



Audio

FULL DETAILS AND TRANSCRIPT

Helping Struggling Students by Using the SAT Process

River Ridge Elementary School, Kentucky • December 2009

Topic: Using Student Achievement Data to Support Instructional Decision Making
Practice: Cycle of Improvement

Highlights

- The Student Assistance Team (SAT) process at River Ridge Elementary helps remove barriers to student learning.
- The SAT forms an intervention plan tailored to the student, and all staff leave an SAT meeting knowing what they need to do to help the student.
- The team meets frequently to look at data to see if interventions are helping the student improve and if any further instructional changes need to be made.

About the Site

River Ridge Elementary School

Villa Hills, KY

Demographics

91% White

3% Hispanic

3% Black

1% Asian

39% Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

10% English Language Learners

26% Special Education

River Ridge Elementary uses data to support instructional decision making and to provide support for students. The school leadership team works collaboratively with staff to engage in the following practices:

- Establishing a vision for data use
- Analyzing data in team meetings to identify students who do not meet the benchmark goals
- Providing supports for staff to embed data use into everyday practice
- Helping students understand their own data and set learning goals

Full Transcript

My name is Shawna Harney. I am the principal of River Ridge Elementary. River Ridge is located in Villa Hills, Kentucky, which is a part of the Kenton County School District.

The Student Assistance Team, otherwise known as SAT, was formed as a district process to help students who have been identified as struggling in one way or the other. The function of the team is to reduce barriers for student learning, whatever they may be. Stakeholders involved in the SAT team process involve teachers, administrators, counselors, special ed teachers, regular ed teachers, school psychologists, parents, and that varies from child to child depending on the needs or the identified areas of weakness.

The steps and process involved within our SAT teams start with a referral made by a teacher when they are identifying needs or areas of weakness with the student; any type of barrier, a teacher makes a referral to an administrator in the building to begin the SAT process. After the referral is received from an administrator, a meeting is set and that team comes up with interventions after discussing the child and looking at the data on the child; an intervention plan is developed. And when the team is finished with that first initial meeting, a plan is put into place; everybody knows what their role is and this process for this child. Progress monitoring then begins, and the team will then meet again to look at the data that is gathered as a result of the interventions that have been put into place.

We look at a lot of data when we are discussing the students during the SAT team process, such as diagnostic testing data that we have on our students in the areas of reading and math. We take several different types of diagnostic tests, and we also look at classroom performance on formative as well as summative assessments. Recently, we have grown in terms of not only looking at overall stanines from those diagnostic scores, but also the scores within particular subtests of those diagnostic tests to really be able to help pinpoint the most needed areas to intervene. For example, if we look at a reading diagnostic test and the child is performing at a four stanine overall, but we learn that the listening comprehension or the vocabulary subtests are at a two stanine, we really try to pinpoint those areas in terms of knowing some

specific intervention plans to put in place targeting those exact areas versus just looking at the overall stanine of the score.

Every teacher in our building has a data notebook, and items that we include in those data notebooks range from a data tracking sheet that we have developed that is a consistent tool each teacher fills out on the child and also serves to show trend data over the school year, so that we can begin to look holistically at the child and in terms of how they are progressing with the data. We have created a sheet through our SAT process called an Instructional Integrity Checklist, and that's another consistent tool that teachers are using to document any type of intervention and the frequency of that intervention. In addition, to any other parental communication that has taken place between the teacher and this child is also included in this data notebook. These data notebooks are brought with the teacher when we have SAT team meetings, and it's very nice to just be able to pick the notebook up and you have everything that you need in terms of what's going on with that child right there at your fingertips and you are not going through different file folders of information. It serves as a great visual to look at the child from the beginning of the year through the middle to the end of the year.

I think the SAT process tremendously impacted our school and student achievement in terms of really putting accountability into place and holding stakeholders, teachers, all staff members accountable to using data to make decisions for our students. We've always been able to identify areas of weakness and how students were struggling. But we didn't always have the best tools in place to know then what to do with that information. I really feel this process has allowed us to quickly intervene with students versus waiting to get all stakeholders at the table, because we have increased our teacher knowledge in knowing these are the interventions that we have in place here at River Ridge Elementary. And if I have a student who is struggling in a particular area, I now know what I can begin to do to help this child before waiting to have a meeting to talk about what to do.