall be specifically licensed or certified as required by statute or regulation (in compliance with §12.41(e))

**Supporting Documents - Attachment**

- South Western School District Wellness Policy