



Leading for Learning Learning to Lead

Pleasant Hill Elementary School
Winfield, Illinois

Mrs. Ann Piccione, Curriculum Leader

Dr. Margo Sorrick, Assistant Superintendent

Pleasant Hill School Facts

- Elementary School
- 605 Students, 16% Special Education,
- Suburban District of Chicago, Illinois
- 85 Total Staff Members
- State Tests with National Norms, Local Assessments
- Wheaton-Warrenville School District 200

Curriculum Leader Initiative

- Interest in Building Leadership Capacity
- Need for On-site Curricular Specialists
- Provide for Equitable Teacher Representation in a Large District
- State Approved Building-directed New Teacher Induction Program

Curriculum Leader Model

- Members of the Bargaining Unit
- Half-day Teachers with Instructional Responsibilities
- Half-day Curriculum Leader Administrative Interns
- Teacher Work Calendar
- Serve as Support to the Building Instructional Leader, the Principal

Liaison for Board of Education Initiatives

- District Level Meetings Bi-monthly
- Provide for Consistent and Effective Communications
- Leadership Responsibilities with the School Improvement Team
- Direct the State and Local Assessment Programs
- Peer Coaching for Novice and Veteran Staff

School Level Responsibilities

- Instructional Resource for Staff
- Communicate Curricular Initiatives
- Facilitate School Improvement Plans
- Classroom Instructional Coaching
- Direct State and Local Assessment Programs
- Coordinate Student Services Programs

Impact of the Curriculum Leader Administrative Intern at Pleasant Hill Elementary School

- Accurate and Efficient Communication
- Seamless Direction of Accountability Programs
- Coordination of Student and Financial Resources
- Effective Transition of New Staff Members
- Provided Stability During Leadership Change

Impact of Curriculum Leader Position Relative to Student Learning at Pleasant Hill

- State Reading Achievement Scores
 - Grade Three – 79% Increased to 86%
 - Grade Five – 89% Increased to 90%
- State Math Achievement Scores
 - Grade Three – 95% Increased to 97%
 - Grade Five – 93% Increased to 96%

Impact of Curriculum Leader Position Relative to Student Learning at the District Level

- State Reading Achievement Scores
 - Grade Three – 85% Increased to 88%
 - Grade Five – 81% Increased to 84%
- State Math Achievement Scores
 - Grade Three – Consistent at 94%
 - Grade Five – 88% Increased to 92%

Impact of Position on NCLB Expectations

- Three Schools Removed from NCLB Watch List
- Initiated Pro-active Intervention Programs for Designated Sub-group Needs
- Decreased the Achievement Gaps Across the District

Financial Implications of the Position

- Grant Funds Support the One-half Day Portion of the Day for the Curriculum Leader Administrative Intern
- Curriculum Work Expenditures Reduced by 37% from Curriculum Committee Structure
- Position Provides Additional Instructional Resource Personnel Previously Not Affordable

Summary Points

Key Learning's

- 60% (+) Curriculum Leaders Have Assumed Administrative Positions in the Profession
- It is NOT All About Money

Challenges Still Ahead

- Building the Next Generation
- Maintaining the Representative Balance

Curriculum Leader Administrative Intern Position Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why did Wheaton Warrenville District 200 decide to create the Curriculum Leader Administrative Intern Position?

There were three reasons which motivated the creation of the Curriculum Leader Administrative Intern Position. First of all, District 200 recognized a need to build leadership capacity within the District. As administrators retired or left administrative positions for new professional challenges, District 200 struggled to find qualified instructional leaders. The District enjoys a reputation as an excellent district and it was difficult to find administrators meeting our standards for employment. We determined that we needed to “build our own bench” and build internal capacity for leadership potential.

Secondly, we are a very large district and it is difficult to effect change and maintain open lines of communication to twenty schools and 1500 staff members. The Curriculum Leader Administrative Intern provides each school with an on-site curricular specialist who is directly involved with all curricular initiatives. A primary responsibility of the Curriculum Leader Administrative Intern is to be a liaison between district-level initiatives and building-level personnel. The Curriculum Leader Administrative Intern is responsible for introducing curricular initiatives, collecting feedback from building-level personnel regarding curricular and program proposals, and serving as an on-site peer instructional coach during the initial implementation of new curriculum. The Curriculum Leader Administrative Intern also serves as a mentor for new hires.

Finally, the position was designed to ensure comprehensive representation of all buildings during renewal of curriculum or the re-organization of instructional programs. This position guarantees that all buildings have a voice in the decisions we make, creating a more powerful foundation for effecting necessary change.

2. What is the position description for the Curriculum Leader Administrative Intern?

The Curriculum Leader Administrative Intern is expected to work directly with the members of the Department for Educational Services and to assist their Building Principals with all curricular issues. They are expected to serve as a communication liaison between the district office and building personnel, assist in the development of new curriculum, participate in the development of local assessments and to serve as a resource for professional development activities. The position also includes responsibilities in the areas of assessment programs, peer support for the implementation of new curricular initiatives and assist the building leadership with basic management components.

While these are the basic parameters for the position, the role of the Curriculum Leader Administrative Intern varies from building to building. We embrace the philosophy that the position is designed to assist personnel in the implementation of curriculum to increase student achievement. As a result, depending upon the individual personalities and characteristics of the seventeen buildings served by this position, the responsibilities can vary. **(A copy of the Position Description for this position is included in this packet as Attachment A.)**

3. *What is the process for selecting Curriculum Leader Administrative Interns?*

The selection of the Curriculum Leader Administrative Intern is a cooperative effort between the Building Principal and the Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services. The position is posted as per our District protocols and interested candidates are interviewed with a series of questions designed for the specific building. Candidates are selected based on their professional history with the District and their interview. We only post these positions internally; we do not seek outside applicants for these positions.

4. *How are the Curriculum Leader Administrative Interns trained to support instruction at the District and building levels?*

An integral part of the bi-weekly meetings conducted with the Curriculum Leader Administrative Interns is professional development. Typically, as a new program or curricular initiative is introduced, we identify the training needs for the Curriculum Leaders and the building personnel. Our Director of Professional Development works with members of the Department for Educational Services to develop and implement appropriate professional development. Often, we follow a “trainer of trainer” model, using the Curriculum Leader Administrative Interns to train the staff at the building level. They are also used to provide grade level training relative to specific content area curricular changes, such as mathematics. **(Attachment B includes a representative Curriculum Leader Meeting Agenda.)**

5. *What are some of the challenges you have encountered as the position was created and implemented?*

The Curriculum Leaders teach each day. Their mornings are spent with students in classrooms and during the afternoons, they are released from classroom expectations to address their curricular responsibilities. This is difficult for the teachers. Although our District has always offered staff members the option for *job shares*, and parents are familiar with this concept in our District, dividing time between the classroom and curricular leadership tasks is very hard. These individuals are all stellar teachers; that is one reason they were selected for the opportunity. As a result, it is often difficult for them to balance the demands of these two positions.

A second challenge for the individuals in these positions is their “place” on a staff. While they are teachers, and members of the bargaining unit, they are viewed as quasi-administrators, which is not always a comfortable place for them. They have been trained to keep their trust circle small and have worked to develop a network among them as a way to have parallel colleagues to discuss concerns and to resolve problems.

There has also been a very high level of mobility among the Curriculum Leader Administrative Interns. Within two years, we have replaced 60% of the individuals. Almost all of these individuals, with the exception of two who chose to return to the classroom full-time, have been named to administrative positions either within our District or in neighboring districts. As a result, there is always an initial learning curve for new Curriculum Leaders and building personnel are subjected to the changes which naturally accompany a change in leadership personnel.

6. Is the position evaluated?

The position is evaluated annually; the individuals in the position are evaluated two ways. Individuals in the position are evaluated bi-annually as per our teachers’ contract. These individuals are also evaluated for the Curriculum Leader portion of their position on an annual basis by the Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services.

The position is evaluated each year by representative stakeholders. Principals and teachers are given an evaluation survey each spring. The survey results are tabulated and shared with the principals, Curriculum Leaders and the Board of Education.

The survey results indicate strong support for the position. Although we identify opportunities for improvement each year, the position is gaining greater creditability and value with each passing year. As a result of this feedback, the Board of Education also strongly supports the position. It is the belief of the Board of Education, District Senior Leadership and Building Principals that this position has had a very positive impact on our District.

7. How is the position funded?

Our District has always relied on grant monies to support curricular committees and curricular work. This position is supported by the same funds. However, this position, which has replaced the traditional committee or task force in our District, has reduced our expenditures for this work by 37%.

Attachment A

POSITION DESCRIPTION

TITLE: Administrative Interns for Curriculum

DEFINITION: Under the supervision of the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, the Director of K-8 Education, Executive Director of Special Education and Building Principals, the Administrative Intern for Curriculum is responsible for assisting with the development of curriculum, the development of local assessments, program implementation, new curricular implementations, the local assessment program, providing on-site professional development, mentoring new teachers, participating in the school improvement process and serving as the communication and resource liaison between the Department for Curriculum and Instruction and building level personnel. This individual is to serve in a supportive, non-evaluative role while assisting classroom personnel and the building principal with curricular issues.

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES: The Administrative Intern for Curriculum is expected to work directly with members of the Department for Curriculum and Instruction and Special Education to assist Building Principals with curricular initiatives. The Administrative Intern for Curriculum will serve as the communication liaison between the Department for Curriculum and Special Education in the design of new curriculum, local assessments and professional development programs. The Administrative Intern for Curriculum and Instruction is also expected to work with instructional staff members to communicate new curricular initiatives, seek feedback on *DRAFT* documents, lead all assessment programs, and communicate issues of concerns from building level personnel to members of the Department for Curriculum and Instruction and Special Education. The Administrative Intern for Curriculum will also be responsible for learning the basic management components of building leadership.

KEY FUNCTIONS:

A. Curriculum and Instruction

Authority/Responsibility: Assist with the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of all aspects of K-8 curriculum in all content areas for regular education and special education.

Representative Activities:

- 1) Serve as members of the instructional task forces to review research, write and edit the curriculum that aligns with the curriculum renewal cycle for regular education and special education.
- 2) Assist with the selection of associated materials/textbooks.
- 3) Assist with the development and implementation of assessments.
- 4) Collaborate with the professional development to schedule, plan and provide appropriate professional development to support the K-8 curriculum.
- 5) Assist with the planning and integration of technology with curricular development.

- 6) Assist with the articulation of the K-12 curriculum across all content areas and grade levels for regular education and special education.
- 7) Serve as the key liaison and communicator for curricular initiatives to building personnel.

B. Program Development

Authority/Responsibility: Assist with the planning, development, and evaluation of all program development in all content areas for regular education and special education.

Representative Activities:

- 1) Assist in the development and process for researching, evaluating and recommending program changes/additions/deletions in all content areas.
- 2) Serve as members of the program task force to study identified areas.
- 3) Assist in the identification of gaps between current and desired instructional programs.
- 4) Review recommendations and work with the goals of the Cabinet and Board of Education to establish priorities.
- 5) Assist with the scheduling and implementation of appropriate professional development related to a new or revised program.
- 6) Serve as the key liaison and communicator for program initiatives to building personnel.

C. Leadership/Management

Authority/Responsibility: Serve as a key liaison between the Department for Curriculum and Instruction and building instruction personnel.

Representative Activities:

- 1) Attend scheduled meetings with members of the Department for Curriculum & Instruction.
- 2) Monitor, identify needs and advocate for building level personnel relative to initiatives of the Department for Curriculum and Instruction.
- 3) Assist building principals in the implementation and monitoring of curricular initiatives.
- 4) Communicate recommendations/decisions to all stakeholder groups.

Attachment B

Curriculum Leader Meeting Agendas - Revised 10/20/06

Meeting Date	Elementary and/or Middle School Level	Topics for Discussion	Responsible Director(s)
10/25	Middle	12:30 - 12:45/Questions/CL Survey Results 12:45 - 1:15/ Electronic Reporting of Writing Scores 1:15- 3:00/Technology Update/MS Computer Curriculum 3:00 - 3:15/ELL	Margo Sorrick Julie Oziemkowski Mary Clifford Phyllis Weaver
10/30	Elementary and Middle	K-8 Articulation of Social Studies/1:00 - 3:00	Kathie Bossier
11/2	Elementary	1:00 - 2:30/Technology Issues 2:30 - 3:15/Planning for Summer Literacy Conference 3:15-3:45/Review of Title I Audit	Mary Clifford Ali Maggio Kathy Myers
11/9	Elementary and Middle	Gifted Program Review Meeting	Kathie Bossier

ADDITIONAL PUBLISHER PRESENTATION DATES

Elementary - January 23rd and 30th

Middle School - February 1st all day

Elementary and Middle School - February 9th all day