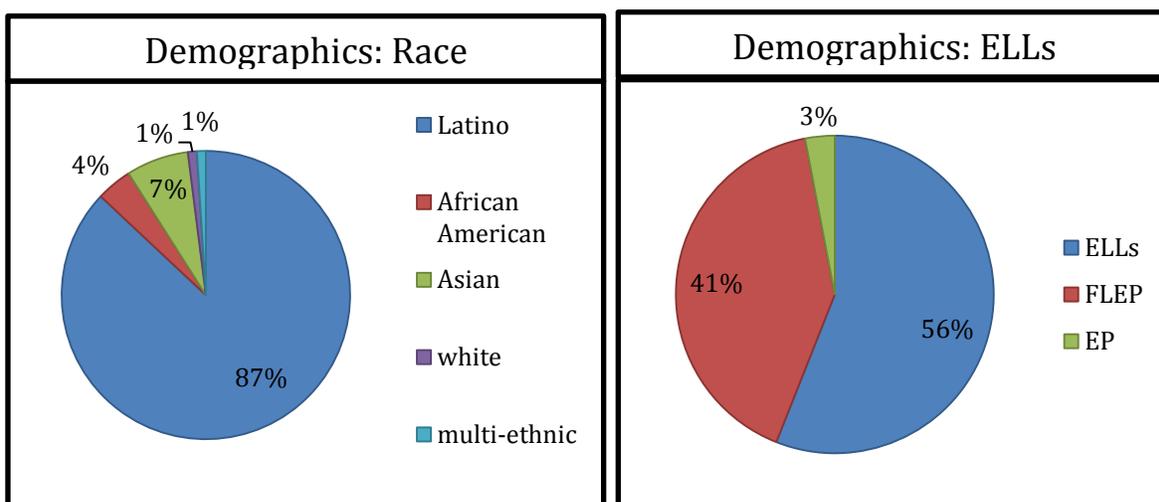


Case Study: Promise Academy M.S.

Based on work by Dori Galvin, 2014

Student Population

Promise Academy is a 6-8 middle school in a large urban district serving approximately 600 students. The school serves primarily Latino students (87%), and 56% of students are ELLs. An additional 41% of students were formerly classified as English Language Learners. In the school, 93% of students are eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch.



Although the school’s scores on the state assessment in both ELA and Math have tripled in the last 10 years, proficiency in both areas is around 50%. 7% of students are eligible for Special Education Services.

Teaching Culture

Teachers collaborate daily with teaching partners and weekly in departments and professional learning communities. Professional development centers on a school-wide instructional focus as well as a focus in each department, both of which are determined by the Site Leadership Team. Data from the state outcome assessments, district mandated writing assessments, and test prep assessments are regularly analyzed and discussed school wide and at the grade level. The school maintains a strong culture of collaboration, and there is a feeling of transparency around data. However, there are few specialists on staff: a part-time special educator and part-time English language developer work with small groups and the ELA and Social Studies classes, respectively.

Student Assessment System

<i>Type</i>	<i>Assessment Given</i>
<i>Screening</i> Quick assessment that identifies student risk for developing reading difficulties in specific literacy skills.	-Scholastic Reading Inventory (a reading comprehension assessment)
<i>Formative</i> Driven by teacher observation and review of authentic reading and writing tasks.	-Frequent teacher designed unit quizzes, tests
<i>Outcome</i> Standardized tests given by state to measure achievement in broad domains.	-State test
<i>Test Prep.</i> Tests marketed for their ability to predict results on state tests.	-IReady

Additional Language Development Provided to ELLs

After recognizing that some ELLs who were ineligible for mandated supports were struggling to keep up with their peers, teachers decided to create a program that ran outside of regular school hours, from 8:00 – 8:45, 'Morning Boost.' The typical profile of this student was one who scored at an "Intermediate" level on the English Language Assessment, and who still seemed to lack a foundation in English. This typical student most likely was born in this country, but spoke another language at home, and most likely had had a score of "Intermediate" for several years. Teachers have their own students so that some frontloading of content can happen, but the bulk of the time is devoted to developing formal academic language.

Each year, teachers make decisions about who will go to Morning Boost based on formative assessments from their classrooms. The structure of the program allows for three 6th grade Morning Boost teachers, two 7th grade teachers and one 8th grade teacher, with the idea that the group should get smaller each year due to the intervention. Despite the promise of this initiative the school has experienced little movement in students scores on the state test.

Stop and Discuss:

What are some strengths of how Promise Academy supports literacy and English language development? What changes could be implemented to further support ELLs?

Action Plan for Improvement

Phase 1: Determining a Focus Area

The leadership team at Promise Academy identified “Morning Boost” as the highest impact lever for promoting student achievement. Specifically, the team wanted to adapt the current structure to more closely meet student needs.

Focus Area:

Use assessments to better match readers to supports during Morning Boost

- **Evidence:** Students designated as needing Morning Boost support are reading at least two levels below their grade level. However, there is not clear data to explain the underlying reasons why they are struggling with reading. Currently, it seems the school is viewing the English Language Learners in Morning Boost as having low skills in a general sense and not getting a more nuanced understanding of their needs as readers and writers.

Phase 2: Action Steps

Step 1: Creating an assessment system to identify student needs

The first step in the process of implementation is to create a plan that will outline an assessment schedule. The goal of the assessments is to screen all students to quickly understand if A) the student is at risk for reading difficulties, and B) if so, does the student need support with code-based and/or meaning-based skills. The school will also need to create systems to make the data accessible and easily interpreted (i.e., color coding and naming specific skills rather than specific assessment titles). The Site Leadership Team at the school can take on these tasks. They can also make decisions about how and when to analyze whole school data, and how to facilitate conversations about trends across grade levels. They also will have responsibility for developing professional development that reflects these grade level and school wide trends. Since it is likely that whole school data will show patterns relating to vocabulary development and reading comprehension as well as some code based skills, it is the job of the Site Leadership Team to research and choose appropriate curriculum that can support teachers with both their entire class and smaller intervention groups.

	Outcome	Code	Meaning
KELLIE	W	27	16
KEVIN	NI	52	27
ENRIQU			48
TATTYA			16
BRIANA			46
JADA			1
ANDRE			77
MARCIA			28
ERIC			61
CAMILLE	NI	32	14
FRANCESCA	P	79	67
AMAI	P	52	71

Example Format

For norm-referenced assessments, we recommend 0 – 25thile as red or “high risk,” and 26 – 35thile as yellow or “some risk”

Step 2: Planning effective intervention

Creating a structure for intervention. The structure of the Morning Boost program currently allows for three teachers at grade 6 (2 regular classroom teachers and an 8th grade teacher), two teachers at 7th grade and 1 at 8th grade. The leadership team proposes that each grade level include 2 teachers who will collaborate every Monday morning to talk about formative assessments, curriculum modifications and progress monitoring on the appropriate week. Currently, teachers have their own students in Morning Boost, but after analyzing data and completing more diagnostic assessments on the flagged students, it most likely will be more effective to flexibly group the students by need across the two teachers.

Monitoring progress of the intervention. The ELA department head will develop a progress monitoring assessment schedule as well as designate certain planning meetings, already built into the schedule every Monday morning, as progress monitoring meetings. If the team follows a schedule similar to the one seen in below then the progress monitoring assessments can be given every 4 weeks, and the department can meet on the 5th week of each cycle. Currently, there is a week break from the program after the December holiday. This break can be aligned to happen after the second screening measure takes place so that teachers can use that time to meet in the morning, analyze data, determine if the needs of students are being met and revise the existing intervention plan.

Activity	Time Frame
Teacher Implements Interventions	4 weeks
Progress Monitoring Data Reported	By End of 4 th week
Data Team Meeting	During 5 th week
Teachers Make Intervention Modification	By End of 5 th week
Repeat Steps 1-4 for remainder of the cycle	3-4 months (based on screening type)
Administer Screening Assessments	End of 3-4 month cycle

Appendix 1 – Timeline for Implementation

SLT = Site Leadership Team

<p>April</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ELA Department discussions about assessment and assessment battery 	<p>May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ELA Department discussions about assessment and assessment battery 	<p>June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ELA Department discussions about assessment and assessment battery - SLT create assessment schedule 	<p>September</p> <p>Teachers Administer screeners</p> <p>Teachers follow up with students who were flagged with additional assessment</p> <p>ELA Department creates progress monitoring meeting schedule</p> <p>ELA Department analyze data</p> <p>SLT makes professional development decisions based on school wide data</p>	<p>October</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meet with families of students receiving additional support in Morning Boost - Begin Morning Boost - Teacher meet weekly to discuss progress monitoring data, grouping, and/or curriculum
<p>November</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher meet weekly to discuss progress monitoring data, grouping, and/or curriculum 	<p>December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Second screener 	<p>January</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SLT evaluates program based on data - Teachers meet to look at screening data and revise intervention structure as needed 	<p>February</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher meet weekly to discuss progress monitoring data, grouping, and/or curriculum 	<p>March</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher meet weekly to discuss progress monitoring data, grouping, and/or curriculum - (End of the month) Third Screener
<p>April</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SLT evaluates program based on data - Teachers meet to look at screening data and revise intervention structure as needed 	<p>May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SLT analyzes school wide screening data to begin to make professional development plans for the upcoming year 	<p>June</p>		

