

Executive Summary

A. Introduction

Tayac Academy is an academically driven elementary school for kindergarten through fifth grade students whose primary focus is to concentrate on excellence in reading, writing and mathematics. Tayac is considered a reading strategy toolkit school therefore; our academic program supports a concentrated focus on reading strategies through out all content subjects such as science, health and social studies. Another noteworthy feature is that students are required to wear uniforms and they have daily access to a computer lab to support the instructional program. The school is comprised of one head start, one pre-kindergarten, two kindergarten, first, second and third grade, and three fourth and fifth grade classes. Our special education program includes the inclusion model where three resource teachers co-teach with general education teachers. Also, our program includes two new Autistic classrooms with two Autistic special education teachers and five paraprofessionals. Finally, we have an extended ESOL program for the upcoming school year to include an ESOL specialist to service our increasing population of ESOL students. Furthermore, third-fifth students will have an opportunity to be involved in Tayac's Extended Learning Opportunity Program. The ELO program meets two days a week after school and provides students with a highly intense concentration in reading and mathematics.

The organization of the school day is divided into 150 minutes of reading for kindergarten through second grades and 105 minutes of reading for third through fifth grades. The mathematics block has an established time period of 90 minutes daily for all grade levels. The reading and mathematics blocks host daily flexible groups, which accommodate differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students. Tayac has allocated sixty minutes to teaching science and social studies with an emphasis on reading strategies within the content areas.

Parents and the board are notified of the school's current status through a home letter and at the annual Back to School Night where a power point presentation gives attendees an opportunity to view the data directly. There is also a direct link to Maryland's Department of Education website via Tayac's home website.

Tayac's population is mostly comprised of African American students but the school's demographics are changing to include a more diverse population due to construction of new communities. The school was able to meet AYP in 2007 in reading and in mathematics. According to 2007 data in reading all subgroups achieved AYP. However, we achieved AYP in Special reading and FARMS reading as a result of safe harbor. In Mathematics all subgroups met AYP. Tayac is not a school in improvement

Our vision is that 100% of our students will achieve state proficiency in accordance with the Maryland assessment criteria. The mission of the faculty, staff, parents and guardians at Tayac Academy is to establish an open, caring and safe environment, which provides experiences, opportunities and resources to promote maximum achievement while challenging our students to meet requirements as productive, successful and responsible individuals.

B. School Demographics

Tayac's staff is comprised of thirty-two educators. Sixteen teachers hold an advanced professional certificate and three hold provisional certificates. There are twelve staff members with zero to three years of experience; four staff members have four to ten years and five staff members have more than fifteen years of teaching experience.

The school is comprised of 335 students. The subgroups are as follows:

Males- 171-51%

Females-164-49%

Asian/Pacific Islander- 7-2%

African American- 286-85%

Hispanics- 42-13%

Special Education- 16 - 21%

Free and Reduced lunch-45-13%

There are 24 students who receive free lunch and 21 on reduced meal plans. Tayac's attendance rate is 97.2%

The community is mostly comprised of single-family homes and small businesses. There are several Day Cares, and Before and After care facilities within close proximity of the school.

C. Major initiatives and how these efforts will improve student performance.

In the 2007-2008 school year, Tayac Academy will focus on the priority academic areas of reading and mathematics and continue to incorporate science as well. 2007 MSA annual measurable objective (AMO) in reading was 67.2%, mathematics was 58.8%, and attendance was 94.0%. Results from the 2007 MSA data indicated that the 2007 AMO was achieved in mathematics however in reading it was met by the confidence interval.

Tayac Academy's focus for the 2007-2008 school year will be to increase student achievement in reading mathematics and science. Tayac will accomplish these goals by:

- Continuing to use the Houghton-Mifflin Reading Nations Choice and Houghton-Mifflin Reading programs to support the county's reading program
- Using the Scotts Foresman Addison Wesley mathematics and science program.
- Implementing technology to facilitate students' research and means of communication through the World Wide Web.
- Providing workshops for parents and students to support the reading and mathematics programs.
- Using the Comprehension Toolkit Curriculum Framework Progress Guide for Reading. There is a focus on integrating reading strategies; self selected independent reading and application within content areas. There is also an emphasis on Brief Constructed Responses and Differentiated Instruction and the use of technology. Teachers will meet weekly to plan collaboratively.
- Using the Curriculum Framework Progress Guides to plan and implement math indicators as outlined by the county and the Maryland State Department of Education.

C. Major initiatives and how these efforts will improve student performance (Cont)

- Holding instructional, collaborative planning and data utilization meetings to discuss the results from the formative and summative assessment data.
- Conducting monthly meetings with the School Planning and Management Team to revise and update instructional strategies in order to monitor and record academic progress on quarterly monitoring tool.
- Following the mandated block-scheduling format to maximize learning opportunities in the prioritized focused academic reading, science, and mathematics with the integration of science.
- Providing professional development for the 2007-2008 school years, to include a focus on reading, science, and mathematics strategies for targeted subgroups. Professional development workshops will be designed

to focus on the needs of the staff and focused content areas. Also, a concentration will be on workshops that provide feedback on BCR's. Formal and informal observations will drive the content of follow-up training sessions.

- Implementing an attendance plan for students with a high rate of absenteeism and tardies.
- Engaging F/ARMS, Hispanics and Special Education students with reading strategy instruction using the Exploring Nonfiction and other pieces of text. Students will participate in the Self selected reading (SIR) along with Book Clubs to promote the independent reading component of the reading block and literacy development.
- Using the concrete, representational, abstract model of instruction for mathematics instruction in order to apply and extend mathematical reasoning, make connections, problem solve, and express higher order thinking with an emphasis on measurement and number computation.
- Conducting the three B's program as a part of the on time incentive program. Be on time, Be prepared and Be ready to learn. Students will earn individual rewards monthly based on their attendance. Class with the highest reward will earn a pizza party.
- Utilize the five E's to deliver science instruction for kindergarten through fifth grade. Utilize science investigation in order to get students familiar with the scientific method.
- Teachers will use CFPG to effectively plan and teach to the assessment limits from the VSC. Unit assessments will measure student progress. Teachers will use the unit assessments to guide instruction.
- Teachers will use the science problem of the week (SPOW) to engage students in higher order thinking.
- Teachers will integrate science process skills and reading strategies with an emphasis on infer, drawing conclusions, and main idea.
- Teachers will integrate science process skills and mathematic strategies with an emphasis on measurement, and estimation.

D. Subgroups

According to 2007 MSA results Hispanics and African Americans in third, fourth and fifth grade exceeded the confidence interval in mathematics. Hispanics and African Americans made AYP in reading due to the confidence interval. F/ARMS made it through safe harbor in reading and Special education subgroups made it by safe harbor in mathematics. *"The school does not have a limited English proficient subgroup at this time."*

F/ARMS

Teachers will be provided with support and staff development in order to address the instructional and attendance needs of this subgroup. Teachers will engage students in reading strategy instruction using the Comprehension Toolkit curriculum framework progress guide. Using the Comprehension Toolkit curriculum framework progress guide, teachers will implement the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model (Pearson) to teach the skills and strategies as outlined in the VSC. There will be a focus on integrating reading strategies; self selected independent reading (SIR), Book Clubs and application of the strategies using Exploring Nonfiction, Houghton Mifflin Reading and the Wildcat series. Reading strategies taught will also be infused within other content areas. There will place an emphasis placed on Brief Constructed Responses and differentiated instruction and the use of technology. Teams will attend weekly collaborative planning sessions to plan collaboratively, to receive professional development and support from reading specialist.

To enrich their learning experience students will utilize Scott Foresman success net, which is the technology component of the math series. Teachers will also use the concrete, representational, abstract model of instruction for mathematics instruction in order for students to apply and extend mathematical reasoning, make connections, and express higher order thinking with an emphasis on measurement and number computation. Teachers will plan collaboratively for flexible group

instruction in mathematics. Learning/literacy centers in both reading and mathematics will be created and used to reinforce basic skills and enhance concepts to develop lessons to address learning deficits according to formative and summative assessments.

Hispanics

This year Tayac has an ESOL teacher, the ESOL teacher will work with the classroom teacher and assist with providing support and staff development to address the instructional and attendance needs of this subgroup. Teachers along with the ESOL teacher will engage students in reading strategy instruction using the Comprehension Toolkit curriculum framework progress guide. Using the Comprehension Toolkit curriculum framework progress guide, teachers will implement the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model (Pearson) to teach the skills and strategies as outlined in the VSC. There will be a focus on integrating reading strategies; self selected independent reading (SIR), Book Clubs and application of the strategies using Exploring Nonfiction, Houghton Mifflin Reading and the Wildcat series. Reading strategies taught will also be infused within other content areas. There will place an emphasis placed on Brief Constructed Responses and differentiated instruction and the use of technology. The ESOL teacher along with grade level teams will attend weekly planning session to plan collaboratively, receive professional development and support from reading specialist.

Hispanics (Cont)

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Special Education

Tayac will continue to implement the full inclusion model where the regular and special education teachers' work cohesively to co-teach. Teachers will be provided with support and staff development in order to address the instructional as well as attendance needs of this subgroup. Students will be engaged in reading strategy instruction using the Comprehension Toolkit curriculum framework progress guide. Using the Comprehension Toolkit curriculum framework progress guide, teachers will implement the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model (Pearson) to teach the skills and strategies as outlined in the VSC. There will be a focus on integrating reading strategies; self selected independent reading (SIR), Book Clubs and application of the strategies using Exploring Nonfiction, Houghton Mifflin Reading and the Wildcat series. Reading strategies taught will also be infused within other content areas. There will place an emphasis placed on Brief Constructed Responses and differentiated instruction and the use of technology. Teams will attend weekly collaborative planning sessions to plan collaboratively, to receive professional development and support from reading specialist.

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Teachers will plan collaboratively for flexible group instruction in both reading and mathematics.

Learning/ literacy centers in both reading and mathematics will be created and used to reinforce basic skills and enhance concepts to develop lessons to address learning deficits according to formative and summative assessments. Using the gradual release of responsibility teachers will also work on brief and extended constructed response items

Special education students will have opportunities to use learning centers to reinforce basic skills and enhance concepts; these centers will be based off indicated IEP goals. Special education teachers will implement accommodations to include additional time to complete a task, and peer tutoring / coaching when necessary.

Special Education (cont’)

The following actions will continue to be implemented in order to decrease the number of Special education students scoring basic in reading and mathematics:

- Reading centers will focus on general, literary and informational text reading activities developed by special education resource teachers to provide further exposure to grade level literature through books on tapes.
- Math centers will focus on achievement in deficient Content Standards by giving students additional time for independent practice.

Special education teachers will attend staff development to acquire an understanding of other instructional best practices that will support learners of special needs.

E. Safe and Orderly Environment

To ensure a safe and orderly environment, the administrators, teachers and counselor review the Code of Student Conduct regularly with assemblies and classroom reviews. The school wide discipline plan has been communicated to all teachers to ensure consistency in the implementation of school and classroom rules and procedures. School rules are posted in each classroom. The pupil personnel worker works in conjunction with the counselor to reemphasize the Code of Student Conduct. Behavior Management Plans or contracts are developed and implemented for those students who are in need of extra support in order to manage their behavior. Peer mediation has been established and used to help resolve conflicts throughout the year. Mediators implement peer mediation, as needed, using fourth and fifth grade students. As a part of the attendance initiative Tayac has implemented the three B’s program as a part of the on time incentive program. Be On time, Be prepared and Be ready to learn. Students will earn individual rewards and class rewards monthly based on their attendance and punctuality. The class with the highest attendance wins a pizza party and the teacher is rewarded by receiving the teacher of the month certificate and will be able to park in the Teacher of the Month parking space. Additionally, correspondences are sent home to the parent/guardians of students who are absent or tardy more than five times per quarter.

F. Parental Involvement

The following programs are being implemented in order to communicate with the community. There is a active Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and parental support for school grade-level activities. The PTO will assist grade levels with raising funds to support academic activities that will be implemented during the year. Tayac also has several means of communicating with parents as well as the community. Posted in front of the school is an illuminated school sign, which provides current school information for all to see. All students are given agenda books, these books are used to provide a home to school connection.

The agenda books are used as a vessel to show student homework assignments, subjects covered in class and a means for parents to correspond with teachers. The “School Communication System” will be used to communicate, via telephone, with parents’ pertinent information. Additionally, Tayac’s website will be maintained as a means to communicate with parents and community. Also, a reading and mathematics website provides additional resources for parents.

Parental Involvement (cont)

Tayac has provided instructional tips through a monthly newsletter as well as on the Tayac website for parents. A “parent institute” will be established to address parental and student needs as they arise during the school year to improve students’

achievement. The parent institute will conduct activities by the parent liaison, Tayac staff and other sources with and emphasis on MSA activities to do at home.

The parent liaison will address specific needs of parents including discipline, attendance, and social- emotional needs of students. Formative and summative data results will be shared during parent conferences, Grade-level PTO and school Improvement meetings. Parents will also be requested to attend evening grade level meetings and workshops.

This year Tayac has a parent liaison. A parent liaison will address specific needs of parents including discipline, attendance, and social- emotional needs of students. The parent liaison will conduct home visits and make phone calls home. There will be an outreach to local businesses on behalf of the school. As mentioned above the parent institute will host activities by the parent liaison, Tayac staff and other sources with and emphasis on MSA activities to do at home.

The parent liaison will address specific needs of parents including discipline, attendance, and social- emotional needs of students.

Again, the community that surrounds Tayac is comprised of small businesses and single-family homes. There are a few Day Cares, as well as before and after care facilities. These facilities host Tayac students after school and are located within close proximity of the school. At the present time Tayac is reaching out to businesses via the parent liaison.