



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA

Feedback and Findings Meeting

Robert E. Lamberton School

November 29, 2018

SYSTEM OF GREAT SCHOOLS
.....
creating great schools close to where all children live



Agenda

- Why We're Here
- Where We are in the Process
- Feedback and Findings
- Next Steps
- Questions



Vision: All children have a great public school close to home

- Some schools need more support so that children can have the learning opportunities they deserve.
- Lamberton has been prioritized for additional funding and support to quickly create better learning opportunities.
- Your feedback and school data help us understand school strengths, challenges, and ways to improve.



As we work to improve student outcomes, we believe...

- All students can learn and achieve
- There is a need for support and room for improvement
- Improvement is possible
- All stakeholders have a perspective that needs to be respected
- The work of school improvement is urgent and is a shared responsibility



What are the recommendation options for additional funding and support?

Enter into the Acceleration Network

- ✓ Defined improvement model
- ✓ Summer planning time
- ✓ Common network supports
- ✓ Keep and hire best staff

Develop Academic Improvement Plan

- ✓ Customized improvement model
- ✓ Commitment to deeper planning in spring
- ✓ Self-selected school supports
- ✓ Strong leader and leadership team

Note: School closure and becoming a charter school are NOT options



Where are we in the process?



Aug-Sept

Sept-Nov

Dec-mid Jan

late Jan-early Feb

Feb-Mar

SGS focus schools
selected and
announced

Data gathering

Data analysis

School
recommendations
announced
(after new SPR
release)

Planning and
budgeting

Selection based on:

- 3-year SPR trend
- Current interventions

- Focus group feedback
- School quality review
- Feedback and findings meetings conclude data gathering phase

- School teams and central office review data

Two options:

- Acceleration Network
- Academic Improvement Plan

- Supports for Academic Improvement Plan begin
- Principal and teacher hiring process begins for Acceleration Network
- Allocate funding for SY19-20



What data did we gather?

Focus group feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 5 focus group meetings● 63 attendees● 23 family members
School Quality Review (SQR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 2 day whole school review● Visited every classroom for average of 25 minutes● Principal, teacher, and student interviews● Reviewed student work
School level data	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Attendance, suspensions, district-wide survey● PSSA, reading levels, grades, benchmarks



How did we organize the information?

1) Instruction

2) School culture, climate

3) Leadership and systems



Findings: Instruction

Practices that Support Student Learning

- In K-5 classrooms, objectives/agendas, standards/learning goals were posted and clearly visible.
- Leadership recognizes the need to prioritize a focus on instruction going forward, and that students are ready for more rigorous instruction.
- There is a core group of teachers and support staff that have the important historical knowledge of students and the community.



Findings: Instruction

Practices that Limit Student Learning

- Standards and learning goals were not visibly present in most middle school classrooms.
 - When they were posted, there were limited demonstrations of students understanding the targeted learning goals.
 - Student engagement was limited in middle school classrooms.
 - There were often missed opportunities to really push students academically and use assessments to drive higher learning for students.
 - There were limited demonstrations of students being asked to use deeper level thinking in student work products.
- Strategies to differentiate learning were used inconsistently in classrooms.
- The vision around instruction is not specific enough because the school is still focusing on improving its climate.
- Teachers seem to be receiving minimal PD on making sure instruction is at grade level.
- Staff are not consistently using their deep knowledge of students and the community to hold themselves, students and other adults accountable to high instructional expectations.



Family Feedback: Instruction - Strengths

Here are some of the positive comments parents made about academics.

“And the sight words help them. So I think for the kindergarten teacher now, that’s what they’re doing sight words. And I think they really do learn.” --Lamberton Parent

“I will say for my son... his teacher...has posted every day what their homework is.” --Lamberton Parent

“One of the things I like about coming here is the diversity of the people.” --Lamberton Parent

“The teachers are great.” --Lamberton Parent



Family Feedback: Instruction - Challenges

By far the number one concern of parents about instruction is the lack of stability over the years of the staff and the negative impacts it has on learning:

“My sixth grader last year didn’t have a teacher for the last half of the year.” --Lamberton Parent

“Substitute, no homework, but like, from I think December until to June, like no homework.” --Lamberton Parent

“These kids have not had a stable teachers since school started in August.” --Lamberton Parent

“Seventh and eighth grade had two teachers out, pretty much all year they had subs.” --Lamberton Parent

“My first grader didn’t have that much academics last year. He didn’t have a teacher at all. So right now he is stuck between kindergarten and second grade. He’s trying to catch up.” --Lamberton Parent



Findings: School climate, culture

Practices that Support Student Learning

- In K-5 and Autistic Support classrooms, students are aware of behavioral expectations for the school and there are clear systems and structures in place to address and support appropriate behavior.

Practices that Limit Student Learning

- There is not a fully built system for rewards/consequences that is balanced and implemented consistently schoolwide.
 - Few systems and structures are in place to support a positive learning environment in emotional support and middle school classrooms.
 - Strategies to de-escalate students in distress were not consistently implemented.



Feedback: School culture - Strengths

Parents expressed some hopefulness about school culture this school year:

“And more and more kids are coming on time. They’re in line. It looks more organized. When I come in the building, okay, there’s not a bunch of people running around. There’s people in their classrooms. The teachers are coming out and they’re grabbing their kids. Changing the environment of the school is hard. It’s hard. It’s very very hard. But they’re trying.” --Lamberton Parent

“So I don’t see the running and the chaos that I saw the latter part of last year.” --Lamberton Parent

“They lined up in the morning, and how quiet they were, and how kids are there on time. Everyone was quiet, everyone was in line....Everybody is attentive.” --Lamberton Parent



Feedback: School culture - Challenges

Parents are concerned about their children's physical safety due to bullying, especially in hallways, lunchroom and the playground:

"There's issues on the playground, there's issues in the hallways, in the classroom. He's been punched in the stomach just waiting in the line in the cafeteria. The abuse is constant. And obviously, there's always name-calling and stuff like that. But it's the touching with the hand that's the real issue." --Lamberton Parent

Another concern is people coming into the school unchecked and children leaving the school on their own:

"I walked right in. There was no one at the front door." --Lamberton Parent

"And he left and came home." --Lamberton Parent

Not enough afterschool programming is a concern, which parents think could help with school pride.

There was a lot of discussion about how new programs in the school have affected schoolwide culture.

The appearance and cleanliness of the building was also a consistent concern.



Feedback: Family and Community - Strengths

The high level of neighbor participation in the Focus Group process is worth noting and is in itself a finding. There appears to be a very high level of interest by the neighbors, many of whom either attended Lamberton or worked in education or other related fields.

“The new principal was more willing and made herself available to the community more than the past three principals we've had in four years roughly, which is not good anyway, but it was close to impossible to get in touch with them as much as we tried to. This new principal got hired, came to a community meeting, and then availed herself to us for questions and comments. So I think that's a good thing.” --Community Member

Parents like the new class Dojo communication tool:

“Whatever is going on in the school, they send text messages. If they are absent, I know right away. Because it comes through a text message...Afterschool activities, that comes through. A meeting comes through. Anything that the school has going on, I know before they even walk in the door to tell me.” --Lamberton Parent



Feedback: Family and Community - Challenges

Parents feel there has been a lack of responsiveness from school staff when they reach out:

“They asked us to use this class dojo if you want to reach out to the teacher, it’s falling on deaf ears. I’m emailing, I don’t get any response back.” --Lamberton Parent

“Only one of my grandson’s teachers is using Dojo.” --Lamberton Grandparent

“They are lacking professionalism coming in the office trying to talk to somebody.” --Lamberton Parent

“I wanted him to get tested. I put in the paperwork in January last year. To this day no one’s responded to me.” --Lamberton Parent

Parents also felt they should have been consulted/informed about new programs being moved into the building.



Findings: Leadership and Systems

Practices that Support Student Learning

- There are systems in place for various staff meetings – leadership team, teacher teams meetings.
- School Leadership is described as positive, optimistic, supportive, and visible/present in all areas of the school.
- Leaders are described as realistic, honest, and transparent. This has enabled an environment of trust between leadership and teachers and leadership and students.

Practices that Limit Student Learning

- Meetings do not consistently engage teachers in collaborative activities, particularly when it comes to reviewing instruction.
- There is little evidence that learning from PDs/meetings and school-wide strategies are transferred into classrooms.
- High expectations set by leadership are not transferred into practice throughout the school.
- The school is significantly understaffed and is unable to ensure students are supported in all areas given the high needs of the student population.



Feedback: Leadership - Strengths

There is very positive feedback on the new leadership in the building:

“I see the principal in the yard every morning.” --Lamberton Parent

“I met the principal because there was a problem. But it was right away I was contacted. It didn’t prolong.” --Lamberton Parent

“She’s putting her foot in his behind and trying to make sure that he gets where he needs to be. So I thought that was good.” --Lamberton Parent

“I understand that she takes time with the students and every day to talk about behavior and that sort of thing.” --Lamberton Parent



Feedback: Leadership - Challenges

Staff turnover, teacher and leadership, is seen by the parents and community as a challenge.

“Half of the teachers that are there this year, I don’t even know who they are. The principal’s new. The vice-principal, he’s new as well right? The counselor’s new. So there’s been major turnover.” --
Lamberton Parent

“So if you've had the last three, [principals] there's been no consistency as of this last, what, four years? It's been just terrible. So they never got a chance.” --Community Member

There were many parents and community members who expressed a strong desire to be involved in the school but have not found a way/system with which to connect.

“But my suggestion was starting September 1, get a form. Every child in the school needs to have someone over the age of 18 who is going to commit to three hours a month. Every child needs to have someone that they can relate to, whether it’s a grandparent, a guardian, a parent, whoever” --
Lamberton Parent



What are the next steps?



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Our children's potential is limitless.

- Each school has unique strengths and challenges.
- The goal for all children and all schools is the same:

**to ensure that all children are able to learn
and to succeed.**