



Bluffton High School Improvement Council's Report to the Parents

April 30, 2011

The State of Our School

Progress is being made on our School Renewal Plan through the efforts of Bluffton High School staff, faculty, and students. It takes dedication, perseverance, and effort to make a difference, and we believe we are on a great course.

One of the avenues we are using to meet our goals and to help us enhance our improvement strategies has been to utilize the High Schools That Work (HSTW) methodology. The HSTW plan is a proven method and strategy to assist schools to make lasting improvements.

Bluffton High School hosted a team of individuals making up the HSTW Technical Assistance Visitation which reviewed our school, students, faculty, and daily activities. This visit happened just before Spring Break in March, and we should receive their official feedback before school lets out in June.

The following summary outlines the actions completed and/or in progress:

Goal 1: Increase student achievement within 5 years to exceed state and national averages.

- Utilizing the High School That Work methodology during this school year in order to structure positive impact and actions
- Developed a remediation and reinforcement initiative to drive greater success with struggling students
- Developed a curricular initiative aimed at collaborating with Bluffton Middle and McCracken Middle to ensure consistency. Also focused on an assessment initiative to better prepare students for standardized tests and college entrance exams.
- Enhanced the professional development of the staff by reviewing data and curricular as it pertains to the 6-12 cluster, not just BLHS.
- Raised our High School Report Card Absolute Rating from Average to Good.
- Improved our EOC Composite score by 20 points.

Goal 2: Ensure best practices and resources are consistent and shared across the school.

- Established the first Bluffton Cluster 6-12 professional development day to collaborate, train, and discuss strategies across the school system.
- Creation of Like-Course Teams for the purpose of staff collaboration with regard to Curricular Mapping, development of common assessments, joint lesson planning, implementation of effective teaching strategies, and data utilization.
- Daily posting of warm-up activities, essential questions, standard(s) to be covered, and summarization activities in each classroom.
- Implementation of the HSTW 10 Key Practices.
- Development of a building-wide Writing Initiative.

Goal 3: Actively engage community and stakeholders in schools.

- Increased student participation and involvement in co-curricular activities.
- Created a system that facilitates the increased input of students and staff.
- Utilization of the school website for the posting of parent and student communications and resources.
- Increased community involvement, especially at sporting events.
- Clubs and fundraising events including community, parents, and stakeholders

Goal 4: Provide resources for appropriate learning environments

- Communication of the Principal's vision for a student-centered school.
- Development and implementation for "Back On Track" and Credit Recovery programs.
- Required bi-monthly Technology Training sessions for all building staff.
- Release time for departmental collaboration and curricular development.

Goal 5: Ensure a safe and healthy learning environment

- Striving for consistent enforcement of school & District policies and expectations.
- Implementation of fire, severe weather, earthquake, and lock-down drills.
- Collaboration and partnership with community law enforcement with regard to the utilization of the School Resource Officer (SRO) and K-9 Unit searches.
- Implementation drug and alcohol education programming and presentations.

Goal 6: Develop practices and processes for open, transparent, and effective communications, both internally and externally

- Weekly publishing of a "Staff Bulletin" by the Principal that is emailed to all staff every Monday.
- Monthly publishing of the *Bluffton High Lites* parent newsletter.
- Monthly S.I.C. and PTSCO Meetings that include Principal Reports, the sharing of student & staff achievements, and presentations by students related to their involvement in school activities
- Monthly *Faculty Forums* that provide dedicated time for staff to meet with the Principal.
- All staff participate on HSTW Focus Teams
- Development, distribution, and review of student, staff, and parent School Climate Surveys.
- Creation of a three-year Graduate Follow-up Survey
- Creation of student recognition initiatives that include daily announcing of student successes, publishing of student "Points of Pride," flying the Bobcat Flag daily in honor of student achievements, and honoring Senior Students of the Month.

Using Data to Implement Change

In order to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses of programs and instruction, the High Schools that Work data committee has analyzed data from multiple sources such as AP (Advanced Placement), HSAP (High School Assessment Program), EOC (End of Course), SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test), and ACT (American College Testing Assessment). The committee members then created charts and graphs which illustrated the data in an easy to understand format. This data, presented to the SIC, became the catalyst for discussion of ways to improve academic achievement especially among various subgroups of our students. The same data has been made available to the teachers and is being used departmentally to drive instruction and curriculum development.

As we move forward, the SIC would like to see the school focus on the large group of students in the regular college track. With a small amount of concentrated effort, this group of students could make great gains.

2009-2010 AP Summary						
Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
BLHS # Tests Taken	125	106	149	161	273	418
BLHS Percent of Students Scoring 3+	56	78	79	71	59	58
State Percent of Students Scoring 3+	54	55	57	57	57	56
National Percent of Students Scoring 3+	58	58	57	58	59	58

Caption: Students scoring 3 to 5 on Advanced Placement (AP) exams earn credit at many colleges. The number of AP tests taken increased markedly from 161 in 2007-08 to 418 in 2009-10 due to a curricular shift from traditional honors to advanced placement offerings.

Highlight: The number of AP tests dramatically increased while the success rate remained at the national average.

End-of-Course Exam Results

English I End of Course Test Pass Rates				Physical Science End of Course Test			
	2008	2009	2010		2008	2009	2010
Bluffton	62.1	63.3	75.3	Bluffton	50.6	55.4	58.2
District	65.1	59.6	71.3	District	41.4	46.7	55.1
State	68.4	68.4	73.7	State	55	55.5	59.1
Algebra I End of Course Test Pass Rates				U.S. History End of Course Test Pass Rates			
	2008	2009	2010		2009	2010	
Bluffton	75	71.2	76.4	Bluffton		39.7	47.6
District	68.3	71.2	73.8	District		37.3	36.8
State	78.3	77.2	80.2	State		42.4	46.3

Caption: In 2009-10, state wide end-of-course (EOC) exams were given in Algebra I, English 1, History and Physical Science. Interventions, such as teacher training and USA Test Prep (student test preparation software), contributed to the score increases.

Highlights:

- ◆ Pass rates increased across the board from 2009-2010.
- ◆ Many students fail the test by only one or two questions. Using test preparation software, such as USA Test Prep, at school and at home can dramatically improve pass rates.

2009-10 HSAP Scores

HSAP MATH

HSAP ENGLISH

Ethnicity	% Prof+ 2009	% Prof+ 2010	Target Score	Met AYP	Students	% Prof+ 2009	% Prof+ 2010	Target Score	Met AYP
All	66.4%	58.1%	70.0%	No	347	63.8%	60.9%	71.3%	No
White	78.8%	69.1%	70.0%	Yes	198	76.4%	77.5%	71.3%	Yes
African American	46.9%	30.2%	70.0%	No	57	52.3%	39.2%	71.3%	No
Hispanic	51.4%	45.8%	70.0%	No	80	39.4%	41.7%	71.3%	No
ESOL	41.2%	44.7%	70.0%	No	53	28.8%	29.2%	71.3%	No
Free/Red Lunch	54.3%	44.9%	70.0%	No	94	42.5%	47.7%	71.3%	No

Caption: For graduation, students must score basic or better on the state-mandated HSAP math and English exams. However, No Child Left Behind requires students to score proficient or better for schools to meet AYP (Annual Yearly Progress). Note that the white subgroup met AYP in math since the three year average exceeded the target score. Increases in below grade level math enrollment from 40% in 2008-09 to 52% in 2009-10 caused the dramatic decrease in math scores. New interventions, such as 9th grade math and English assistance courses, target students who enter high school behind in math and English allowing them catch up while remaining in grade-level courses.

Highlights:

- ◆ Scores fell due to increased student numbers in below-level classes.
- ◆ Current interventions concentrate upon both catching students up while moving them forward.

Scholarships

The 2010 Bluffton High Seniors Class secured a grand total of \$2.5 million in scholarships

Communication

Beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, BLHS has been able to provide access to your students' current grades, upcoming assignments, teacher blogs & email, as well as specific attendance information through the School Fusion Website. Our school Fusion Site brings you the most up to date information about Bluffton High School, our achievements, and daily happenings. Parents may access this site by stopping by BLHS and picking up a form that gives you specific directions including a username and password.

Another communication technique used by Bluffton High School is the *School Messenger system*. *School Messenger* will phone the student's number to inform families of important meetings, progress and report card dates, and other news of interest to the Bluffton High community.

Mr. Dievendorf also emails monthly communication letters to parents. The email communications explain the most recent happenings and achievements here at Bluffton High School. The BLHS Webmaster keeps the website current so that interested individuals can learn about events and programs at our school.

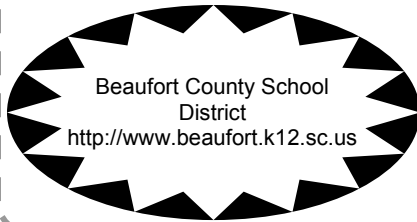
Uniform Implementation

The good news is that a majority of the parents and students are working hard to help implement the dress code for Bluffton High school students this school year. We conducted overviews of the district's dress code policy with students, contacted parents, allowed students to change into appropriate attire, and answered students questions (in/out of classrooms) pertaining to the dress code.

Challenges: Boys wearing cargo pants, 5% of students habitually defy the dress code, and 2% monthly wear jeans or flip flops.



Bluffton High School
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CLUBS at BLHS

CHESS CLUB-Mr. George Martin
DECA-Mrs. Elizabeth Ferrato
FCA—Mr. Dave Adams
INTERACT-Mrs. Davis,
Mr. Petitjean, Mrs. Tkocs
INVISIBLE CHILDREN-Mrs. Lisa Sumner
JROTC Battalion Command and Staff– LTC Carothers,
CSM Brown
JROTC Booster Club– Mr. Will Pelletier
JROTC COLOR GUARD AND DRILL TEAM-CSM Brown
JROTC RAIDER TEAM-LTC Carothers
LASO –LATIN AMERICAN STUDENT ORGANIZATION-
Mrs. Leonarda Merino-Barraza
MARTIAL ARTS CLUB—Mr. Petitjean, Mr. Richard Smith
MODEL UNITED NATIONS-
Mrs. Erin Reichart
NATIONAL ART HONOR SOCIETY -NAHS-Mrs. Andrea
Pejeau
NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY-Mr. Myers
POETRY CLUB-Mrs. Lisa Sumner
ROBOTICS—Dr. Sandusky
STRENGTH TEAM-Mr. Derek Boyd
STUDENT GOVERNMENT-
Mrs. Pam Wolske
STUDENT TRAINING EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM-
“STEP”-Mrs. Laura Gottardo
YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT-
Mrs. Erin Reichert

School Improvement Council (SIC)

The Council meets on the first Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. in the Media Center. Minutes are published and posted on the school's website in the SIC link. 2010-2011 Members of the SIC are as follows:

John Ortega	Chair
Vicki Neitzel	Vice Chair
Vicki Ratzel	Secretary
Mark Dievendorf	Principal
Laura Gottardo	Faculty
Bobby Collar	Faculty
Michelle Morris	Faculty
Lindsey Skirtich	Teacher of the Year
Pam Davis	Previous Years' Chair
Kim Abron	PTSCO President
Mary Miller	Appointee
Nate Pringle	Appointee
Jessica Sandusky	Student
Gloria Abron	Student