



J. Warren Killam School

A T.R.R.F.C.C. Place to Be!

June 1, 2017

The J.W. Killam School is proud to share information about our Killam School Improvement Plan. Our staff are dedicated to supporting all students, following the mission of the school. Our mission states, “The J.W. Killam Elementary School is a T.R.R.F.C.C. place where everyone belongs, where everyone achieves at their personal best and where everyone’s accomplishments are celebrated! It is our vision that our staff will work collaboratively to improve student learning and achievement so that every child will leave the J.W. Killam Elementary School having met or exceeded district and state standards.” Based on this premise, we have addressed the two School Improvement Goals noted below during the 2016-2017 academic year.

Goal #1: We will identify and develop strategies to ensure that all students are accessing core instruction and grade-level expectations. These strategies will better support struggling learners, more effectively meet the needs of diverse learners, and better challenge students at all levels.

During the 2016-2017 school year, the J.W. Killam Elementary School will successfully implement systematic formative and summative academic and social-emotional assessments to support MTSS across all Tier 1 settings. Our school’s leadership team will promote universal supports for our students that address the school needs as evidenced in the SWIS data, PARCC data, and benchmark data. Our school culture and climate will improve through professional development and focused grade-level data team work that targets universal supports and instructional minutes. We will measure the effectiveness of our implementation by using the Tiered Fidelity Instrument.

What does this look like?

Killam School has seen progress in identifying our struggling learners. To determine this information, we have looked over our collected formative and summative assessment data. Grade level data team meetings that met every three weeks consistently looked at identifying key academic and social-emotional power standards and then establishing common formative assessments to obtain the data. From here, we looked at grade-level trends and established lessons that would allow for further practice. We also looked at the mathematical and the writing progressions as a way to determine how to best support all our learners, as well as how to unpack certain curriculum units.

What does the future hold for this goal?

While we have made progress in this area, this work is ongoing. For example, we have identified the areas of focus for our assessment collection. We do not, however, have a school-wide systematic way nor standard practice of collecting the data across a grade level or across all grades. Therefore, next year’s goals will focus on identifying common data points, establishing protocol and expectations on how to score and report the data, and protocols on how to make instructional decisions based on the data. School-wide data collection will take place at three points in the year.

From here, student needs will be identified, and targeted instructional practices will be addressed. This work will begin by looking at student practice standards or habits of mind, and professional development on establishing academic routines and expectations.

Goal #2: We will increase the use of higher level questioning techniques to engage all learners and encourage student-driven discussion in literacy and math.

During the 2016-2017 school year, the J.W. Killam Elementary School will successfully implement systematic formative and summative assessments that promote the use of discussions that center around academic vocabulary, student driven conversation, and open ended questioning by the teacher. The implications for robust learning and engagement is supported by the PARCC data, benchmark data, and grade-level formative assessments. Our school culture and climate will improve through professional development, focused grade-level data team work, collaborative proposal agendas, and PLC discussions. We will measure the effectiveness of our implementation by using the district-aligned educator supervision and evaluation power standards rubrics.

What does this look like?

This second goal is very specific and draws upon more targeted work. Much of Goal 2 relies on work in addressing Tier II practices and coaching. Within a tiered framework, Tier II refers to small group lessons that reteach a concept that was addressed to the whole class (Tier I). What was discovered is that Killam had a stronger understanding and common language around questioning techniques associated with social-emotional learning than academics. Having this foundation is necessary to engage in higher level questioning techniques with students. For example, we have a solid start on identifying Tier II behavioral interventions. Using our data that looks at reported major and minor discipline incidents, student connectedness surveys, and teacher referrals, we have been able to identify students who would benefit from adult-peer mentoring and a check-in/check-out model. Due to this information, this goal shifted to looking at social-emotional development. Our Tier I behavioral data trends show that we are “growing the green” at a steady pace. This means that the instructional practices for all students are showing to be impactful. This needs to be celebrated!

We are beginning to address higher level questioning in literacy and math. Grade level data team meetings and the Building Leadership Team has started unpacking the data at an introductory level. We have some teachers who have piloted the AMC Anywhere Math interventions and the Reader’s Workshop Units of Study, seeing positive results from both practices. We hope to grow this success next year.

What does the future hold for this goal?

Academically, we have pockets of deep discussions happening throughout the building from the Know Atom Socratic method to Reader’s Workshop mini lessons. In reflection, our entire staff needs to work on pre-requisite entry points prior to building in rich dialogue. In order to work on this, peer observations need to be built into the schedule. Additionally, coaches, specialists, and instructional leaders need further professional development on models of coaching so that the building leadership team, grade-level time, data teams, and staff meetings can address the needs of our teachers and students.

Furthermore, classroom observations have led to discussions with teachers about reflecting on one's own practices. From here, a focus area will be on establishing dialogue across grade levels and providing professional development on modeling, observing, and trying new practices that engage students in higher level thinking. A baseline on our use of direct versus open-ended teaching techniques and a shared understanding of embedding these practices needs to be explored as a staff.