

Putting Knowledge into Practice – “From Knowing to Growing” Activity



Sweet Living District #1

1 Title I School – *Upward Bound Elementary*

Carryover	\$7325
FY 2017 Funds (New Grant)	\$321,167

Total Requested =	<u>\$328,492</u>

LEA Administration	\$75,674
Parent Involvement (1% minimum of allocation = \$3,212)	\$5000
Homeless	\$1000
District Set Asides	\$12,000

Amount distributed to school	<u>\$234,818</u>

Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Please provide a brief narrative that describes the characteristics of the school. Include data trends regarding student achievement, teacher and administrative quality, and parent involvement. Highlight the school's strengths and areas of concern.

**The following Comprehensive Needs Assessment represents a fictional school. Any information contained is for training purposes only. Any resemblance of information to an actual school is merely coincidental.*

Upward Bound Elementary School is located in a small rural community in South Carolina. Administrators, teachers, parents, and students go to great lengths to provide a quality education for the students of the community.

The district was accredited by AdvancED during the 2015-16 school year and several improvement areas were identified during this process. The AdvancEd team identified the following as powerful practices:

*The district demonstrates a strong commitment to continuous improvement.

*The district fosters positive relationships with stakeholders to create a strong sense of community and ownership in support of the district purpose and direction.

*The district fulfills its vision and direction in a culture committed to rigorous expectations for social and academic success celebrated by all district staff, students and stakeholders.

The AdvancEd team made the following recommendations:

- *Develop a systematic, systemic, needs-based professional development plan for all staff that aligns with the district strategic plan and improvement goals.
- *Develop, implement, and monitor a district professional development program to train teachers, administrators and support staff in the analysis, interpretation and use of data to drive instructional decisions.
- *Provide structured, consistent collaboration time for teachers to review and respond to student learning evidence.
- *Formalize a process for the annual review and evaluation of all programs that support learning.

Upward Bound Elementary School teachers are 100% highly qualified, but retention of highly **effective** teachers continues to be an area of concern. Only 86% of teachers returned last year, and the elementary school has experienced another high turnover rate during the 2015-16 school year, as well. Neighboring districts offer higher paying salaries and bonus incentives. The lack of available housing, entertainment, and shopping, make it very difficult to attract teachers to our area.

The 2014-15 ACT Aspire Assessment results indicated that students performed 3.6% higher than students at schools like ours in the area of ELA, but 2.6% lower than schools in the state. Only 41.1% of students scored exceeding or ready in Math on the ACT Aspire, which was 5% lower than other schools like ours and 5.6% lower than the state average. The SCPASS Science assessment indicated that 57.7% of students achieved met or exemplary, which is a 3.3% increase from last year, but 5.2% lower than schools like ours and 9.8% lower than the state average. However, 73.3% of students scored exemplary or met on the SCPASS Social Studies assessment, which is a 6.6% increase from last year, but .6% lower than schools like ours and 1.8% below the state average. African American males were our lowest performing subgroups in ELA and math. Females improved in all areas except math.

The district leadership team is currently working with teachers and other stakeholders towards developing a district curriculum that is directly aligned to the South Carolina College and Career Ready Standards. *Upward Bound Elementary School* is also focusing more efforts towards building a firm foundation in reading and math for kindergarten, first, and second grade students to ensure that students are prepared for the rigorous and challenging third grade standards. Kindergarten, first, and second grade teachers are focusing their efforts in reading to ensure that all third grade students are reading on grade level by the end of third grade in 2018 and performing at or above grade level in math. Efforts include reduced class sizes, the use of leveled literacy libraries, technology instruction, training in analysis, interpretation, and use of data to drive instructional decisions, and better use of assessments to determine student growth in reading and math.

The elementary school is also focusing on continued efforts to increase parent and family engagement. The Parent-Teacher Organization was re-established during the 2014-15 school year and continued efforts are being made to involve parents in decision-making opportunities. A Parent Facilitator was added two years ago using Title I funds, which has helped to increase parent and community involvement. A local church has “adopted” the school and members from the church, along with other community members, mentor students in first grade who are academically challenged. According to parent surveys, we have seen an overall increase in the percentage of parents, teachers, and students who are satisfied with home-school relations and the learning environment over the past two years.