

Knightstown Intermediate School

PL221 Report

April 2008

The Charles A. Beard Corporation

I. Introduction

Charles A. Beard Memorial School Corporation is a rural, consolidated, public school corporation headquartered in Knightstown, Indiana, a town approximately 30 miles due east of Indianapolis on Interstate 70. The corporation is currently composed of three elementary schools, an intermediate school, and a high school. Students feed into Knightstown Intermediate School from all three elementary schools in the corporation. Knightstown Intermediate School's demographics include: enrollment, 409; free and reduced lunch 35 %.

The corporation is the district's largest employer with a certified staff of 89 and a non-certified staff of 131. Although additional employers exist as merchants in the Knightstown Community, Carthage, and Kennard have few businesses. Employment is generally found outside the towns at either New Castle or Greenfield, nearby larger towns. Hospitals, factories, Eli Lilly, and other businesses are housed in those cities. Indianapolis is also a place of employment for numerous people

The school corporation provides a large amount of the area's entertainment opportunities through extra-curricular events. It also is the center of the area's technological resources. Additionally, most parent assistance programs and connections to outside family-assistance service providers occur through the school corporation.

The Charles A. Beard Memorial School Corporation is dedicated to providing excellence in education and consistent support to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and non-certified personnel. The corporation is fully committed to meeting and exceeding the standards of the state of Indiana in all areas. To demonstrate this commitment, the corporation provides release time to curriculum committees to develop local curriculum and suggested instructional methodology that meets or exceeds state expectations. To aid in meeting the standards, the corporation encourages the administration of comprehensive needs assessments at each building site, the setting of measurable goals and objectives, the use of effective, research-based programs, program evaluation, and sufficient professional development to reach our goals.

Charles A. Beard Memorial School Corporation updates local curriculum with each textbook adoption cycle to assure full coordination with Indiana Curriculum Standards. The local committee uses both Indiana Academic Standards and Indiana Frameworks in developing curriculum. Both state and local curriculum are available upon request at the main office of Knightstown Intermediate School.

Charles A. Beard Memorial School Corporation is also diligent in assessing student progress toward mastery of standards. In addition to ISTEP testing, the corporation uses Scholastic Reading Inventory and Scholastic Reading Counts. These programs allow for frequent measurement of student progress through lexile assessments. These assessments provide solid data that allows our professional faculty to aggressively intervene to help students progress toward achieving their reading and writing goals.

Some of the programs implemented at Knightstown Intermediate School are:

- Read 180
- Shurley Method
- Super Reader Program
- Six + One Writing Traits
- Scholastic Reading Inventory
- Scholastic Reading Counts

Several programs are in place that enhance reading and writing skills, but do not provide trackable data.

During the 2006-2007 school year, a curriculum privatization program was implemented, and curriculum mapping was put into place for Language Arts.

II. Mission Statement

The mission of Knightstown Intermediate School is to provide each student a diverse education in a safe, supportive environment that promotes self-discipline, motivation, and excellence in learning. The Knightstown Intermediate staff joins the parents and community to assist the students in developing skills to become independent, self-sufficient, life-long learners who will succeed and contribute responsibly in a global community.

III. Summary of Data

Both the Charles A. Beard Memorial School Corporation's Annual Report (Attachment A) and Knightstown Intermediate School's annual report (Attachment B) may be found at the conclusion of this report.

These reports indicate that during this one-year period the enrollment at Knightstown Intermediate School declined slightly from 443 to 409 students.

According to school and corporation 2007-2008 Fall ISTEP+ reports, 86% of our current fifth grade students passed the Math portion, 81% passed the Language Arts, and 64% passed Science portion of the 2007-2008 ISTEP+ tests. Therefore, Knightstown Intermediate School fifth grade students scored 8% higher in Math, 5% higher in Language Arts, and 2% lower in Science than the state average score.

According to school and corporation 2007-2008 Fall ISTEP+ reports 88% of our current sixth grade students passed the Math portion and 79% passed the Language Arts portion of the 2007-2008 ISTEP+ tests. Therefore, Knightstown Intermediate School sixth grade students scored 9% higher in Math and 1% lower in Language Arts than the state average score.

According to school and corporation 2007-2008 Fall ISTEP+ reports, 83% of our current seventh grade students passed the Math portion, 77% passed the Language Arts, and 72% passed the Science portion of the 2007-2008 ISTEP+ tests. Therefore, Knightstown Intermediate School seventh grade students scored 3% higher in Math, 6% higher in Language Arts, and 14% higher in Science than the state average score.

According to school and corporation 2007-2008 Fall ISTEP+ reports, 80% of our current eighth grade students passed the Math portion and 71% passed the Language Arts portion of the 2007-2008 ISTEP+ tests. Therefore, Knightstown Intermediate School eighth grade students scored 5% higher in Math and 1% higher in Language Arts than the state average score. All segments of the school population (i.e. the special education students) are included in this data assessment.

These scores indicate that 81% of the Knightstown Intermediate School paid lunch students passed the Language portion of the ISTEP+ test, which compares to 59% of the free/reduced lunch

students passing. Knightstown Intermediate School paid lunch students passed the Math portion of the ISTEP+ test at 89% compared to 84% of the free/reduced students.

Upon review of Knightstown Intermediate School data, monitoring of specific data resulted in concrete conclusions on strengths and weaknesses in all areas. The data is displayed in the teachers' workroom in the form of a data wall.

In addition to the annual report, Scholastic Reading Inventory data indicates students in grades 5 through 8 have lexile levels ranging from 0 to 1443. At the end of first semester, the school has improved by 78 points during the 2007-2008 school year.

Programs are in place that will allow for data tracking. Data-driven decision making will be used for placement of students in Math and Language Arts.

IV. Conclusions

Knightstown Intermediate School's curriculum strongly supports the Indiana standards in all areas. Knightstown Intermediate School incorporates the corporation's local curriculum which is tied directly to the Indiana Academic Standards and Frameworks through the curriculum writing process. Furthermore, the textbook selection process utilizes and correlates with the Indiana Standards. Teachers attend workshops regarding the interpretation and implementation of standards and apply that information directly to their classrooms. Knightstown Intermediate School internalizes the academic standards into its classroom instructional strategies. Teachers base individual lessons on the standards, monitor student progress, and adjust methodology and content to meet individual needs. Teachers also have access to such teaching tools as Discovery Education Video Streaming. This tool allows teachers to have multi-media curricular support to support a large variety of standards in every discipline and at every level. The Indiana Academic Standards website is utilized to attain lesson plans, activities, and assessments that directly correlate to the Indiana Academic Standards. Accelerated Math students from the fifth and sixth grade feed into the Pre-Algebra and Algebra program offered in the seventh and eighth grade. All fifth through eighth grade teachers have received training in differentiated instruction. Plans are in place for training to meet the needs of our increasing number of poverty level students. Opportunities are available to fifth and sixth grade students to participate in high ability programs which enhance their Language Arts and Math abilities. Teachers have been trained in creating and utilizing rubrics to meet and address state standards.

In 2006-2007, a committee of teachers was trained in Curriculum Prioritization, through a Professional Development opportunity. The teachers then shared this information with grade level teams and collaborated to prioritize Language Arts and Math curriculums. All subject areas will be prioritized by their specific adoption year.

Finally, ISTEP measurements coupled with data tracking and data-decision making programs such as: Scholastic Reading Inventory, and Reading Counts will provide professional staff with the data necessary to individualize and differentiate instruction. Upcoming adopted textbooks for each subject area will include data tracking software.

Current ISTEP scores indicate that Knightstown Intermediate School should continue to enhance Language Arts programs and maintain and/or improve Math scores. Goals and strategies are being reviewed on an ongoing basis to meet the needs of students.

Parental involvement at Knightstown Intermediate School is promoted by the parent auxiliary league (PAL) program for the seventh and eighth grade parents. In years past, a fifth and sixth grade Parent-Teacher Organization has existed, however, in 2007-2008 it was inactive. Parents of fifth and sixth grade students will be encouraged to rebuild this group. Parent-teacher conferences are held each year with an average of 99% parental attendance for grades five and six, with 67% for grades seven and eight. Also, parents are encouraged to contact the school at any time as needed. Knightstown Intermediate School communicates via the school website where parents may obtain information.

Performance programs are scheduled and parents are welcome to participate. A newly-formed drama club provides this opportunity as well as band concerts and academic competitions. Likewise, students are rewarded for various accomplishments during awards ceremonies and parents are invited and encouraged to attend. Parents serve on the book adoption committees as required by the state, and their input is valued. Orientation programs are available at the beginning of the year for the incoming fifth graders and their parents.

Technology is a high priority at Knightstown Intermediate School. In an ever-changing multimedia world, keeping up with the changes is an important educational tool. In order to support all areas of the curriculum, all classrooms have been equipped with AV computer/TV connections. These centers allow the teachers to access an educational website, project that site onto a large-screen television, and use that site for instruction. This technology allows teachers to share up-to-the-minute information with students and to support the curriculum with lessons that are being developed daily to support Indiana educational standards. Each classroom also has a DVD/VHS player. Fifth and sixth grade classrooms have computers for student use, as well as three readily accessible computer labs. Knightstown Intermediate School has a student/computer ratio of 2 to 1. All classrooms have access to laser printers. As curriculum textbook adoptions take place, books that provide data tracking and numerous technological advancements will be considered. Students and parents have access to textbook and remedial websites.

Knightstown Intermediate School provides the students a safe learning environment. Discipline is incorporated to create an atmosphere that promotes a productive place of learning. The expectations for students are clearly addressed and consequences are fairly administered accordingly. Life skills such as honesty, integrity, responsibility, and cooperation are taught and reinforced to prepare students for real-world situations.

Professional development is addressed in Section X of this document.

V. Goals and Objectives

1. Attendance Rate

Goal: Knightstown Intermediate School will continue to maintain or increase the 96.1% attendance rate that Knightstown Intermediate School currently holds. The state average attendance rate is 95.8%.

Objectives: In order to maintain the current attendance rate, school policy will continue to address numerous absences via parent contact. Students will be recognized for outstanding attendance during awards ceremonies.

An incentive program for fifth and sixth grade students is in place for daily attendance competition.

Child Protective Services (CPS) will be notified in the event of continued excessive absences.

2. ISTEP Data

Goal: Knightstown Intermediate School is committed to maintaining or increasing our current scores that are above the ISTEP state average scores.

Objectives: In order to maintain or increase the ISTEP scores, Knightstown Intermediate School will continue to strictly align curriculum with state standards and search for best instructional practices to help meet the objectives. The staff will continue to support professional development opportunities within our school corporation that enhance these best practices and differentiated instruction in teaching Language Arts and Math.

Special education students will have access to programs to enhance their

achievement. Special education students will have access to programs, which correlate with their current IEP's. These programs will provide individualized remediation or extension and trackable data opportunities.

Suggested programs include:

- Read 180
- Scholastic Reading Inventory
- Reading Counts
- The Shurley Method

Professional development for Knightstown Intermediate School teachers will focus on using newly acquired programs that provide useful, trackable data. Use of data will be ongoing throughout the school year, giving teachers direction for proper remediation of students.

3. Poverty Awareness

Goal: An ongoing effort is being made to bring teacher awareness to poverty issues.

Objective: With the poverty rate of Knightstown increasing, teacher awareness of current poverty issues is improved by on-going training received in programs such as Ruby Payne's A Framework for Poverty. Other programs are being investigated to support this issue.

4. Cultural Diversity Awareness

Goal: Due to Knightstown's homogeneous population, cultural diversity awareness will be implemented to the students and teachers.

Objectives: The Social Studies classes have been geared toward teaching global awareness. Students participate in pen pal activities, Holocaust studies, exchange student programs, Civil Rights studies through literature, and music programs of other cultures. Field trips are standards-based and are designed to provide students with cultural diversity awareness when possible.

5. Health and Social Awareness

Goal: Social and Health related issues, such as drug abuse, teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and bullying are increasing in the intermediate school-aged students.

Student, teacher, and parent awareness can improve or alleviate activities that increase these risks.

Objectives: Students will develop the personal management and team-building skills needed to become successful learners, responsible citizens, and productive workers. Students in grades five through eight will participate in team building activities, and incentive programs that will help create a cohesive environment. Mentor relationships with teachers or staff will encourage good behavior based on role-modeling with sound guidance.

This will be measured with discipline records and a decline in social problems among students.

VI. Specific Areas for Immediate Improvement

The Knightstown Intermediate School staff is focused on state standards and the improvement of ISTEP results. The 6+1 Writing Traits program was implemented at the start of the 2007-2008 school year. This program addresses the needs of students who fall below the state average in Language Arts, specifically writing skills. The rubrics used in this program more effectively analyzes student deficiencies and provides needed improvement.

VII. Benchmarks

Based upon the above information Knightstown Intermediate School has identified specific benchmarks that will indicate progress toward meeting our goals and objectives.

The first benchmark addresses attendance by:

- Maintaining or improving the state average attendance rate.
- Attendance records will continue to be monitored by the office staff.
- Incentive programs are in place to encourage students.

The second benchmark addresses another priority, ISTEP results. We will recognize progress toward this goal by:

- Analyzing ISTEP scores and maintaining continued progress toward higher achievement.
- KIS will seek to meet or exceed the state's averages in each subject area.
- Data-driven decision making will be used for placement of students in Math and Language Arts.

The third benchmark addresses cultural diversity, poverty and social awareness. We will recognize progress toward this goal by:

- Decreasing the number of office referrals due to prejudicial statements, remarks, bullying, and threats.
- Staff development will be ongoing in the area of cultural diversity.
- Increasing awareness of the poverty level in the school community.
- Providing staff development concerning issues of poverty and its effect on education.

VIII. Academic Honors and Core 40

This does not apply to Knightstown Intermediate School.

IX. Proposed Interventions

The staff at Knightstown Intermediate School will be acutely aware of the need to intervene in situations involving cultural and social insensitivity. This would include the Stop Bullying law - SB231. The administration provides logged/recorded data concerning bullying threats.

X. Professional Development

The Knightstown Intermediate professional development program is rigorous and tied to student achievement. To be effective it must be ongoing and an integral part of an educator's workday. Effective professional development uses a variety of approaches and models. It needs to be teacher designed and collaborative, rich in academic content, learning processes, current research, materials and technologies. Effective professional development uses the systematic study of student work to improve teaching and learning. It aligns with state standards, long-term school and district goals, accountability plans, and other components of a standards-driven system. Effective professional development occurs in environments of safety, trust, and shared problem solving.

The professional development plan at Knightstown Intermediate School is standards based. It enables teachers to improve expertise in subject knowledge and teaching strategies, uses of technologies, and other essential elements in teaching to high standards. It furthers the alignment of standards, curriculum, and assessments. The Knightstown Intermediate professional development plan includes measurement activities to ensure the transfer of new knowledge and skills to classroom instruction. Materials are continually updated and made available in a professional library for teachers and staff to access.

Professional Development will address key areas needed to implement our revised plan. These areas and a summary of intended professional development are:

Cultural Diversity

The Social Studies classes have been geared toward teaching global awareness. Students participate in pen pal activities, Holocaust studies, exchange student programs, Civil Rights studies through literature, and music programs of different cultures. Field trips are standards-based and are designed to provide students with cultural diversity awareness when possible.

Poverty Awareness

With the poverty rate of Knightstown increasing, teacher awareness of current poverty issues is improved by on-going training received in programs such as Ruby Payne's A Framework for Poverty. Other programs are being investigated to support this issue.

Attendance Rate

Knightstown Intermediate School will continue to meet or exceed the state average attendance rate. In order to maintain the current attendance rate, school policy will continue to address numerous absences via parent contact. Students will be recognized for outstanding attendance during awards ceremonies. Competition will be used as incentives.

Child Protective Services (CPS) will be notified in the event of continued excessive absences.

ISTEP Data

Knightstown Intermediate School is committed to maintaining or increasing its above state average ISTEP scores. In order to maintain or increase the ISTEP scores, Knightstown Intermediate School will continue to strictly align curriculum with state standards and search for best instructional practices to help meet the objectives. The staff will continue to support professional development opportunities within our school corporation that enhance these best practices and differentiated instruction in teaching Language Arts and Math.

Professional Development for Benchmarks

Based upon the above information Knightstown Intermediate School has identified specific benchmarks that will indicate progress toward meeting our goals and objectives. The first benchmark deals with attendance. We will recognize progress toward this goal by assessing whether our attendance meets or exceeds state averages. Attendance records will continue to be monitored by the office staff.

The second benchmark deals with another priority, ISTEP results. We will recognize progress toward this goal by analyzing ISTEP scores and maintaining continued progress toward higher achievement. KIS will seek to exceed the state's averages in each subject area.

The third benchmark addresses cultural diversity and poverty, as well as social awareness. We will recognize progress by increasing awareness of the poverty level in the school community and providing staff development concerning issues of poverty and its effect on education. We will also recognize progress toward this goal by decreasing the number of office referrals due to prejudicial statements and/or remarks. Staff development will be ongoing in the area of cultural diversity.

Professional Development for Intervention Strategies

The following topics will be incorporated into the professional development plan in accordance with state standards for Knightstown Intermediate School:

- Cultural diversity
- Poverty
- Bullying laws and prevention
- Language Arts teaching strategies
- Math teaching strategies
- Teaching with technology
- Science teaching strategies
- Data-driven decision making

XI. Statutes and Rules to be Waived

This section is non-applicable in our plan.

XII. Three-Year Timeline

Implementation

- ISTEP data analysis
- Track and analyze school data to lead professional development and instruction
- Analyze attendance records
- Curriculum Prioritization

Review

- Apply data to Language Arts and Math teaching strategies to improve or maintain ISTEP scores
- Review attendance records
- Review statistical data on bullying or threats
- Implement cultural awareness

Revision

- Continue monitoring Language Arts, Math, and Science teaching strategies based on ISTEP test results
- Revise attendance policy if percentage drops below state average
- Reassess cultural awareness strategies