

Q Comp Annual Report

2021-2022

This template, which may be changed as needed, is designed to help formulate the Quality Compensation (Q Comp) Annual Report. Per [Minnesota Statutes, section 122A.414, subdivision 3\(a\)](#) the report must be submitted to the school board by June 15 of each year and include findings and recommendations for the program. We also recommend that the report include a summary of what was implemented for the year, to help provide context for the findings and recommendations.

Please address the following questions for each program component describing the implementation of the approved plan, the impact of implementation, findings from the program review and recommendations to improve program effectiveness. **All information reported should be based on the current school year.** We recommend that each question be addressed with a brief summary of 3-7 sentences.

Please provide the following **District Identification Information**.

District Name: STRIDE Academy

District Number: 4142-07

Date Presented to the School Board: June 23, 2022

Core Component: Career Advancement Options

Implementation

Are the teacher leader positions that were implemented this year the same as those outlined in the approved plan (approval letter and subsequent plan change approval letters)?

Response: Yes

If no, please explain what changes have occurred and why?

Impact

How did the work of teacher leaders through coaching, observing, mentoring, facilitating learning teams and performing other responsibilities impact classroom instruction?

Conversational data collected show evidence that the work of the Q Comp Peer Evaluators had a positive impact on classroom instruction. The majority of the respondents indicated that they “received meaningful feedback” from their Peer Evaluator in the post-conference following the classroom observation.

Additionally, Principals Dr. Gwen Anderson and Nathan Schwieters conducted observations and evaluations of teachers as part of the Minnesota Teacher Development and Evaluation system. Their observations verified that instructional strategies suggested by peer evaluators, as well as the strategies emphasized in the school’s professional development program, made a positive difference in improving instruction by teachers.

How did the work of teacher leaders impact student achievement?

The disruption of teaching and learning caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic made it difficult for STRIDE to reach its academic achievement goals based on MCA test results. Reviewing MCA data, there was a slight decrease in the amount of students achieving Exceeds (2.8% to 2.7%), a slight increase in Meets (15.3% to 15.4%) an increase in Partially Meets (10.6% to 13.4%) and an increase in Does Not Meet (23.8% to 38.5%) [Note: No Score decreased from 47.4% to 38.5%.]

In reviewing NWEA data, 33.4% of students showed growth from Spring 2021 to Spring 2022, 26.2% did not show growth, and no score was available for 40.4%.

The anecdotal data suggest that the work of teacher leaders had a positive impact on teaching and learning. Some teacher leaders were instrumental in assisting teachers in developing instructional practices to increase student learning.

Review Findings

How did the training teacher leaders received impact their ability to fulfill the responsibilities of the position and meet the needs of the licensed staff members?

From the beginning of the Q Comp Program at STRIDE Academy in 2012, Administrators and Teacher Leaders have been trained to provide evaluation and coaching for teachers. Beginning with the 2016-17 school year, the Q Comp training, conducted by Dr. David Peterson, has focused on four skills that are necessary to become proficient Peer Evaluators:

- 1) Gathering objective data during a classroom observation,
- 2) Labeling and classifying the data using an established rubric,
- 3) Determining the quality level of teaching behavior and assigning a valid and reliable rating, and
- 4) Coaching and mentoring teachers through effective conferencing skills.

The training was a session of peer evaluators learning the skills of data gathering. By the end of this session the evaluators made significant progress in assigning valid ratings for teacher behavior, which demonstrated that the STRIDE Q Comp system possessed inter-rater reliability.

What did the results of the evaluations of the teacher leaders in their leadership roles demonstrate about the impact they had on the effectiveness of the licensed staff members?

The 2021-22 school year presented a series of challenges for all teachers in Minnesota due to the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Instruction for students alternated between virtual and in-person throughout the school year, which required teacher leaders to use creative approaches in observing the work of their peers. Likewise, the evaluation of the teacher leaders required the use of both in-person observations as well as other methods to assess the effectiveness of their work.

The data collected throughout the year by Principals Dr. Gwen Anderson and Nathan Schwieters indicate that the teacher leaders were effectively implementing the Q Comp system. The teacher leaders adapted well to the challenges by using appropriate methods to assess and coach teachers. For example, the second observation shifted to the teacher observing a peer rather than being observed an additional time by the Peer Mentor. Teachers found the authentic learning from colleagues valuable and they appreciated the reflection together as teacher and mentor.

Recommendations

How will the district use the review findings to improve the effectiveness of teacher leadership?

The findings noted in the Q Comp review, both from the conversational data and from direct observation of their work with teachers, showed continuing improvement in the effectiveness of teacher leadership with the implementation of the Peer Observation component of the Q Comp program. Additionally, the Peer Mentors enjoyed having an additional mentor to divide caseloads and observations and the teachers appreciated having more learning time to observe their colleagues.

Core Component: Job-embedded Professional Development

Implementation

Are learning teams configured and meeting as outlined in the approved plan (approval letter and subsequent plan change approval letters)?

Response: Yes

If no, please explain the changes that have occurred and why?

Impact

How did teacher learning from learning teams and other job-embedded professional development activities impact classroom instruction?

The 2021-22 school year presented many challenges for teaching and learning at STRIDE Academy due to the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Instruction alternated between Distance Learning and on-site learning depending upon state and local health guidelines.

In addition to the need for training and development in Distance Learning, the Professional Learning Communities at STRIDE continued to focus on instructional strategies targeting improvements in student achievement in math and reading. The focus of this year was on unpacking language arts standards and creating curriculum maps during their PLC time. Additionally, the school continued to emphasize concepts associated with Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning.

Curriculum mapping data suggests that many teams were able to unpack most of their grade level standards though were not able to complete the curriculum maps.

The Q Comp Leadership Team will engage the PLCs in a discussion of how to set meaningful goals and implementation strategies for improvement of instruction for the upcoming school year.

How did teacher learning from learning teams and other job-embedded professional development impact student achievement?

Learning teams engaged in a variety of activities, including those noted in the previous section, during the 2021-22 school year. Each of these professional development activities was designed to have a specific, targeted effect on improving outcomes in student academic achievement. The time spent in PLCs with the SEL coordinator was also valuable in discovering more about how we embed social-emotional learning into classrooms in order to improve reading growth.

Review Findings

How did the sites or learning teams identify needs and instructional strategies to increase student achievement?

PLC groups at STRIDE used student achievement data, this year including DIBELS data and office referral, gathered using interim assessments, to identify instructional strategies to increase student achievement. Teams also discussed specific research-based teaching strategies designed to help English Language Learners increase their ability to meet standards in math and reading.

How did learning teams use data and implement the selected instructional strategies and follow-up on implementation?

The learning teams shared data on a regular basis during PLC sessions and this information provided guidance to colleagues on how to tailor their instruction to meet the needs of students.

Recommendations

How will the district use the review findings to improve the effectiveness of job-embedded professional development?

Based on the results of the QComp review of Dr. Anderson and review of Mentors, it is recommended to continue the Professional Learning Community structure in the school, including both small groups and larger group settings. Within these settings teachers will learn and share ideas for implementing the initiatives in curriculum and instruction that the school leaders identify as high priority strategies for improving student learning. It is also recommended to continue with the PLC Leader role to ensure guiding of conversations and data collection and reporting. PLC training

would benefit the teams in understanding the purpose and processes behind PLCs and use of the DuFour Four Questions.

Core Component: Teacher Evaluation

Implementation

Are licensed staff members observed/evaluated as outlined in the approved plan (approval letter and subsequent plan change approval letters)?

Response: yes

If no, please explain the changes that have occurred and why?

Impact

What impact did the observation/evaluation process, including coaching, have on classroom instruction?

Both administrators and peer evaluators conducted pre-conferences, observed classes, gathered data and provided feedback to teachers in a post-conference. In these feedback sessions conducted by the trained Peer Evaluators, teachers identified strategies to meet the needs of their students. Data collected from interim assessments were also reviewed in these feedback sessions to design strategies for improved instruction. In the Review Process, the peer evaluators each cited examples of how teachers on their caseload were able to use feedback in the post conference to design improvement plans that would improve their teaching.

What impact did the observation/evaluation process, including coaching, have on student achievement?

Because of the disruption of the educational program caused by the Pandemic, MCA test scores may not be a reliable measure of determining the effect of the observation/evaluation process on student achievement. However, there is growth shown in NWEA data as well as in ample anecdotal evidence to indicate that student achievement was impacted positively by the observation/evaluation process. For example, peer evaluators noted how teachers were able to design plans to improve instruction.

Review Findings

How did the feedback teachers received from each observation/evaluation assist in self-reflection and improved instructional practice?

During the 2021-22 school year the Q Comp system continued to use the pre- and post- observation conferences as an opportunity for self-reflection by the teacher. In the pre-conferences the teachers were asked not only to review their objectives for the lesson, but also to anticipate possible areas for adjustment during the upcoming lesson. Likewise, the post-observation conference was re-designed to make increased use of open-ended, reflective questioning strategies to increase the ability of teachers to analyze their own lessons and make improvements in teaching strategies. In the Review Process

peer evaluators reported that they regularly were able to see examples of deep self-reflection on the part of teachers in response to receiving feedback in post conferences.

How did the training observers/evaluators received throughout the year impact inter-rater reliability and their ability to provide constructive and meaningful feedback to all licensed staff members?

The training program provided by the consultant and trainer helped observers/evaluators gain skills in:

Inter-rater Reliability – In the training session at the beginning of the school year participants reviewed several video segments of instruction, ones which had been rated and normed by several other peer observers in other Q Comp districts. As a result of this training, the peer evaluators were able to rate segments of instruction with a high degree of consistency and reliability. Later in the school year, in actual practice of these skills with their peers, these evaluators rated teachers in similar fashion, demonstrating that the training was successful in helping them see instruction in a similar fashion, thus ensuring validity and reliability in the Q Comp evaluation system. A review of the final ratings of teachers showed a high degree of consistency between evaluators for each teacher.

Providing Constructive Feedback to Teachers – The one-to-one training provided by the consultant in previous school years provided intensive training in giving feedback to teachers in a post-conference setting. In the review session at the end of the year, the teachers gave several examples illustrating the value of the feedback from the peer evaluators. One feature they particularly appreciated was the timeliness of the feedback, which almost always occurred within 24 hours after the observation. Teachers also benefited from the detailed notes that the peer evaluators took during the observation, and from the manner in which the peer evaluators shared that data in the post conference.

Recommendations

How will the district use the review findings to improve the effectiveness of teacher evaluation?

In 2021-22, the same set of criteria were used for the evaluation/observation phase of Q Comp as the previous year.

- Component 1e. Designing Coherent Instruction
- Component 2a. Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport
- Component 2d. Managing Student Behavior
- Component 3a. Communicating with Students.
- Component 3b. Using Question and Discussion Techniques
- Component 3c. Engaging Students in Learning
- Component 3d. Using Assessment in Instruction
- Component 3e. Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

It is recommended that the Q Comp Committee consider using these criteria again in the 2022-23 school year.

Core Component: Performance Pay and Alternative Salary Schedule

Implementation

Are the performance pay amounts and standards the same as outlined in the approved plan (approval letter and subsequent plan change approval letters)?

Response: YES

If no, please explain the changes that have occurred and why?

Is salary schedule movement or base salary increase based on the same measure of performance as outlined in the approved plan (approval letter and subsequent plan change approval letters)?

Response: YES

If no, please explain the changes that have occurred and why?

Impact

What percentage of all licensed staff met the standard to earn performance pay for the measures of student achievement?

One hundred percent of teachers received payment for meeting schoolwide math and reading goals. Twenty of forty-eight (41.7%) teachers met or partially met their individual goal for student achievement, based on the results of student growth on assessment testing measures.

What percentage of all licensed staff met the standard to earn performance pay for observation/evaluation results?

One hundred percent of licensed teachers at STRIDE received a full stipend for performance pay.

What percentage of tenured licensed staff met the standard to earn performance pay for observation/evaluation results?

This question is not applicable, as Stride is a Charter School and there is no distinction between tenured and probationary licensed staff, as all staff are employees at will.

What percentage of probationary licensed staff met the standard to earn performance pay for observation/evaluation results?

This question is not applicable, as Stride is a Charter School and there is no distinction between tenured and probationary licensed staff, as all staff are employees at will.

Is performance pay awarded for another area (besides school wide goals, measures of student achievement and observation/evaluation results)?

Yes. A stipend was awarded for licensed teachers who met the standards for being active participants in their PLC meetings, as evidenced by at least 85% participation, documented by minutes from these meetings noting the members in attendance. Additionally, each PLC member created three Growth Targets. Classroom observations by the STRIDE Administrative staff documented the level of completion of these PLC goals.

If yes, what percentage of all licensed staff members met the standard to earn performance pay for this other area?

One hundred percent of participants met this goal.

What percentage of all licensed staff met the standard to earn movement on the salary schedule or an increase in base salary?

One hundred percent of participants met this goal.

What percentage of tenured licensed staff met the standard to earn movement on the salary schedule or an increase in base salary?

This question is not applicable, as Stride is a Charter School and there is no distinction between tenured and probationary licensed staff, as all staff are employees at will.

What percentage of probationary licensed staff met the standard to earn movement on the salary schedule or an increase in base salary?

This question is not applicable, as Stride is a Charter School and there is no distinction between tenured and probationary licensed staff, as all staff are employees at will.

Recommendations

How will the district use the data to improve the effectiveness of this core component?

STRIDE Academy will use the data collected in the Review Process to make further refinements in this core component for the upcoming school year. Specifically, the school will refine its policies and procedures for assigning performance pay for PLC participation by developing measurement rubrics for determining the degree to which licensed teachers implement PLC-based initiatives into their classroom instruction. STRIDE teacher leaders, in collaboration with STRIDE administrative staff, will determine the focus for PLC groups for next year. We will continue to use the MCA test scores as a measure of student achievement, and to provide stipends for teachers if the school makes its goals for student achievement.

General Program Impact and Recommendations

What overall impact on instruction has the district or charter school seen as a result of implementing the Q Comp program?

The QComp program has had several overall positive impacts on the school program at STRIDE Academy during the years of its implementation. The QComp program has provided a structure for school improvement that will continue to improve student achievement.

There continues to be increased collaboration among teachers at all grade levels, which certainly would not have occurred without the structure and impetus provided by the QComp program. The observation and evaluation component of the QComp program was also successful in producing positive outcomes for teachers. In particular, the modification of the components for observation made a significant difference in the focus of the peer evaluators in gathering data and giving meaningful feedback to teachers.

What overall impact on student achievement has the district or charter school seen as a result of implementing the QComp program?

Student Achievement at STRIDE Academy has been stabilized in recent years, after experiencing a series of declining test scores in reading and math between 2012 and 2017. The QComp program also has been a significant driving force in improving student achievement. The change from having this program being implemented largely by administrators to the current model in which peers are performing the observations and evaluations has also produced positive results. These factors, acting in concert with each other, have caused improvement in student achievement at STRIDE, and have laid the foundation for additional student achievement gains in the future.

How will the district use the review findings to improve the overall effectiveness of the program?

These Q Comp review findings are an important component of our school's plans for meeting its goals. These findings, combined with other data collected by the school, allow STRIDE to reflect on their past and present performance and to develop goals for improvement in the future. These review findings document the consistency demonstrated by the peer evaluators in their observations and evaluations. Also noted was their ability to gather objective data during classroom observations, as well as the consistency of their evaluations when compared to peers.

The QComp Review for 2021-22 revealed gaps in the Professional Learning Communities' completion of work around unpacking standards to create curriculum maps. Anecdotal and conversational data showed that teachers continue to have a high regard for the opportunity to meet on a regular basis with colleagues to discuss strategies for improving instruction and reflect on the success of those strategies. The review findings continue to be a valuable source of information upon which to make decisions relating to the instructional program at STRIDE. We believe in our staff, our parent community, and in the value of the QComp program to focus our efforts to promote high-quality teaching and learning.