

DOINGWHATWORKS



PRESENTATION

5:05 min

[Full Details and Transcript](#)



Creating an Actionable Plan

Jackson Central-Merry Academy for Medical Technology High School, Tennessee

May 2013

Topic TURNING AROUND CHRONICALLY LOW-PERFORMING SCHOOLS

Practice FOCUS ON INSTRUCTION

- Highlights**
- » Jackson Central-Merry Academy of Medical Technology partnered with the National Association for Secondary School Principals (NASSP) to obtain help in identifying areas of need.
 - » The school established a literacy council to oversee literacy instruction across the curriculum and literacy assessments.
 - » The literacy council explored the Doing What Works (DWW) website and used the Adolescent Literacy school planning template to identify key actions for instructional improvement.
 - » Students learn that the writing process is a fluid, nonlinear process.
 - » After using DWW resources and implementing the schoolwide literacy initiative for just one year, ninth grade students gained almost two grade levels in reading.

Jackson Central-Merry Academy for Medical Technology Jackson, Tennessee

Demographics

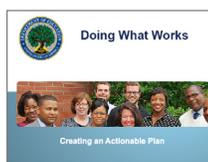
- » 88% Black
- » 8% White

- » 3% Hispanic
- » 89% Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

Jackson Central-Merry Academy of Medical Technology High School revised its curriculum to offer rigorous and relevant instruction to all students. The school employed the following practices:

- » Emphasis on career and technology education
- » Ninth-grade academy
- » Literacy instruction across the curriculum overseen by a Literacy Council
- » Development of a coherent teacher professional development plan based on consultations with experts

Full Transcript



Slide 1: Welcome

Welcome to Creating an Actionable Plan.

Slide 2: Meet the Principal and Assistant Principal



My name is Eric Jones and I am the principal at the Jackson Central-Merry Academy of Medical Technology in Jackson, Tennessee, and I have been principal here for four years.



I am Dr. Teresa McDaniel. I am assistant principal at Jackson Central-Merry Academy of Medical Technology in Jackson, Tennessee.



Slide 3: Turnaround school

Jones: In 2009, I started as principal at Jackson Central-Merry Academy of Medical Technology [JCM], and we were a turnaround school and [had a] lot of instability. So we started a partnership with Dr. Mel Riddile, and our first order of business was to stabilize the building. And from that point, we were starting to stabilize the building and we

were able to do more of a focus instructionally. And starting in 2011 we really started to identify some areas of deficiency in the area of literacy.

Dr. Mel Riddile introduced us to Doing What Works, and as a result of that, we were able to really start to hone in on some of the issues that had allowed JCM to stay behind. With the help of Dr. Mel Riddile and the Doing What Works template for addressing adolescent literacy, we were able to really create a comprehensive plan to address literacy throughout the school building.



Slide 4: Identifying actions

McDaniel: Where do you start? What do you do? Okay, we know we have a problem; now what? And that's where Doing What Works came in for us. The Doing What Works template identified specific behaviors and actions that leadership should take, that teachers should take, certain things that should happen within the school as you start to focus on improving literacy.



Slide 5: Literacy council

Jones: We sat down and we created a literacy council, and that literacy council consists of one person from each core content area, the principal, our assistant principals, our instructional coach, and our media specialist. And one of our first orders of business was to address the Adolescent Literacy School Planning Template. And as a result of that, we were able to really identify areas where we may have been doing well and areas where we needed to improve or areas where we needed to even start implementing. And that literacy council really started to meet on a regular basis and plan out how we wanted instruction to look.

Area of Focus	D3	D4	D5	Next Steps
1. Reading Strategies to Practice				
2. Supporting Instruction in the Classroom				
3. Supporting Instruction in the Classroom				
4. Supporting Instruction in the Classroom				
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19. Supporting Instruction in the Classroom				
20. Supporting Instruction in the Classroom				

Slide 6: Comprehensive planning template

McDaniel: The Doing What Works template initially helped us to know what questions we needed to ask. When it says “consistently in all content areas,” where were we with that? And I think early on, we might have thought we were further along there than we actually were. When we started actually going in classrooms, looking for literacy strategies, what we were missing is engagement with literacy, with text. And so, as we were able to understand what that really looked like in a classroom, then our professional development actually moved to offering articles and asking our teachers to closely read the articles and actually demonstrating the type of questions we wanted them to ask their students by asking them those same questions in professional development.

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Slide 7: Scheduling time

Jones: The Adolescent Literacy template also points out under the heading D3: Supporting Instruction in the Classroom that the principal needs to schedule weekly planning time for literacy specialists to work with content area teachers. That was not something we were addressing before we saw this in the template. So what we were able to do was schedule time during the school day that our core content area teachers were able to meet in a professional learning community and discuss specific strategies around how to best address student challenges, especially in the area of literacy.

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Slide 8: Screening for reading levels

McDaniel: One component of the Doing What Works template, the C: Providing Research Base and Effective Instruction, #3 suggests that you should screen students for their reading levels. And when we read that, we realized that we were not screening our students for reading levels. So we implemented a reading—the Gates MacGinitie Reading Comprehension Test and it yielded some interesting results. The first year that we tested our students, we found that our students were

reading on an average Lexile of 600 to 650, which we equated to be 70% reading at a fifth-grade level or below. We tested those students again the following year and our students gained 130 Lexiles. That's the equivalent of almost two grade levels in one year.



Slide 9: Clear direction

Jones: I think it all starts with having a clear direction. The Doing What Works template, the Adolescent Literacy Template, allowed us to have a clear direction. And with the implementation, the consistency that it provided, we have been able to see immediate results with our students.



Slide 10: Learn more

To learn more about Creating an Actionable Plan, please explore the additional materials on the Doing What Works website.

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