

Whittier K-8 Innovation School Plan

Whittier K-8 Innovation School Plan

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**Application to be designated as an
Innovation School**

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SECTION I: VISION STATEMENT, MISSION STATEMENT AND GOALS

Vision Statement

Whittier K-8 will become *the* research based learning community whereby all students meet standards of excellence. Whittier K-8 will become *the* research based learning community whereby all students meet standards of excellence and engage in activities such as art, career education and additional enrichment programs that promote the total development of each child spiritually, morally, intellectually, and socially.

Mission Statement

By providing staff professional development opportunities, maintaining fidelity to Colorado State Standards and research-based strategies for increasing student achievement, Whittier K-8 will become an independent and self-governed school where all students will attain the skills necessary to become self-sufficient, well-educated young leaders.

Outcome Goals

Academic Goal

Whittier ECE-8 School will offer a strong academic program that is standards-based and data driven. The planning of curricula components and the implementation of the components will be determined by the school leadership team. Planning and pacing will be based upon data from the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (**PARCC**), current year benchmark and formal class assessments approved by the school leadership team. It is the goal of Whittier ECE-8 School to achieve a minimum score that exceeds the district average growth based on the Denver Public Schools School Performance Framework (SPF) at all grade levels taking the PARCC examinations. In grades K-2, a goal of a 5% increase per year, for the first five years, on the end of year Read Act examinations will be set. Teaching strategies will follow the principles from Robert Marzano's research based publication Instructional Strategies That Work.

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Independent & Self Governed

Whittier K-8 will have the appropriate freedom to control its educational programs; financial resources; staff structure and incentives; scheduling and school

Explicit Instruction

All Whittier K-8 students will graduate at or above grade level in all academic subject areas to ensure their future academic success.

Upon graduation, all students will have gained the ability to break topics down into their most fundamental components, whether in Math or Literacy in order to identify relationships between concepts and gain a deeper understanding of the standards-based material.

Whittier K-8 Community Participation

The successful implementation of this plan will require the full participation and support of the entire Whittier K-8 community of students, parents, staff, administration, and our neighborhood.

We recognize that a quality education depends on the effort of the people who work at our school. Each staff person from custodian to administrator will have made a proactive choice to work toward making Whittier the best K-8 school in Near Northeast Denver. Our commitment is that all staff members are highly qualified, caring, professional, and dedicated to excellence.

Belief Statements

The following are the belief statements that guide our educational practices at Whittier K-8. Our goal is to ensure that all students who attend Whittier K-8 will be well prepared to succeed in career oriented professions that required a college education. We will increase student achievement in all academic areas as measured by School Performance Frameworks and the Colorado State accountability Report. We believe that rigorous practice in math, science, social studies, and literacy will promote high level thinking based on Bloom's Taxonomies. Our unified commitment is that all staff members are professional, self-motivated and dedicated to excellence. We understand that a quality education is a vital factor in the future success of our children, community, society, and country.

SECTION II: INNOVATIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED

Overview

Innovation status would permit greater access to recruiting from the open market, and allow early offers upon vacancy of a position. We would be able to control the type and amount of student service providers that are allocated to our school. Another option would be to have non-certified staff assist with duty and substitute coverage.

In accordance with the Denver Plan, the Whittier K-8's Leadership Team's priority will be to review and analyze data for the purpose of developing and utilizing appropriate curriculum, pacing and planning, supports and instructing students accordingly. The leadership team will be required to direct staff energy and time towards standards-based academic achievement, will review and secure standards-based materials, and provide staff development to enhance our instructional practices as outlined in the Academic Strategies section of this document.

It is our intention that all stakeholders including teachers, parents, students, and administrators at Whittier K-8 have a concise understanding of expectations and universal consensus of the school's mission and vision. Staff will be required to treat students in a professional manner that promotes respect and responsibility. Whittier K-8 philosophy will also consistently model professional a manner that will be required of students as they prepare for career oriented professions.

Staff at Whittier K-8 will exemplify strong classroom management by having consistent rituals and routines throughout the entire year so students understand behavioral expectations. Frequent communication with parents regarding student behavior will be expected of all teachers. Teachers will reinforce the behavior expected of students through planning and established procedures regarding discipline and class decorum. These practices will enrich all students' school experiences and create a learning environment which is responsive, yet controlled.

The social and emotional development of all students will be nurtured through staff interaction and various student activities. We acknowledge and understand that student achievement is contingent upon not only academic performance, but also the development of the student as an individual and responsible member of society.

We will maintain an environment where opportunities for individual development at all levels is encouraged and reinforced through school counselors, peer to peer projects, individualized student plans, seminars, Project Pave, Jewish Family Services and real-life experiences that prepare students for the future. The Whittier K-8 staff are always required to act in the best interest of the student. It is our responsibility to foster a safe

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and stable environment throughout the school data.

A. Academic Strategies

Whittier K-8's Innovation academic plan will focus primarily on the following strategies that have proven to increase student achievement: 1. and explicit materials that support these criteria, 2. Power Standards, 3. Direct Explicit Strategies, 4. Spiraling Curriculum, 5. Automaticity, and 6. Retention.

1. Colorado State Common Core Standards and Explicit Materials

Based on PARCC and A-Net results we have determined that students need extra practice in order to attain mastery or automaticity. Therefore, we will supplement the our curriculum with additional resources such as: Study Island, Reading from A to Z., Educational Helper, IXL, teacher created materials and other resources that provide additional standards-based practice for students. These materials will also be used to help differentiate instruction for students across all grade levels. With this process in place, teachers will have readily available materials that document student progress.

2. Power Standards

Power Standards are Colorado State Common Core Standards that are absolutely necessary for student success. The Power Standards will be used by teachers to develop a "subset" of instructional strategies to meet district standards, and to guide the development of meaningful formal and informal curriculum and assessments. For a current listing of Power Standards for Literacy and Math based on Read Act, A-Net and PARCC student performance see appendix 14. The Power Standards will be based on ongoing A-Net assessments and review of student results from the Leadership Team and via DDI. This cycle of DDI will occur at least every 3 weeks with an in depth analysis occurring each trimester in conjunction with the district A-Net benchmark assessments. The Leadership Team review will occur at least every two weeks with emphasis on strategically disseminating information and developing best practice strategies to staff and DDI teams.

3. Direct Explicit Instruction

Direct explicit instruction is a systematic step-by-step format requiring students to respond to instruction and receive immediate feedback. Direct explicit instruction also includes continuous modeling by teachers, followed by more limited teacher involvement and then fading teacher involvement as students begin to master the material (Maccini & Gagnon, 2000). With direct explicit instruction, teachers will follow a sequence of events; generally stating the objective; reviewing skills necessary for new information, presenting new information, questioning students; providing group instruction and independent practice; assessing performance, and giving more practice (Swanson, 2001). Whittier K-8 has defined Direct Explicit Instruction when any six of the following instructional strategies are occurring. Teachers will spend 75% to 80% of their

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classroom instructional time using the following strategies:

- Breaking down a task into small steps
- Administering probes
- Administering feedback repeatedly
- Providing a pictorial or diagram presentation
- Allowing independent practice, and individually paced instruction
- Breaking the instruction down into simpler phases
- Instructing in a small group
- Teacher modeling a skill
- Providing set materials at a rapid pace
- Providing individual child instruction
- Teacher asking questions
- Teacher presenting the new (novel) materials

4. Classroom Instruction that Works

In the book Classroom Instruction That Works by Robert Marzano, researchers have identified nine instructional strategies that are most likely to improve student achievement across all content areas and across all grade levels.

- Identifying similarities and differences
- Summarizing and note taking
- Reinforcing effort and providing recognition
- Homework and practice
- Nonlinguistic representations
- Cooperative learning
- Setting objectives and providing feedback
- Generating and testing hypotheses
- Cues, questions, and advance organizers
- Automaticity

Based on student achievement data from 2005-2009 at Whittier K-8 we have identified the following strategies from the book Classroom Instruction that Works that have substantially increased student achievement: 1. Identifying similarities and differences, 2. Summarizing, note taking, and other structured responses that pertain to state standards such as: author's purpose, paraphrasing, prediction and inference, 4. Homework and practice, and 7. Setting objectives and providing feedback. These strategies will be the primary focus since they have significantly improved student achievement at Whittier.

5. Spiral Curriculum

The concept of a spiral curriculum was developed by Harvard professor Jerome S. Bruner, a one-time President of the American Psychological Association and one of the

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major moderate thinkers on education. The main idea of the spiral curriculum is that students repeatedly revisit the same sequence of topics at increasing levels of depth, detail, and sophistication. This approach has been successfully used at all levels of education, from the kindergarten level to the level of university education. The spiral curriculum will be implemented at Whittier either by curriculum materials which embed this philosophy such as Every Day Math, Minute Math, and Comprehension Cards, or by instructional planning based on Benchmark results. See appendix 15.

6. Automaticity

Students will be taught standards to a skill level at which they require little or no conscious thought.

7. Retention Policy

In general, students will be placed at grade level to which they are best adjusted academically, socially, and emotionally. As a usual practice students will spend one year in each grade. A small number of students, however, may benefit from staying another year in the same grade. Such retention may occur when:

- The student is achieving significantly below ability and grade level according to Read Act, Star, and A-net assessments and other Common Core Based Assessments
- Student has not exhibited work or study habits essential for promotion and/or
- Retention would not cause an undue social and emotional adjustment and/or
- Retention would have a reasonable chance of benefiting the student and/or
- The students developmental age is below his/her chronological age and/or
- A committee consisting of the principal, classroom teacher(s) RTI team and parents make the decision to retain.

When considering a student for retention the RTI team will consider the following

- Success in interventions including: RTI, extended instructional time, teacher interventions, and additional assessment and planning
- Environment
- Assessment Data
- Academics
- Age of student
- Work Ethic and Effort
- Attendance
- Behavior

If the Whittier staff has reached consensus on retention and the parent is in disagreement with the decision, the following process will be enacted:

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- A. The committee consisting of the principal, classroom teacher(s) RTI team will review the decision
- B. As per parent request, the student will be reassessed using Read Act, STAR and A-net data. For a student to be promoted to the next grade level he/she must be no more than a **year and a half below grade level** as based on Read Act, STAR and A-net assessments and/or score at least partially proficient on Read Act, STAR and A-net assessments.
- C. Another meeting will be held with the RTI Team and parent. A vote of 60% in favor or against will determine the child's promotion or retention
- D. Retention of students will involve parents in the process but the final decision will be staff and school based.

B. Curriculum and Assessment Strategies

Whittier K-8 will offer a viable E-8 Standards-Based academic program that will be achieved with integrity and commitment to the mission, vision, and belief statements. The pacing and planning of curricula components will be determined by the school leadership team based upon relevant, timely, student data. The education plan is aligned with the Colorado State Standards. The education plan is composed of the following areas:

1. Standards-Based Curricula
2. Backwards-Lesson Design
3. Student Initiative Grant (SIG)
4. Data Driven Instruction
5. Assessment
6. Direct Explicit Instruction
7. Student Academic Goals
8. Technology
9. Student Engagement Learning and Accountability
10. Responsive to Intervention

The areas outlined below are intended to be a general overview and not a detailed description of all activities. The goal is to achieve high student academic outcomes by implementing consistent curricula and instructional methodology. Whittier K-8 must have the flexibility to make curricular and instructional decisions that are in alignment with our educational plan, in alignment with state standards and responsive to student needs. The plan will be based on the use of Direct Explicit instruction and Marzano's strategies that will allow us to provide rigorous, appropriate grade level instruction.

C. Arts Curriculum

As reached by consensus with community, parents and teachers, Whittier will expand the offerings of the art program. Our arts program will be a dynamic celebration of the history and vibe of the school. This environment will be created by students and other stakeholders such as parents and teachers. Creative opportunities that will be explored are: 1. Hallway murals 2. Blacktop art 3. Cultural Day celebrations and other school based themes that identify and refine the school environment. The arts program will also focus on Common Core academics with graphic representations of data that will demonstrate art as a vehicle for quantitative expression and conjecture. These activities will prepare students for future jobs that rely on the art of visual demonstration such as geometry and physics. For students who exhibit a deep passion for artistic expression, afterschool programming will be offered by art specialist who mentor students to create and develop displays. Our outstanding arts teacher and Art Corps currently offer these opportunities. Redline, which is an artistic gallery, displays Whittier student work at which time the artist speaks to participants about the design and influences of their own personal artwork.

D. Career Education

In order to prepare students for the future workforce, Whittier will provide opportunities for students to meet and dialogue with adults from different professional careers for the purpose of initiating the exploration of their own goals and aspirations. Speakers will be identified by information from questionnaires and survey results from students and parents. The results will be calibrated and a ranking system will be defined. Based on results, guest speakers will represent professions of student interest by presentation. Planning and organization of these activities will be provided by offering paraprofessionals or teachers who have strong cultural bonds with the school and/or community a monetary stipend. The overwhelming majority of the activities will occur initially once a month at the end of the day. Adjustments will be made as the implementation progresses. Coordination of these events will occur at these designated times so that the instructional functions of the school day are not interrupted.

Standards-Based Curricula:

At Whittier K-8 we will use the big ideas from the following standards based curricula:

Colorado State Standards and Explicit Materials

Based on CSAP and benchmark results from 2006 – 2008 we have determined that students need extra practice in order to attain mastery or automaticity. Therefore, we will supplement the DPS Elementary and Secondary district curriculum with additional resources such as: Foundations, Comprehension Cards, Reading from A to Z., Educational Helper, Minute Math, teacher created materials and other resources that provide additional standards-based practice for students. These materials will also be used to help differentiate instruction for students across all grade levels. With this

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process in place, teachers will have readily available materials to instruct and document student progress.

Literacy:

We will assess students in grades K-1 three times a year using the DRA assessment or other district Standards Based Assessments. We will modify instruction based on these assessment results. We will provide literacy instruction as needed, which may not adhere to the District defined Literacy pacing and planning documents. Whittier K-8 teachers will need the flexibility to adjust, deviate from, and integrate curricula based on student needs. We intend to be truly data driven, and in order to do this we must be able to respond to the student needs. Therefore, we recognize that data driven decisions may supersede fidelity to the pacing and planning inherent in District programs. Literacy will consist of a reading workshop, writing workshop, and a skills block. Each block will be formatted as a workshop composed of whole group instruction through mini-lessons; small group guided reading practice; and independent work.

Should Whittier opt to select any curriculum that is different from the standard DPS curriculum, Whittier K-8 will follow the established procedure of seeking approval through the Chief Academic Officer and the Assistant to the Superintendent for K-8 Instruction.

There will be five components to the literacy block as needed: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Vocabulary, Comprehension, and Fluency. These components will be integrated and individual instruction will be provided as necessary. Each portion of the block will contain rituals and routines, artifacts, and best practice strategies. Methodology of vocabulary instruction will be consistent and focused across grade levels. The skills block and explicit phonics instruction will be taught for 30-50 minutes by every literacy teacher during the literacy block grade. We will assess students in grades 2-8 rigorously throughout the year using the A-Net and/or District's Benchmark Assessments or other Standards Based Common Core Assessments.

Mathematics:

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Whittier teachers will need the flexibility to compact, pace, extend, and adjust, from the district defined in pacing and planning documents to meet student needs. As cited above, we intend to be truly data driven, and in order to do this, we must be able to respond to the student needs. Therefore, we recognize that data driven decisions may supersede fidelity to the pacing and planning inherent in District programs. We acknowledge the importance of math as integral to the understanding of the hard sciences and intend for our students to be prepared for this curricula.

Should Whittier opt to select any curriculum that is different from the standard DPS curriculum, Whittier K-8 will follow the established procedure of seeking approval through the Chief Academic Officer and the Assistant to the Superintendent for K-8 Instruction.

We will use A Common Core standards-based mathematics curriculum that emphasizes a conceptual understanding, while building mastery of basic skills. We will implement an explicit approach with all mathematics standards.

Science:

The focus of our Science curriculum will be an inquiry and computer based search for knowledge and application of the standards. Specific tasks will include scientific thinking, scientific tools and technologies, and communication. The three standards of earth, life, and physical science will be explored from ECE to eighth grade with an Explicit Instruction based approach.

Scientific literacy will be a stated goal for every student. Students will use inquiry exercises based on everyday experiences and discover the answers to the questions. Students will understand and be able to explain natural phenomena, identify national and local scientific issues, and understand scientific content material.

Social Studies:

The focus of our social studies curriculum will include: history, geography, economics, and civics which are studied throughout K-8. We will focus on tasks that will be relevant to our students and content that will provide strong connections to their world. It will honor the multiple and multicultural perspectives of our students and contain cultural competency elements. This will encourage and enable students to talk openly about culture, celebrate diversity, and establish their own cultural competency. First through fifth grade will also center on units of studies that include one to two of the standards; kindergarten-civics, first grade- civics and economics, second grade-geography and civics, third grade-history and geography, fourth grade-history and geography, and fifth grade-history and civics. Students in sixth through eighth grade will explore units of study. Sixth grade will explore Geography, seventh grade will study World History, and eighth grade will center on US History and Civics.

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English Language Development:

Whittier teachers will need the flexibility to compact, pace, extend, and adjust, from the district defined in pacing and planning documents to meet student needs. Whittier K-8 ESL teachers would be able to team-teach in content classrooms. We will continue with the district's pull-out/push in ESL models. ESL teachers will make data driven instruction decisions based on ACCESS and Benchmark or Standards Based assessment scores, and modify their approach accordingly.

We will utilize sheltered content instruction delivered via newly adopted district curriculum. English phonics and English leveled reading will occur during flooding and/or pull out sessions. We will use the Avenues and Shining Star programs as the vocabulary component for students based on ACCESS scores. Instruction will be based on language development with particular emphasis in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing and will be implemented throughout all content areas.

Special Education:

Special Education Teachers will provide academic support to students with special needs, provide necessary accommodations and modifications, and closely monitor the Individual Education Plans (I.E.P.) goals, written under the guidelines of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.)

Specials:

Innovation will allow us to add multiple specials, including Physical Education.

Whittier K-8 will offer Music, Visual Arts, Computer and Technology as Specials classes. Students will alternate between classes throughout the year. Activities such as playground painting and visual displays of quadratic functions will provide an atmosphere of civic engagement as well as scientific reasoning. Overall, specials will provide an opportunity for students to expand their core content knowledge while being standards based.

1. Backwards Lesson Designing

The use of backwards lesson design, in conjunction with data tracking, will ensure that curriculum and instruction are responsive to student needs. This will ensure that each student is on target to obtain grade-level standard expectations in all content areas. Whittier K-8 innovation status will provide teachers the flexibility to craft lessons that will get their students to grade-level and beyond.

2. Data Driven Instruction

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Whittier K-8 innovation status will support data driven instruction that focuses on individualized student instruction, allows flexibility, and consistently strives to produce high-levels of student achievement.

In addition, the RtI (Response to Intervention) multi-tiered model will incorporate proactive intervention and prevention for struggling students, which is outlined in Section 10 below.

3. Assessment:

Innovation status will provide Whittier K-8's leadership and assessment teams the opportunity and flexibility to create additional assessment and instructional tools, and use data to positively impact student learning. Teachers will have the freedom to create standards-based tools that will assess thinking skills.

This data may be in the form of the following formal assessments: benchmark exams, ongoing progress monitoring (AIMS WEB) common formative assessments and other formal and informal teacher observations. Data is a common link for our school plan, instructional content areas, interventions, and focused classroom instruction. Data will be accessible and tracked in a way that is public and comprehensible for students, teachers, parents, and community. The data will be timely and specific to be used to drive classroom instruction. Based on assessment, we will implement research based instructional strategies to create learning opportunities for all students.

5. Student Academic Goals

Whittier K-8 will develop a schedule and process to assess students that is effective and efficient. The assessments will be used to set baseline student academic goals. They will also be used to determine differentiated instruction, groupings, and early intervention. All students will establish periodic goals (weekly, monthly, year-long) with their teachers based on their pre-assessment and data from their previous academic year. Each student's academic goals will be based on grade level expectations as identified in the standards and progress indicators.

Commencing with the current school year, Whittier K-8 students will be assessed in reading, writing, and mathematics 3-4 times a year. This includes: DRA II, a writing sample, and the end-of-year Everyday Math Assessment and Benchmark. These will be used to establish baseline data for grades K-2. The Benchmark assessment or other standards based assessments will be used to establish a baseline for grades 3-8.

Teachers will improve the process of formal and informal assessments to track student progress in reaching their goals. We will implement one-on-one conferences between students and teachers to discuss academic progress and to revise goals as necessary. These will occur every 4 weeks. Class data will be available for review to all students in

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a classroom in order to create a sense of transparency and to develop a learning community.

4. Technology

Whittier K-8 will integrate technology based tasks into the core curriculum standards that will enhance students' skills so that all students will be prepared for the technological demands in their academic careers and beyond. Technology will be accessible both in the classroom and lab settings. The technology based tasks will encourage students to be engaged in learning and result in higher-order thinking skills, better problem-solving skills, ability to retrieve current information quickly and efficiently and modeling specific tasks proficiently. Teachers will integrate lessons with technology while continuing to pursue the standards that will enrich their practice.

Teachers will also work closely with the computer technology teacher to ensure all students have the opportunity to extend learning with technology.

The technology that will be standard in each location is as follows:

Classrooms:

Promethean boards and/or document Camera/LCD Projector, 4 student computers, digital camera, CD and DVD player, teacher wireless laptops, and a mobile computer for checkout

Library:

Promethean boards with clicker system for the purpose of obtaining data, full set of desk top computers, printer, software, laptop, LCD projector, document camera, and speakers.

Computer Lab

LCD Projector, CD and DVD player, document Camera, 30 student computers, video cameras for check out, core and educational software.

Programs

STAR, IXL, Study Island, and A-Net will be used in the computer lab and classrooms to assist students with fluency. Students will be identified by formal and informal assessment data. Progress will be tracked using the AIMS web. This program will be part of the RTI process at Whittier K-8.

5. Student Engagement, Learning and Accountability:

Whittier K-8 Innovation status will foster the flexibility to extend learning opportunities (before/after school tutoring and Saturday school) that provide additional learning time for students that are below grade level.

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Teachers who self-select to earn additional compensation will tutor and teach Saturday school. Saturday school will be required for those students who are in jeopardy of being retained.

In order to prepare students for the 21st century work related skills and competencies Whittier may gift Chrome Books or an equivalent technological device to all students who are enrolled at Whittier in 6th grade and continue until 8th grade without interruption. The use of Chrome Books provides students the opportunity to actively think about information, make choices, and execute skills. Moreover, when technology is used as a tool to support students in performing authentic tasks, the students are in the position of defining their goals, making design decisions, and evaluating their progress. All students (and parents of students) who are gifted a computer will sign a waiver affirming that the child is the sole owner of the gifted device and that the school and/or Denver Public school District has no liability whatsoever.

6. Responsive to Intervention (RtI)

Pre-assessment of K through 8th grade during the first two weeks will establish fluid grouping. The tools to accomplish this will include AIMS web, DRA2, DIBELS, Everyday Math End of Year Assessment, and Benchmark or standards based Assessments. The results will determine the assessment based groups and students will receive the support based on their specific tier level. The assessment team will include an intervention teacher and/or paraprofessional, 2 special educators, counselor, student advisor, and an administrator. A team leader will be selected from this group. This team will also function as the Student Intervention Team (SIT), which will coordinate the process for identifying students who need additional interventions beyond Tier 1.

Tier 1: Standard-Universal/Reading and math skills blocks in the general classroom for 30 minutes. Students displaying minimal growth in their reading are referred to SIT. Must consider ELL status and evaluate.

Tier 2: 1 to 2 grade levels below may require Reading growth or Math growth flooding. If no growth after 6-8 weeks, this may require intervention pull out.

Tier 3: 2 or more full grade levels below or no growth in flooding will require intervention pull out in addition to flooding class. If no growth is identified within 6-8 weeks, consideration will be given for special education.

The core elements that will be addressed in each classroom are: fidelity in teaching skills block; implementation of sound instructional practices; progress monitoring every 6- 10 weeks via AIMS web and student work samples; backward lesson designs; and prompt referral to SIT when lack of progress is indicated. Professional development support will be provided for the SIT process, ELL considerations, AIMS web, skill block, curriculum, and restorative justice.

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Data driven instruction will be an essential component of the RtI model, where the use of common language and expectations horizontally and vertically are implemented. The goal is to support, critique, and improve quality assessment driven instruction. Intervention teachers will be hired to provide a continuum of support including both pull out and push-in models. Additionally, intervention teachers will gather, organize, track, and share student data with core teachers. Based on the data, in partnership with the core classroom teachers, the intervention teacher will establish the type of support that is needed for each individual student. Also, mandatory pull-out programs can be restructured as needed to include push-in to the classroom.

Our innovation status will permit extending student learning time. This can be accomplished by before and after school tutoring (2 hours), Saturday school (4 hours), summer school (additional 14 days), and an increase in staff as needed. Through these practices a potential of 3 hours may be added to a student's instructional day. Students who are below grade level will be required to attend these intervention programs based on need.

C. SCHEDULE AND CALENDAR

The overall school year calendar, as well as the weekly and daily schedules will be developed based upon the premise of achieving maximum student performance. The Innovation plan will provide the opportunity for participation in the schedule development by administration, teachers and parents. It will be clear to the entire Whittier K-8 community as to what the specific schedule details are, how and why it was developed, and the importance the schedule in successfully achieving our stated outcomes.

Class Scheduling

The flexibility discussed in this innovation plan will permit Whittier K-8 to make modifications to teacher planning time as necessary and allow us to offer the program components referenced in the plan. Whittier K-8 has developed a master schedule that includes: A platoon model, a flooding skills block, literacy block, math/science block, specials block, lunch/recess, intervention support, and teacher planning time to incorporate sufficient time for grade level, vertical team planning, and data team planning.

We are committed to providing the best educational instruction and the freedom to make decisions regarding the use of district assigned days for professional development and other purposes (e.g. Late Start days, etc.) that will support this effort. Whittier K-8 will make class assignments based on academic data and will be configured to meet the diverse needs of our students. This includes the use of rigorous instruction and interventions which are made available to students who do not meet the proficiency levels for a specific grade. All students

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will be challenged to meet their full potential through ongoing daily support and periodic adjustments throughout the school year.

D. LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Whittier K-8 strives to create a school which supports a healthy work environment as well as a healthy learning environment. These two are critically linked and mutually dependent. At Whittier K-8 we recognize that both the staff and students need a safe, healthy, and supportive setting for all to thrive and reach maximum performance levels. We intend to reinforce the philosophy that only when all members of the Whittier K-8 community take responsibility for and contribute towards the world we work, live and learn in, will we reach our full potential.

Principal Leadership

The principal of Whittier K-8 provides leadership by example. The principal sets the tone for professionalism, student compassion and understanding, and academic excellence through daily interaction with students, parents and staff. The principal's primary responsibility is to foster the type of physical & social environment which will encourage students to reach for the highest level of academic achievement. In order to fulfill this role, the principal, in consultation with the Leadership Team, must have the creativity and discretion to make best use of the time, money and resources available to meet the agenda set forth in this plan. In the event of a change in leadership, every effort will be made to secure a principal who understands the nature of the innovation status and will honor the provisions within this application.

Participatory Leadership

At Whittier K-8, there is a commitment to participatory leadership at all levels. This includes curriculum pacing and planning adjustments, instruction methodologies, professional development and administrative operations. Although the principal will always remain accountable as the final decision-maker, all staff at Whittier K-8 will work to share the decision-making responsibility in order to provide professional leadership and expertise needed to ensure high student achievement. This commitment to participatory leadership will ensure a stable academic and administrative environment in the event of leadership turnover at the principal level.

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A key strategy within this focus is the creation of teacher leader roles in all schools. The DPS Teacher Leadership & Collaboration focus supports our vision of Every Child Succeeds by keeping highly effective teachers in the classroom while extending their positive impact throughout an entire school. Teacher Leadership & Collaboration also allows great teachers to advance their careers while continuing to directly impact students.

Our district-wide goal is to support Teacher Leadership & Collaboration—including, specifically, the Team Lead role—in nearly all district-run schools by 2018 and to include nearly all teachers on a team that is led by a Team Lead by 2020.

To attract, retain and develop great teachers in every school, all district-run schools will support distributive leadership that includes teacher leaders in consistently defined roles. Teacher Leadership & Collaboration is focused on three key approaches that benefit teachers, teacher leaders, school leaders and—most importantly—students and families.

- Distribute leadership opportunities to effective teachers
- Build strong teams to support all teachers
- Provide socio-emotional support to new teachers

Distributing the leadership structure at our school with strong, specialized and vertical teacher-led teams is critical to helping our school meet the DPS vision that Every Child Succeeds. Our vision of success is to increase collaboration within our school culture and community. Our leadership is formed so that there are strong differentiated teams that build a partnership within the team when looking at data or being involved in focused professional development. This impacts our staff positively with leaders being able to provide immediate and applicable feedback when observing, implementing new curriculum and making modifications supporting student needs.

All members of the team will engage in the professional learning and data team time together; coaching will be differentiated by the senior team lead and based on teacher need. Our distributive leadership will promote teachers as stakeholders when supporting initiatives, pilots, or interventions that our school may implement. As a result, our teachers will feel empowered and continue to be professional learners in an environment that shares the DPS vision.

Collaborative team time will be used to strengthen our teams and give focus to our professional learning. When teams collaborate and analyze data together to identify areas for direct instructions and intervention they are meeting the needs of all of our students. Our teams meet to utilize DDI and adjust instruction based on data. Grade level teams meet for collaborative planning, sharing ideas/materials, co-observing and debrief/feedback.

Our school is organized to implement these changes/activities to continue to build strong teams and successfully distribute leadership.

The math senior team lead has 50% release time and can spend this time observing, providing

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feedback, analyzing data, planning for professional development, meet with leadership team, plan for and meet with grade level teams and subject based teams. The other 50% of the time will be spent in the classroom.

The literacy senior team lead will organize release time throughout the day to make up 50% of the time observing, providing feedback, analyzing data, planning for professional development, meet with leadership team, plan for and meet with grade level teams and subject based teams. The other 50% of the day will be meeting with small groups and providing push-in instruction to best meet the needs of the students on their roster, who are both GT and intervention students.

The school leader and senior team leads meet weekly to coordinate, plan analyze data and collaborate to align across teams. The senior time leads and the team specialist will meet monthly to plan for professional development and coaching for the primary team.

Dispute Resolution

The principal, faculty and staff at Whittier K-8 are committed to solving problems in good faith and at the lowest possible level. Therefore, if faculty or staff member(s) believe that the terms of this plan have been violated, or they have some dispute that they want resolved, they are expected to raise this matter with an appropriate member of the Whittier K-8 Teacher Personnel Committee Team which consist of teachers on staff who are appointed by the principal prior to conflicts. These teachers will mediate and resolve disputes. If the dispute is not resolved to the satisfaction of the faculty or staff member, an appeal can be made to the Principal and the Principal's decision will be final. If the dispute involves the Innovation plan or policies that have not been waived, the faculty or staff member should raise the matter with the principal first. Then upon an unsatisfactory conclusion, the Instructional Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee and the employee will collaborate to resolve the dispute. The decision of the Instructional Superintendent or Superintendent's designee, as applicable, shall be final in such instances.

Whittier K-8 Leadership Team

The principal will continue to guide the leadership team which includes the Administrative Assistant or Assistant Principal, the DCTA representative or designee, 4-teacher members, 1-non teacher staff member, and 2-community members/parents. The staff members will be nominated and voted on by the whole faculty. The community/parents members will be nominated and voted to serve annually by parents by secret ballot. For the purpose of increasing the opportunity amongst community and parents this constituency group will be limited to a two year term and may not serve consecutively. The leadership team will be responsible for establishing the conditions for student learning at the school, including the following:

- Identifying student academic needs based on all available student performance data

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- Setting academic goals and priorities, based on student academic needs
 - Monitoring and managing consistent delivery of high quality curriculum to every student
 - Providing instructional support to all teachers
 - Building the master calendar and the student schedule
 - Establishing assignments, job responsibilities and workloads for all staff and faculty
 - Communicating and updating all staff members of leadership team work
- Administering
- decisions about ongoing professional development
 - Identifying creative solutions to problems faced in the operation of the school
 - Revising the Academic Plan, the Unified Improvement Plan (Attachment 11), the Faculty Handbook (Attachment 12) and the School Handbook (Attachment 13), as needed and based on student performance data
 - Monitoring progress toward the goals of the School Improvement Plan
 - Reviewing the principal's recommendations for extra duty compensation or incentives if the rates exceed those established in the DPS/DCTA Agreement;
 - Establishing community and parent involvement activities
 - Monitoring the school budget
 - Making recommendations regarding general school governance.
 - Establish school based commitments

Professional Learning Community

Innovation status will allow us to design and implement a master schedule, a teacher work schedule, and an annual calendar that will best serve our students, families and teachers. We believe that teachers need individual and collaborative planning and reflection time in order to be most effective. We will work collaboratively with our families to determine the best schedule and calendar to meet the needs of our students.

The principal, faculty and staff at Whittier K-8 will collaborate to promote the professional growth of all staff members, including programs for peer assistance and ongoing professional development for all staff. The professional growth system will incorporate practices vital to improve the achievement of all students at Whittier K-8 and ensure teachers the professional latitude necessary to enact the mission of Whittier K-8 and the Denver Plan. Professionals and coaches may be hired on a contract or short-term basis to meet the school's and faculty's differentiated professional development needs.

All professional development at Whittier K-8 will be relevant, research and data based. We will focus on general and specific standards at each grade level. Professional development will be relevant such that it will support the staff to implement a viable academic program (that is responsive to the needs of the students), ensure ongoing

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improvement, and cultivate a positive intentional school-wide culture. Professional development will be encouraged and supported so that adult learners will be challenged to learn and reflect on their practice. Professional development is the responsibility of the teachers and staff to pursue in order to affect growth and to make the learning meaningful for them and their students. Best practices used throughout all professional development sessions will not only be structured for adult learners, but modeled to demonstrate strategies that can be carried over to the classroom. As the year proceeds, the collaborative professional development will build and progress to deeper understanding.

6 types of professional development will be implemented:

1. RTI meetings twice a month
2. Weekly one on one with the Humanities Facilitator
3. Bi-weekly Standards Based Instructional meetings with the Principal
4. Team meetings
5. Monthly Staff development meetings
6. Standards Based material development meetings

Coaching is an integral part of professional development at Whittier K-8. Coaching opportunities and sessions will be available throughout the year's academic cycles. While our intent is to be flexible, teachers and coaches will meet on a regular basis to reflect on past performance challenges, brainstorm strategies, and plan together based on student data. The opportunities include, but are not limited to, co-teaching, modeling, peer coaching and observations. Our desire is to support teachers as they cultivate a community of learners with effective, engaging, and rigorous academics.

Professional development opportunities will be scheduled throughout the year by the school leadership team, however ad hoc opportunities will be encouraged and supported. The topics for the upcoming 2009-2010 school year will be RtI, Fluency, and Standards Based Instructional Materials. Professional development will be crafted on an individual basis for each teacher and each specials teacher in content areas, and include options and choices based on individual needs and goals. As such, professional development will be staff directed. All hours of professional development will be documented for re-certification credit and a school wide Professional Development Unit will be collaboratively designed and contain a required component that will enable teachers to apply for Professional Development Unit credit in the pro comp structure.

The primary outcomes related to staff development will be:

- Effectively analyze data for the purpose of improving student achievement
- Develop packets of standards-based materials to differentiate instruction
- Implement new Denver standards-based materials

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Public School curriculums with an emphasis on targeting the materials which correlate with state standards

- Visit other school sites for the purpose enhancing teacher knowledge and improving our decision-making processes
- Schedule released time for teachers to complete district wide assessments and engage in staff development
- Maintain teacher focus on state standards and school Power Standards Vertical team collaboration to articulate student academic social and emotional needs
- Collaboration, mentoring and coaching between teachers
- Seek staff development that coincides with our philosophy of instruction Support the development and use of the PDU process
- Collaborate with the K-8 network facilitators as needed
- Develop a strong and effective RTI process

E. STAFFING AND EVALUATION

Whittier K-8 requires the flexibility to select and hire individuals in order to meet and achieve the overall goals set forth in our Innovation Plan. At this time the current system does not permit Whittier K-8 the flexibility to hire the individuals with the appropriate experience on a part-time or temporary basis.

In order to create and maintain an outstanding school, Whittier K-8 will assemble a faculty and staff who will work together to improve achievement for every student and be committed to the school vision. We expect this committed workforce to remain stable over time. The principal at Whittier K-8, in consultation with the Leadership Team, will prepare job descriptions for all staff and faculty assignments at the school. While the principal may use standard District job descriptions, however the principal is not be limited to them.

The principal, with input from the personnel committee, will select all school staff and faculty as soon as possible after a vacant assignment is determined. All faculty and staff will meet minimum district requirements, unless an exception to this policy is warranted. In cases where a faculty or staff member does not meet district requirements, the employee must complete a plan to become qualified in no more than a year. All new employees, regardless of status in the district will follow the rules and regulations of a probationary status as outlined by the district. The employee's record of performance is critical in determining the decision regarding annual appointment.

Decisions regarding returning staff will be made in a timely fashion in order for departing staff to participate in the DPS teacher staffing cycle. Recruitment and selection of new staff will follow established protocol and will take into consideration the needs of our students.

Evaluation and Teachers New to the School

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For teachers hired to Whittier **before** Innovation teacher vote:

Probationary: Teachers will be formally evaluated every year. If the principal has concerns of the teacher's performance, the principal shall provide detailed feedback to the teacher. The teacher will be provided a reasonable amount of time, no less than four (4) weeks, to show improvement. Teacher may be non-renewed if sufficient improvement is not demonstrated.

Non-Probationary: Teachers will be formally evaluated every three years. The principal will have full discretion to initiate a formal evaluation for any Whittier teacher at any point in the school year. The principal will have the option of initiating a remediation plan for improvement as outlined in Article 10 and in state statute (TECDA).

For teachers hired to Whittier that are hired **after** the innovation vote:

Probationary: Teachers will be formally evaluated every year. Teachers will sign an employment offer letter indicating acceptance of conditions of this Innovation plan. These teachers will be considered "at-will" employees while employed at Whittier K-8. If the principal has concerns of the teacher's performance, the principal shall provide detailed feedback to the teacher. The teacher will be provided a reasonable amount of time, no less than four (4) weeks, to show improvement. Teacher may be non-renewed if sufficient improvement is not demonstrated.

Non-Probationary: Teachers will be formally evaluated every three years. The principal will have full discretion to initiate a formal evaluation for any Whittier teacher at any point in the school year. The principal will have the option of initiating a remediation plan for improvement as outlined in Article 10 and in state statute (TECDA).

Employee Handbooks

General practices and procedures applicable to the school and articulated in the Academic Plan and the School Improvement Plan are incorporated into this plan. These will be modified when necessary to be consistent with this plan. The Faculty Handbook will be a collaborative effort representing input from the school leadership, staff, and the parents.

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment

With the addition of the EOP (Educational Opportunity Program) and 8th grade, Whittier K-8 is reaching maximum capacity. Currently we have the enrollment of 307 students and are reaching capacity. Therefore, emphasis will be placed on developing school choice within the Near Northeast community so that continuity is maintained. Students

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that live within Whittier K-8's enrollment boundary and EOP students will continue to have first choice for attendance. However, the school leadership team could open enrollment windows that would limit or increase the number of new students who are not EOP and/or don't reside within Whittier K-8's boundaries so that our enrollment goal is met and maintained.

Over the past thirteen years, Whittier K-8 has increased enrollment from 230 to 307 as of the end of the 2014-2015 school year. This has been the result of incorporating additional programs into the school such as: Full day ECE programs; full day kindergarten programs; grades 6, 7 and 8; EOP; integration of Ebert's Elementary when that school closed; and the addition of two rounds per grade level from ECE to fifth grade which is currently in progress. All of the previously mentioned programs have been implemented with ongoing conversation between all stakeholders including teachers, parents, community members, CSC, and high schools within the Near Northeast Neighborhood. This community building and constant survey of community priorities has also created a wide range of activities that have influenced enrollment. Students attend Whittier K-8 for a variety of reasons. Some choose Whittier K-8 because we offer a K-8 program that provides the opportunity for parents to send siblings to school together. Others choose Whittier K-8 because they work in the downtown area and can take advantage of the enrichment after school programming which provides coverage for two hours. We also have enticed parents to our school because of our academic success and AYP results. Currently we are working to add a robust community art program primarily designed to improve the athletics of the building and to mark our core values. We will also incorporate a survey of professional career oriented professions which may include: Work studies, presentations and onsite visits to stimulate interest in ongoing education.

We are able to provide these activities because of our Community Partnerships. Our partnerships include the following groups and organizations: PTA, Summer Scholars, Project Pave, Jewish Family Services, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Science Club, After School Reading Club, and Denver Partners. Our partners are committed to Whittier K-8 students as we all strive to reach the goals of student achievement and community.

SCHOOL CULTURE

The school culture impacts everyone, everything we do and how we view our relationship to each other and the student community. As a team we will establish a sense of family, trust, and agreement on how to do things. We will stress an approach that encompasses the norms of advocacy, inquiry, and trust. We believe that it is in the best interest of the school culture when the staff creates and lives out of shared agreements which provide coherence for students, parents, and staff. As a staff we will ensure that collaboration, collegiality, and efficacy come to life. We will make sure every student feels special and everyone is supported.

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Our school culture will include the following elements:

Motivation is the most effective strategy for students to learn and become responsible citizens and we instruct students with educational practices that engage students' interest and motivate them to become the best students and citizens they can be. Goal setting with feedback provides students with a great deal of control over their learning and provides timely information so students can easily assess their progress and become self-motivated. Examples of motivation at Whittier K-8 are:

- Eagle Pride incentives
- Behavior Plans that explicitly clarify expectations for students
- Academic goal setting plans which are revisited with students 4 times a month
- Public Displays of assessment results such as Benchmark
- Student checklist and frames that guide student academic learning
- One on one goal setting

At Whittier K-8 we will implement the Restorative Justice Approach to teach students conflict resolution. In this process both the victim and the offender will have a chance to be heard. The victim will be able to ask clarifying questions to the offender and receive information for the purpose of identifying misunderstandings. The offender, in a respectful manner, will be held accountable and gain insight into how their actions affect other members of the Whittier K-8 community. The overall goal is for both the offender and the victim to "rethink" the situation and make better choices in the future. In order to stop these types of events before they get started, we will initiate the Restorative Justice in minor infractions and offenses as well as major ones. This will allow both the offender and the victim an opportunity to reach consensus, problem solve and begin anew.

In unison with Restorative Justice we will offer Counseling services through the following groups: Denver Public Schools, Jewish family Services and Project Pave. At Whittier K-8 we believe counseling programs improve student safety and success.

- School counseling exerts a positive impact on students by:
 - Students feeling safer attending their schools
- Having better relationships with their teachers
- Believing that their education is relevant and important to their futures
- Appreciating the quality of education available to them in their schools
- Having fewer problems related to physical and interpersonal interactions

Behavior / Consistent Consequences

The purpose of our discipline is to teach students to behave in ways that contribute to academic achievement and school success, and to support a school environment where student and staff are responsible and respectful.

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Whittier K-8's System of discipline is also in alignment with the District's Policy which:

- Maintains safe and orderly learning communities Assures consistency across all classrooms in the school
- Defines and communicates expectations for student behavior
- Defines and communicates expectations for staff responsibility related to school discipline
- Balances the needs of the student, the needs of those directly affected by the behavior, and needs of the overall school community
- Assures equity across racial, ethnic, and cultural groups, as well as all other protected classes such as gender, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity
- Recognizes that misbehavior damages relationships between the person or persons who misbehave, the person harmed by the behavior, and the community as a whole
- Has an opportunity to safely repair harm done and restore relationships whenever possible, as opposed to excluding the person who misbehaved
- Builds personal responsibility by helping individuals develop empathy, self control and motivation
- Refrains from interrupting a student's education to the extent possible for the purpose of maximizing the time the student spends in the classroom learning which should be used after all other efforts have been exhausted.
- Uses reasonable consequences which considers:
 - Age, health and disability or special education status of the student
 - Appropriateness of academic status of the student
 - Student's prior conduct and record of behavior
 - Student's attitude
 - Level of parent/guardian's cooperation and involvement
 - Student's willingness to repair harm
 - Seriousness of the offense and the degree of harm caused
 - Impact of the incident on overall school community

Classroom interventions will be clearly explained to students which are:

- Green
 - Verbal warning
- Yellow

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- Conference with student
- Loss of privilege
- Classroom timeout
- Call parent from the classroom

- Orange
 - Conference with student
 - After school Intervention
 - -either 30-or 60 minutes (Parent must be notified) and/or Saturday school
 - Teacher will schedule a conference with parent
 - Teacher will make a referral to school counselor or to the SIT Student Intervention team (SIT) –orange

- Red
 - Extreme behavior(s)
 - Office Referral
 - Call the office to alert the staff
 - It will probably be necessary to send the student with an escort
 - Call parent
 - Suspension or discipline that corresponds to the strategies at level orange

After School Detention will last 30 minutes or 1 hour and will be supervised by teachers on a rotational basis. The emphasis of detention will be based on common core academics with data to establish growth. Saturday School may occur initially once a month from 8:00-10:00. In-school suspension will occur as needed and on Fridays in the morning. The purpose of Friday detention is to de-escalate students who have had difficulty throughout the week until they are ready to refocus and return to the classroom. Classroom teachers will be responsible for providing standards based packets of academic course work in their content areas for students during these periods. Students will receive detention when they reach the level of yellow or orange.

Saturday school may occur initially once a month from 8:00 to 10:00. Teachers will volunteer to supervise Saturday school and be compensated hourly for the work. Compensation will be determined by an agreement between the principal and the teacher. Classroom teachers will be responsible for providing standards based grade level packets of academic course work in their content areas. Students will be assigned Saturday school according to violations of the school code and the stop light system. In school suspension will be given either by the principal or Administrative Assistant. If extenuating circumstances occur, then the in-school suspension will be located in the office. Classroom teachers will be responsible for providing standards based grade level packets of academic course work in their content areas. The administrative team will determine the duration of the in-school suspension. In school suspension will occur when

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there is reasonable evidence that supports the following has occurred: fighting, harassment, habitual disruptive behavior, theft, property damage, and gang related activity or affiliation. Only the administrative team or teacher in charge may assign students to both in-house and out-of school suspension. There will be a clear understanding by all staff when and why students will be suspended as aligned with the District Policy and Whittier K-8's stoplight system. The school administrator, school counselor, and student advisor will be available to assist with student behavior.

Administration will be available to lead implementation of restorative justice; help address behaviorally disruptive noncompliant students; monitor behavior plans through check-ins and check-outs. The school counselor will be available to hold social skills groups for behaviorally disruptive students; facilitate groups focusing on strategies to use with non-compliant students; and help administration with various duties as specified above. Professional development will be made available to the staff for restorative justice and classroom management strategies.

In each classroom, expectations will be strictly enforced throughout the entire year. Each teacher will utilize the green, yellow, orange, and red card system and the refocus system. All discipline must be fair and reasonable. On Fridays, teachers will develop a positive incentive system that coincides with the RTI plan. Teachers will implement a 3 tier system with the lowest level being Tier 1 and the highest Tier 3. At least 99% of students in each classroom must be eligible for positive incentives. During this time, which will be approximately one hour, students will be able to enjoy positive incentive activities such as recess, games, pizza parties, and independent reading. These incentives will be developed with the students, team teachers, resource teachers, specials teachers and parents. The students' progress will be publicly displayed.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Family and Community Engagement

At Whittier K-8 our focus has been to:

1. Consistently engage parents and other community members for the purpose providing an enriching environment at the school
2. Improve communication among parents, teachers, administrators and other stakeholders to support a common vision
3. Provide opportunities for parents and community members to participate in planning activities.
4. Employed parents and other community members to plan and market the school to increase student enrollment
5. Reached consensus with parent and community members to implement a new arts and career education focus for the purpose of providing a holistic educational program for our students.

Our PTA which was founded in 2008, we have begun to fulfill these goals. The following

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are examples of this partnership:

- The Taste of Whittier raised funds for the school and advertised our success and achievement to the community. Through this partnership the school was able to raise funds which were used to support school goals and objectives.
- The Winter Intermission program is a fun activity which is attended by 400 parents and community members every year. This program provides an opportunity for arts, music and performance. This is also a time where parents are informed of how they can participate in upcoming activities at the school.
- Summer Scholars is an innovative community-based initiative to promote literacy and bring elementary students in Denver Public Schools up to grade level in reading. The key strategies include intensive summer classes, recreation, family involvement, community partnerships and creative school year programs. Summer Scholars also provides a variety of activities including sports, arts, crafts, special events, and field trips. This program also engages parents by providing adult seminars and other educational opportunities.
- The annual Job Fair is an opportunity for our middle school students to meet professionals from diverse backgrounds including small businesses, legal, medicine, law enforcement, and space exploration. This experience has motivated our children to strive and emulate the achievement of these adults.
- Math Night is a way for parents to connect with their children as they talk and learn together about math. It also creates an opportunity for the teacher to be involved with both their students and the parents when it comes to the child's math learning.
- Literacy Night is a way for children to understand the importance of reading by listening to storybooks read by parents or other caregivers. By participating in storybook reading, they learn a variety of literacy skills that prepare them for learning to read. For example, they begin to become familiar with typical story elements and with print concepts.
- Teaching empathy places students in another person's shoes. As a result, we are often more sensitive to what that person is experiencing and are less likely to tease or bully them. By explicitly teaching students to be more conscious of other people's feelings, we can create a more accepting and respectful school community.

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- Father's Night is a way for dads to enjoy a movie, popcorn and conversation with their children.
- Mother's Day is a day for our primary providers to be honored and appreciated by their families and school for all of their hard work and dedication. Mothers are treated to a formal dinner and served by students and other family members.

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Through the School Community Grant, Whittier K-8 actively met with parents to discuss how to improve community participation and to problem solve safety issues in the Whittier Neighborhood. One of the many successes was the collaboration between Whittier K-8, the Denver Police Department and the Denver Traffic Department. The collaboration addressed the need for additional safety lights and markers to the intersection of 24th and Downing. We will continue to work with these groups as we transition into an Innovate school.

Educational Environment

We are committed to providing a safe, healthy and secure educational environment. All staff and faculty will be professional, well-mannered and treat each other and all students with the utmost respect.

The safety of all who enter the school and school grounds is of the highest concern. Safety cameras are installed throughout the school as well as a door buzzer that is located at the front door. All doors will remain locked throughout the day and access to the building will only be through the front doors. All visitors will be required to sign-in at the main office to get a badge. Parking and bus-loading will be in designated areas and highly supervised to ensure the safety of students as they enter and leave the school.

The halls will be areas where students will exhibit personal decorum and will also reflect student learning. In order to promote healthy interaction among students in the hallways, the core belief statements will be posted throughout the hallways to reinforce positive values and behavior. Students from multi-age groups will integrate only during supervised, appropriate times.

The Student Handbook and Staff Handbook will outline in detail the policies and procedures governing the physical and social environment. Included in the student handbook will be: the attendance policy, retention policy, grading policy, tardy policy, health care policies, discipline procedures, general information, and dress code. In order to promote a safe, disciplined and equitable student environment, students will be required to wear uniforms. This will also assist students in understanding the importance of self-presentation and help prepare them for future career opportunities. The dress code policy will outline in detail the school uniform requirements.

Under the discipline procedures, guidelines directly from the DPS section J, rules, and how inappropriate behavior will be handled will be clearly stated. Each family will receive a Student Handbook and sign a contract stating that they will abide by the school policy and procedures. Each staff person will receive a Staff Handbook which outlines all applicable policies and procedures and will sign a contract acknowledging that they will abide by the policies.

SECTION III. LISTING OF PROGRAMS, POLICIES AND OPERATIONAL DOCUMENTS AFFECTED BY INNOVATION

1. The School will Implement Research-Based Educational Program:
The program to which Whittier K-8 is committed to is summarized on Pg 7-16 This includes Academic Innovations and includes both academic strategies and curriculum and assessment strategies.
2. Length of School Day and School Year. Schedule and Calendar 22
3. Student Promotion and Graduation Policies:
Whittier K-8 is currently in the process of defining a promotion process that outlines expectations that must be met to proceed to the next grade level.
4. Assessment Plan:
The WhittierK-8 Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) provides an analysis of PARCC scores. It also defines achievement targets and refers to progress monitoring assessment plans. See Pg 10-16.
5. Proposed Budget: See Attachment X for the 2010-2011 budget.
6. Staffing and Evaluation: See page 27
7. Enrollment Policy: See pg 30

SECTION IV: IMPROVEMENTS IN ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT PERFORMANCE WHITTIER K-8 EXPECTS TO ACHIEVE IN IMPLEMENTING INNOVATIONS

School Improvement Plan

See the School Improvement Plan (Attachment 11) for specific details regarding achievement goals for Literacy, Math, and Parental Involvement.

Overall Academic Goal

Whittier ECE-8 School will offer a strong academic program that is standards-based and data driven. The planning of curricula components and the implementation of the components will be determined by the school leadership team. Planning and pacing will be based upon data from the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (**PARCC**), current year benchmark examinations; Read Act Assessments; and formal class assessments approved by the school leadership team. It is the goal of Whittier ECE-8 School to achieve a minimum score that exceeds the district average growth based on the Denver Public Schools school performance framework (SPF) at all grade levels taking the PARCC examinations. In grades K-2, a goal of a 5% increase per year, for the first five years, on the end of year Read Act examination will be set.

SECTION V: FINANCIAL INNOVATIONS, COST SAVINGS, AND INCREASED EFFICIENCIES

Staffing and Use of Financial and Other Resources

To ensure that all staff agrees to a common set of expectations, The Whittier K-8 staff members are required to sign the Whittier K-8 student/teacher/parent/administrative shared agreement (see Appendix 5). Whittier K-8 will have control of its budget so that it can appropriately hire and utilize staff, establish effective time management practices and utilize incentives in the most effective manner.

Compensation

Whittier K-8 staff compensation package will reflect an individual's commitment to the school and their ability to reach mutually established objectives and goals in regard to student academic achievement. This compensation and benefits package will be guided by the salary systems established in the DPS/DCTA Master Agreement and the ProComp Agreement. The principal will have the discretion to exceed the minimum base salary thresholds by applying a bonus structure developed by the principal and Leadership Team. Whittier K-8 will be responsible for developing the compensation package for teachers and will be exempt from § 22-63-401, et seq, C.R.S. All full time employees at Whittier K-8 will participate in the Denver Public Schools Retirement System (DPSRS/PERA). Should any staff or faculty member transfer from Whittier K-8 to another

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DPS assignment, all pension benefits will be portable and there shall be no loss of benefit. All other policies will be in accordance with (DPSRS/PERA).

Leave

All employees at Whittier K-8 will receive the same long leave entitlements granted under district policy. Annually, all employees at Whittier K-8 will receive 14 days of short leave to be used for any purpose. Notification procedures for sick leave and personal leave are outlined in the Faculty Handbook. Unused leave days accrue according to district rules. The district and school may provide additional leave days for the purpose of professional development or instructional development.

Budget

According to established DPS procedures, Whittier K-8 will receive an annual budget allocation based on the number of students enrolled on October 1. During the spring, the principal and DPS will negotiate the actual terms for the budget allocation. The budget will be prepared by the principal and the Leadership Team. Whittier K-8 will be able to purchase from DPS administrative services, transportation, food services, facility management, maintenance, student services and substitute teachers from an established price list provided by DPS. Whittier K-8 will seek supplemental funding through grants and fundraising events.

Cost Savings and Increased Efficiencies

The possibility of paying actual vs. average salaries would promote the efficient use of school funds and significantly extend the resources currently available. Whittier K-8 will annually analyze each salary schedule and will implement the one that is most cost effective. For the 2010 - 2011 school year Whittier K-8 will use the average salary schedule. However, we reserve the right to review and adjust our budget to either paying or actual when this innovation plan is to be renewed.

With the implementation of teacher developed Standard Based materials costs will be reduced because fewer copyrighted materials will be purchased. Also, by producing teacher developed Standard Based materials we will create a "laser like focus" on the Power Standards that will allow students more practice on critical standards and eliminate lessons that are not congruent with necessary instruction. See Pg 26 (Assignment of Staff) and See Pg 28 (Staffing and Use of Financial and Other Resources and Compensation).

**SECTION VI: ADMINISTRATOR, TEACHER, COMMUNITY, AND
COLLABORATIVE SCHOOL COMMITTEE EVIDENCE OF SUPPORT**

On 05/17/2010, the teachers employed at Whittier K-8 voted 100% to 0% in favor of designating Whittier K-8 as an Innovation School.

On 05/17/2010, the teachers employed at Whittier K-8 voted 100% to 0% in favor of the Whittier K-8 Innovation Plan.

The Principal and Administrative Assistant are in full support of Whittier K-8's proposal to become an Innovation School.

SECTION VII: ADMINISTRATOR, TEACHER, COMMUNITY, AND COLLABORATIVE SCHOOL COMMITTEE EVIDENCE OF SUPPORT

April 22, 2010 DPS School Board,

The purpose of this letter is to inform the school board the paraprofessionals at Whittier K-8 support the application for Innovation Status. We feel that this plan will provide an innovative and rigorous instructional program that explicitly targets state standards and implements best practices based on research. We also believe this plan will prepare Whittier students for the academic rigor necessary for future employment opportunities requiring a college education. We hope that you reach our consensus and allow Whittier K-8 Innovation Status.

Sincerely,

Melissa Luc
Cathie Filus
Dolly M. Prout
Rebecca Romero
~~Leora ety~~
Lancho K. Gray
P. H. H. H.
Carol A. Manning

REVIEW, REVISION, RENEWAL OF INNOVATION STATUS

The Innovation Plan, once adopted, is considered for renewal every three years per the Colorado Innovation Schools Act. At that time, the Whittier K-8 staff can alter, revise, or rescind their innovation plan or status with the consent of a majority of the teachers and a majority of the administrators employed at and a majority of the school accountability Leadership Committee . This is articulated in full in Section 22-32.5-110, District of innovation – review of innovation schools and innovation school zones.

**SECTION IX: LISTING OF STATUTORY, REGULATORY, AND DISTRICT
POLICY REQUIREMENTS THAT NEED TO BE WAIVED**

A. Statutory Sections to be Waived

Section 22-32-109(1)(f), C.R.S., local board duties concerning selection of personnel and pay;

Section 22-32-109(1)(g), C.R.S., handling of moneys

Section 22-32-109(1)(n), C.R.S., schedule and calendar

Section 22-32-109(II)(A), C.R.S., actual hours of teacher-pupil instruction and Contact (B) school calendar

Section 22-32-109(t), C.R.S., determine educational program and prescribe textbooks

Section 22-32-109(aa), C.R.S., adopt content standards and plan for implementation of content standards

Section 22-32-110(1)(h), C.R.S. local board powers concerning employment termination of school personnel

Section 22-63-201, C.R.S., Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990; Employment-license required – exception

Section 22-63-202, C.R.S., Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990: contracts in writing – duration – damage provision

Section 22-63-203, C.R.S. Teach Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990: Probationary teachers – renewal and non-renewal of employment contract;

Section 22-63-206, C.R.S., Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990; Transfer of teachers – compensation

Section 22-63-301, C.R.S., Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990: Grounds for dismissal

Section 22-63-401, C.R.S., Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990: Teachers subject to adopted salary schedule

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Section 22-63-402, C.R.S., Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990: License, authorization of residency required in order to pay teachers; and

Section 22-63-403, C.R.S., Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990: Payment of salaries Whittier K-8 may have a stronger compensation and incentive pay system for all staff members (Section 4: Pg 28 Staffing and Use of other Financial Resources), with full input and involvement of the Leadership Team, composed mainly of teaching staff and administrators (see Pg 23 Whittier K-8 Leadership). Whittier K-8 will utilize the District's evaluation procedures until, or, if it so chooses, to develop its own evaluation procedures that will be more specifically geared to the programs at Whittier K-8.

The details with regard to the school calendar, school day, choice of curriculum and text books have all been specified in this Plan.

B. Regulatory Sections to be Waived.

Whittier K-8 is requesting a waiver of all CDE regulations related to the statutory provisions specified in subsection 1 above.

C. District Policies to be Waived.

The District and the Principal have agreed that all District policies that impede the implementation of this Innovation School Plan will be waived.

D. Collective Bargaining Agreement Provisions to be Waived

Licensed employees have the choice to become members of DCTA; the District will continue to deduct dues, assessments, and other contributions toward a union program or fund, from paychecks of all licensed employees who have given written authorization as specified in the DPS/DCTA Agreement. The District will continue to transfer all such deducted funds to the DCTA in accordance with the DPS/DCTA Agreement

E. Procedure to Rescind Innovation status

This agreement will remain in full force and effect unless a recommendation to discontinue is presented to the Leadership Team and supported by a vote of 50% +1 of the Whittier K-8 faculty.

F. Suggested innovations (The Act lists the following areas in which the Board of Education should strongly encourage that innovations be considered):

1. Curriculum academic standards and assessments. **See Pg 7-16.** Data driven-Instructional practices are based on research and have proven to be effective in schools that have followed through with their implementation. Decision Making Criteria for adopting curricular and instructional practices that aligns with State and District standards, supports and accommodates accelerated learning and accommodates students with special needs, supports English language acquisition.
2. Accountability measures to more accurately present a complete measure of student learning and accomplishment may include:

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- Progress reports to document student performance
- Assessment data collected at the beginning, middle and end of year Student work
- Performance as measured by the DPS School Performance Framework State and national accountability measures
- Percentage of students progressing to the next grade level at proficiency

G. Provision of services, including, but not limited to:

The focus of the education plan is described in the Analysis of Board Policy Waivers Called for by the WhittierK-8 Innovation Plan Pg 41-52. Additionally, Whittier K-8 will continue to provide all of the district-wide programs for special education students, gifted and talented students and English Language Learners. Support for interventions and accommodations will be made available to students with identified needs.

Whittier K-8 will participate in District Title I programs and comply with all expectations of the plan. Should the district change its Title I plan, Whittier K-8 retains the right to enact its own plan, in alignment with its Innovation Plan, with the oversight of the District Federal Programs Office, informed in part by the School Performance Framework. The District will delegate to Whittier K-8 the responsibility of complying with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), informed in part by direct District oversight and in part by the School Performance Framework. The Positive Behavior Support model and Restorative Justice have been adopted and implemented by Whittier K-8 and serve as the backbone of our discipline system. Students are held accountable for their behavior and learning.

H. Teachers:

The recruitment, preparation and professional development of teachers are described in Pg 22 (Evaluation of New Teachers to School). All teachers must sign the Whittier K-8 Job Description (see Appendix 5) and may be required to attend professional development during the summer months. Dates and times will be communicated with all teachers well in advance. Based on performance and survey data, the Principal and Leadership Team will identify professional development needs, establish schedules, locate resources and collect information to ensure that the teachers have access to the tools and training required to meet the needs of all students and increase student achievement.

I. Teacher Employment is referenced in Pg 22 (Assignment of Staff) and Cost Savings Pg 32 (Financial Resources)

J. Performance Expectations and Evaluation Procedures for Teachers and Principals.

See Pg 22 (Staffing, Evaluation and Compensation)**Compensation for Teachers, Principals and Other School Building Personnel, Including but not Limited to** Performance pay plans, total compensation plan and other innovative approaches are

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contained in Pg 22 (Compensation)

K. School governance and the Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations of Principals in Innovation Schools

The Principal is the instructional and administrative leader at Whittier K-8. The Principal, working collaboratively with the Leadership Team and with input from faculty and staff, parents, and community representatives, is responsible for decisions on curriculum, instruction, assessment, selection, assignment, and evaluation of all faculty and staff; development of the budget and compensation system; as well as general administrative duties for Whittier K-8. See Pg 18 (Principal Leadership and Governance).