Eyes on the Future, Begich Middle School, 2008

Who are we? A brief description.

In its first year of operation, Begich Middle School, grades 6-8, is in the heart of the Muldoon Community.

We house

- ~ 1170 students
- ~ 115 staff members
- ~ 800 (2/3) of students get free and/or reduced lunch
- ~185 SPED
- ~ 211 ESL with 24 reported languages spoken

What was the focus of your AEIN work?

Our learning community focused on establishing a common purpose by building and nourishing strong working relationships while fostering leadership among students and collegial members.

Through the AEIN grant, our school was able to focus on our goal through the use of

- Professional study groups
- Working committees
- Sharing of knowledge
- Behavior support matrix

What was your process or strategy?

- Professional study groups
  - -consisted of 2-4 members per group that met monthly
  - -culminating staff retreat to disseminate information and share their learning experience
- Working committees
  - -focused on activities, positive climate, decorum, safety, scheduling nuts and bolts, and technology
  - -consisted of both classified and certified members from all grades and curricular areas
- Sharing of knowledge through technology resources
  - -using shared folders for easy access to new ideas
  - -Begich Broadcast News 3x weekly
  - -1:4 computer to student ratio
- Establish a positive behavior support matrix
  - -this work-in-progress focuses on promoting respect, responsibility, and safety

What are you learning and how do you know?

Learning the latest research on teaching practices

10 different educational genres were explored through professional study groups, groups presented information from their reading and the influence it had on their practice

Working committees impact student ownership and sense of belonging

Stats of participating students in activities? Honor roll celebrations, mix-it-up lunch, AVB, decorum refreshers, Drills, Quarter rotation for 6th graders, Snow Leopard Camp, SBA Camp

Ways to integrate technology for learning and communication

90% of core teachers use SmartBoards during teaching time, use of SmartTunnel to share resources

Who has been involved?

- 67% of certified staff were study group members
- All staff are involved in working committees

What resources have you used?

Professional books
Behavior support person (Fran Mauri)
Tech coordinator (Brian Heckart)
Various grants (AEIN, Arts, Struggling Students)
After school academic support

What further questions does your work pose?

- How can we best utilize the data from testing?
- How can we keep staff involvement high?
- How can parents find meaningful ways to contribute and participate in the school?

What are you excited to pursue more deeply?

- Aligning our student needs in subsequent years using data from testing.
- Establish adult connection for all students and create a sense of belonging, pride and ownership.
- Develop student leadership for safety and healthy habits.
- Generating an *organized* system for disseminating information and resources.

Working committees in action!

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