

# Downers Grove Grade School District 58 School Improvement Plan

## Pierce Downer School 2022-23

### Goal #1

#### Statement of Goal

Pierce Downer school will implement phonemic awareness instructional strategies during the 2022-2023 school year in all instructional environments throughout the building.

Throughout the year, we will differentiate instruction based on data for students and explore morpheme instruction for upper-grade levels.

#### Rationale for Goal

After reviewing the data from the 2021-22 school year, we saw the benefit of the instruction provided. Our sample group of students showed growth of over 66% from pre to posttest on the PAST. As a result of this significant growth, our team felt the value in continuing to utilize the foundational reading skills instructional strategies introduced and implemented during the 2021-22 school year to support all readers. Research tells us that "... an intimate and reciprocal association exists among children's letter knowledge, their phonemic awareness, and their skill in alphabetic decoding. Once this initial insight is acquired, children develop increasingly sophisticated skills in alphabetic decoding, moving in broad phases from partial to full decoding ability." (*Ending the Reading Wars, Castles & Nation, 2018*).

#### Implementation and Support of Goal

- Students in K-1 will use Heggerty, a research based phonological and phonemic awareness curriculum, systematically in the classroom
- Students in grades 2-6 will be using Kilpatrick, programming that explicitly teaches and builds phonological awareness skills in readers of all levels, systematically in the classroom
- ILT will be supporting classroom teachers to ensure fidelity of implementation
- ILT will use peer modeling to help support instruction, assessment, and groupings
- ILT will provide resources and support for classrooms ready for morpheme instruction

#### Plans and Timelines to Measure Effectiveness

- During our opening Institute Days, ILT will review our progress from last year and expectations to continue last year's instructional methods.

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- In September 2022, a sample grouping of students will take a pre-test to determine its effectiveness as a measurement tool.
- During the first trimester building directed PLMs, ILT will introduce and model the implementation of the PAST. Following this meeting, teachers will assess 2 students using the PAST. At the next meeting, we will assist in scoring and interpreting results.
- Once teachers are familiar with using and interpreting the PAST, more students will be assessed. ILT will continue to support how to use the data to inform instruction and differentiate within the classroom.
- At our October School Improvement Day, ILT will provide resources and support for classrooms ready for morpheme instruction and support programming specific to each grade level as needed.
- In the spring, we will administer the PAST to the sample group of students from September to measure their growth.
- Implementation will be measured through conversations in grade level teams, faculty meetings, PLMs, and the regular review of teacher feedback by the ILT. Ultimately, the ILT will analyze the effectiveness of implementation in May 2023.

## Goal #2

### Statement of Goal

Pierce Downer school will establish and encourage a culture and climate that is rooted in positive psychology, using the work of Shawn Achor's The Happiness Advantage as our guiding principles.

### Rationale for Goal

*Focusing on the good isn't just about overcoming our inner grump to see the glass half full. It's about opening our minds to the ideas and opportunities that will help us be more productive, effective, and successful at work and in life.*" - Shawn Achor, The Happiness Advantage

Last school year, District 58 participated in initial training through the Orange Frog/Happiness Advantage workshops. In what was an incredibly trying year for everyone in education, our deliberate efforts to focus on the principles of the Happiness Advantage did have a tangible impact on our school district. We renew those efforts this year; members of each building's staff went through a two-day

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training this summer and began identifying building-level implementation strategies to promote a positive culture and climate. We intend to build upon last year's successes and reflect upon last year's experiences at the district and building levels, continuing to take deliberate steps that are rooted in positive psychology.

### **Implementation and Support of Goal**

At the district level, we will continue to promote choosing positivity through district level celebrations and recognition of individual and group efforts of success, as well as through allocating time at district level meetings for activities that enhance a positive culture and climate. We will also ensure that district staff model our positive approach, from the front district office through the central office administrators. We continue to encourage all district staff to wear orange each Monday as a visual reminder of our commitment to choosing happiness.

At the building level, Pierce Downer School will continue implementing and fostering growth with keeping the PD PROMISE that has a monthly focus during the year, including these components:

- Polite
- Respectful
- Optimistic
- Making Good Choices
- Integrity
- Safety
- Encouraging

The PD PROMISE will unite the school to educate and reinforce expected behaviors and increase school pride.

### **Plans and Timelines to Measure Effectiveness**

The effectiveness of this goal will be measured by the presence of deliberate efforts aligned with the philosophy of the Happiness Advantage as well as the overall educational and collegial climate in District 58. The evidence of activities and the allocation of time and resources will be apparent in meeting agendas, communications at the building level, and student activities that are scheduled. The evidence of celebrations of our accomplishments will be shown through venues like Twitter, newsletters and even at Board meetings. We also measure the school environment formally through surveys like the 5Essentials, and regularly collect feedback regarding professional learning experiences, meetings, and other district employee experiences. Similarly, we survey students and families regarding

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their perceptions of the school environment. These quantifiable measurements will hopefully be complimented both by the intangible “feel” we have when we enter school buildings or attend district events. In the end, the implementation of this goal will be reviewed and analyzed each school year, but continues to be part of a multi-year process that continues district-wide.

Pierce Downer School will measure effectiveness through monthly grade-level meetings, administration of staff surveys at the end of each trimester, and behavior logs. Pierce Downer will also utilize Building-Based PLM to develop staff understanding of collaborative learning, engagement strategies, and classroom management.