

APPLICATION: Leonard R. Flynn Elementary

Describe the critical challenge you would like to tackle in a different way.

Our school has worked hard to develop our Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI2) model over the past few years to ensure that all students benefit from differentiated teaching and learning. As a school community, we have clarified the components of our tiers of academic and behavioral interventions. Through this work, we have better understood the value of focusing on behavioral and academic needs simultaneously, with many students often requiring support in both realms. To cultivate creative, reflective, and innovative knowledge seekers (as stated in our school's vision), it is vital that our tiers of supports and interventions build upon one another in a coherent way.

The reality of our implementation of this framework, however, has led to many interventions substituting rather than supplementing other instruction and support. As we attempt to schedule classroom instruction and interventions, we are often forced to choose between supports rather than provide all of those that a student or group of students needs. Teachers may need to decide, for example, to schedule reading intervention at a time that causes the student to miss a Second Step Social-Emotional lesson OR a math lesson in the general classroom. We believe in supporting students holistically, but our current scheduling approach often forces us to prioritize behavioral or academic supports over the other.

Our school site has a range of supports offered by staff and partner organizations: Reading Recovery (English & Spanish), Small Group Literacy Intervention (English & Spanish), RSP pull-out groups in literacy and math, English Language Development Small Group Support, Reading Partners 1-on-1 tutoring, Volunteer tutors from SF state, Social Skills groups provide by our social worker and Restorative Practices Coach, Play Therapy, Counseling, Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and others. In order to effectively mobilize these interventions alongside excellent tier 1

instruction, we believe we need to rethink the way we schedule interventions and supports for students so that they work in harmony with each other and excellent, Tier-1 instruction.

What outcome(s) or change(s) would you like your design to achieve at your school site?

We would like to create a process for scheduling and coordinating interventions and supports for students that provides students access to consistent, excellent Tier-1 instruction alongside purposeful interventions geared towards students' needs. In doing so, we would also be better prepared to measure the impact of particular interventions on students and identify strengths and gaps in our RTI framework at X School.

If this problem didn't exist, the wide range of interventions and supports we have at our disposal would be fully leveraged in purposeful ways that serve the students who need those supports most. Furthermore, we would be able to track trends of student performance growth for groups receiving certain interventions or combinations of interventions. With this data, we could focus our development in the areas/interventions most likely to impact student achievement and success.

For teachers, a stronger culture of collaboration and shared ownership over student success would be built. With the reassurance that interventions are being implemented in ways that support and not interrupt Tier-1 classroom instruction, teachers, interventionists, support staff, and administration will be better equipped to problem solve to meet student needs. Parents will feel confident that the needs of their children are being met, and that each moment a child spends at X School is purposefully targeted towards their improvement in a critical area. Students will be encouraged to take risks with the knowledge that they will receive the support they need to be successful. X School will follow through on its promise to be a school

that holds all students to high expectations and provides high levels of support towards meeting those ambitious goals.

How have you engaged your school to identify your critical challenge?

We have collaborated as a staff around defining our tiers of supports and interventions. Through our work around the comprehensive approach to literacy, Second Step social-emotional curriculum, culturally relevant pedagogy, we have engaged our school around what the components of our RTI2 model are. Where we have fallen short, however, is clarifying how and when these strategies and supports should be implemented in a strategic and coherent way. Staff members across our school have shared common challenges around scheduling interventions and supports for students that they truly need. With a diverse team whose members each have a unique perspective as to how scheduling affects the impact of our RTI model, we have a great deal of enthusiasm and purpose to tackle this problem.

What solutions have you tried or considered to address this challenge so far?

Last year we convened a master scheduling committee to attempt to develop a coherent schedule that was supportive of students. With a focus on predictability and coherence, we were able to develop consistent instructional blocks for grade levels throughout the school week. While this has supported classes in following a predictable schedule Monday-Friday, it has not meant that interventions for students are scheduled strategically. Whether it is Reading Recovery, one-on-one therapy, or social skills, these supports still feel as if they are coming at the expense of valuable classroom instruction or other important interventions. Considering the many complex layers of X School (2 language programs, SOAR academy, Transitional Kindergarten, half-time visual arts and 0.8FTE P.E. and garden teacher, multiple

afterschool programs), it has been difficult to implement RTI2 with fidelity within the traditional paradigm of the instructional day.

How is this challenge an equity dilemma, one that is interfering with your school's ability to ensure that all of your students will thrive?

Many of our students that require multiple levels support and intervention are language learners, students with learning differences, trauma-impacted students, and/or historically underserved students of color. The students that are currently thriving in our school are not the ones that receive or need tier-2 and tier-3 supports. 67% of our students who identify as white scored proficient on the 2015 SBAC ELA test. 18% of Latino students, 4% of African American students, and just 3% of students receiving SPED services were proficient on the same exam. By and large, students receiving interventions and supports are from the latter subgroups.

By developing a creative solution to scheduling coherent supports and interventions within our school, we will create personalized pathways for students to achieve ambitious goals and results. We believe that we can re-imagine the school day, keeping learning standards constant while we explore new ways to use space and time. Rethinking our scheduling of services will allow us to prioritize the interventions and supports students need, ones that are essential for continuing to support student progress. Many of our students arrive early and stick with us until 5:30pm in the after-school program, creating an exciting opportunity to re-think the way we schedule and provide a range of supports to students.

Who is on your design team? (the more diverse the better)

Special Education Teacher

School Social Worker

School Secretary and parent of a Kindergartner

Kindergarten Spanish Immersion Teacher

5th Grade English Plus Pathway Teacher

Assistant Principal

Principal

How will you make sure your team will commit the time needed to succeed?

All team members are aware of the time commitment required to engage in this process. The team is comprised of members who have felt the impact of this of this challenge and are committed to addressing it.

We will have each team member sign a document outlining the necessary time commitment and participation should we be awarded with this opportunity.