



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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TO: The Honorable Nikki R. Haley, Governor
The Honorable Hugh K. Leatherman, Sr., Chairman, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable W. Brian White, Chairman, House Ways and Means Committee
The Honorable John E. Courson, Chairman, Senate Education Committee
The Honorable Phillip D. Owens, Chairman, House Education and Public Works

FROM: Jay W. Ragley
Director, Office of Legislative and Public Affairs

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SUBJECT: Proviso 1A.24 Report: High Schools That Work Programs

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Overview of Program

High Schools That Work (HSTW) is an effort-based school improvement initiative. At its core, the program is founded the principle that students can master rigorous academic and career/technical studies if school leaders and teachers create an environment that motivates students to make the effort to succeed. Started by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), the HSTW school improvement design provides a framework of goals, key practices and key conditions for accelerating learning and setting higher standards.

There are two companion programs to HSTW: Making Middle Grades Work (MMGW) and Career and Technology Centers That Work (CTCTW).

Growth

All high school sites are required to participate in a whole school reform initiative based on the HSTW 10 key practices as mandated by EEDA. Currently, all but 8 high schools have joined HSTW. Approximately half of the middle schools in South Carolina participate in MMGW. Forty-one percent of Career and Technology Centers participate.

HSTW Sites Added	MMGW Sites Added	CTCTW Sites Added
2011: 1	2011: 10	2011: 0
2010: 1	2010: 10	2010: 0
2009: 13	2009: 24	2009: 16
Total: 192	Total: 132	Total: 16

Every new site must complete a New Site Development Workshop. The workshop lasts for 3.5 days, and the sites develop a plan of how they are going to implement the initiative at each of their sites.

Training and Development

In 2010-2011, 53 HSTW sites and 32 MMGW sites received Technical Assistance Visits (TAVs) from the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE). TAV reports to the schools provide baseline information, challenges, and action steps to help school leaders assess where their schools are in relationship to the HSTW Key Practices. The reports guide school leaders and teachers in prioritizing next steps for implementation of school improvement.

The TAV teams for high schools consist of the following:

- Math Teacher
- English Teacher
- CATE Teacher
- Social Studies Teacher
- Science Teacher
- Guidance Counselor
- Middle School Representative
- Higher Education Representative
- SCDE Representative
- Trained Team Leader
- Parent/Community Representative (optional)

TAV teams provided feedback to each site by evaluating “Promising Practices and Challenges” from the following areas: (1) Rigor/High Expectations/Extra Help (2) Leadership (3) Student Engagement (4) Data (5) Guidance (6) Parent/Community Involvement (7) CATE (high schools only). Each site was provided a brief exit report power point, and then each site received a 35+ page report with recommendations included.

Over 2100 educators attended the Education and Business Summit where sessions focused on the key practices of HSTW/MMGW/CTCTW. Approximately 150 educators participated in the New Site Development Workshop for HSTW/MMGW.

Assessments

SCDE divides HSTW sites into two cohorts for testing purposes. Cohort 1 was given the NAEP-based HSTW assessment in 2008, and Cohort 2 was tested in 2010. Cohort 1 will be tested again in 2012.

Highlights

1. Support: Schools cite a superior level of customer service by SCDE staff, who provide each site with answers to questions, support, and resources for the programs.
2. Collaboration: Last year SCDE partnered with Schools to Watch so middle schools could receive recognition for having best middle school practices in place.
3. Innovation: This year, SCDE will pilot two “Best Practices” visits so educators across the state can witness and learn best practices in place at schools.
4. Engagement: We maintain the fidelity of the TAV by having trained team leaders who are experienced in leading teams.
5. Follow-up: Last year was the first year we put into place the Technical Review Visit (TRV), which is a one day visit to make sure that schools are implementing programs with fidelity and maintaining progress.