

Monitor Progress at All Levels (Performance Management)

Overview

High functioning, non-profits, government agencies and companies are committed to continuous improvement. They are clear about high expectations and have tools to monitor progress. They can identify struggling performers early and provide targeted support; they recognize high achievers and give them more freedom. In short, these successful entities have effective performance management systems at all levels.

Seattle Public Schools is committed to developing and using a performance management system to ensure that everyone in the school district is working toward the same goals and is equally accountable. Developing the components of this system and ensuring effective implementation is a priority for the district in the coming six months.

Key Elements

There are a number of components that we will focus on this year.

Set Clear Goals – These are based on what we ultimately hold ourselves accountable for – how students are performing. The district will focus on a small number of student-level goals and all work that the district commits to will connect to these goals. The other components of the performance management system will flow from them.

Develop Dashboards - Dashboards are high level charts that track progress on key strategies and show at a glance how work is moving forward. This is a way to gauge our progress towards our goals-- are we doing what we said we'd do and is it having the effect we intended. These are sometimes referred to as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). We will focus initial work on two dashboards:

- Central office dashboard – how is the central office executing the strategies outlined in the strategic plan and addressing the issues raised in the external reviews. To start with this will cover three core functions in operations (IT, HR, Finance) as well as the academic departments.
- Superintendent dashboard – what are the superintendent's priorities that will ensure successful implementation of the district's priorities and how are we tracking progress against those

Create School Performance Framework – This framework will group schools according to a set of academic and non-academic performance targets and outlines interventions, assistance, and autonomies/flexibilities for schools depending on their performance. Developing this framework will be a collaborative process with key internal stakeholders playing a crucial role. The framework will be developed by Fall 2008 and initial baseline data will be collected during the next school year; we anticipate having it operational by the 09-10 school year.

Questions for the Community

- What do you want to learn more about?
- What is not clear?
- What are we missing?
- How would you like to stay informed about or engaged in this work?