

Barre Unified Union School District Continuous Improvement Plan / Summary

The mission of the Barre Unified Union School District (BUUSD) is to do what it takes to ensure the success of every child.

Through the **Continuous Improvement Planning** process, we will implement a system of coordinated and aligned curriculum, instruction, and assessment that defines, measures, and communicates clear student learning objectives; provides high quality professional learning opportunities for our staff that are aligned to the Continuous Improvement Plan [CIP]; and works to improve our multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) to better support all students in their academic and socio-emotional development.

I. CIP areas of focus:

Academic Proficiency - There continue to be significant gaps between the achievement levels of students who qualify for free and reduced lunch and those who do not. In some grade levels, these differences in achievement levels exceed 20%. This is true for both English Language Arts (ELA) and Math. Although performance in Math at grade 9 and grade 4 in our title 1 schools exceeds the State average, five grade levels scored below the State average. In the Non-Title funded school, all students exceeded the State average on the SBAC in math. Teachers report that use of data to inform instruction is inconsistent. Student work is not consistently discussed or measured. There [has been an] increase in consistency across the schools and grade levels, but there is still work to be done.

Safe and Healthy Schools - Students' social, emotional and behavioral needs continue to increase in intensity and frequency as [our] student demographic evolves due to increases in [the number of] adverse incidents they experience. Teachers are experiencing increased pedagogical demand [a demand for new ways of teaching] around trauma informed practice [in order to deal with trauma-based behavioral issues]; and there [is a need for us to] strengthen, coordinate [and make more consistent] our practices at the Tier 2 level.

II. Based on the areas of focus [above], describe the prioritized goals/problems of practice for which you intend to seek innovative solutions/interventions.

Problem of Practice (Goal) I: Although significant gains have been made, we still have some gaps in total alignment in practice for curriculum delivery, assessment, data analysis and instruction cycles across some grade levels.

Problem of Practice (Goal) II: All students may not get the level of support that they need because our system does not have the capacity to support all of their needs in a consistent way, and pedagogical [teaching and instruction] practices have not been consistent across all grade levels in all schools.

III. 2019-2020 CIP Action Steps

Problem of Practice (Goal) 1: We will implement a system of coordinated and aligned curriculum, instruction, and assessment that defines, measures, and communicates clear student learning objectives.

Problem of Practice (Goal) 2: We will strive to meet the academic and socio-emotional needs of all students by implementing curriculum, programs and strategies including: PBIS, Developmental Designs, Responsive Classroom and trauma informed practices at tiers 1 and 2.

Barre Unified Union School District Continuous Improvement Plan

Phase One: Assess Needs and Innovate

Shared Vision

The mission of the BUUSD is to do what it takes to ensure the success of every child.

Through the Continuous Improvement Planning process, we will implement a system of coordinated and aligned curriculum, instruction, and assessment that:

1. defines, measures, and communicates clear student learning objectives;
2. provides high quality professional learning opportunities for our staff that are aligned to the Continuous Improvement Plan [CIP]; and
3. works to improve our multi-tiered system to better support all students in their academic and socio-emotional development.

I. Describe the broad area(s) of focus directly related to the five domains of Education Quality Standards [EQS]: Academic Proficiency; Safe and Healthy Schools; High Quality Staffing; Personalized Learning; and Investment Priorities.

Academic Proficiency

- There continue to be significant gaps between the achievement levels of students who qualify for free and reduced lunch and those who do not. In some grade levels, these differences in achievement levels exceed 20%. This is true for both English Language Arts (ELA) and Math. *Source: SBAC 2018 and local data*
- Although performance in Math at grade 9 and grade 4 in our title 1 schools exceeds the State average, five grade levels scored below the State average. In the Non-Title funded school, all students exceeded the State average on the SBAC in math. *Source: SBAC 2018 and local data*
- Teachers report that use of data to inform instruction is inconsistent. Student work is not consistently discussed or measured. There [has been an] increase in consistency across the schools and grade levels, but there is still work to be done. *Source: Teacher interview and feedback forms and administrator feedback.*

Safe and Healthy Schools

- Students' social, emotional and behavioral needs continue to increase in intensity and frequency as [our] student demographic evolves due to increases in [the number of] adverse incidents they experience. *Source: School Wide Information Systems [SWIS], local data, and teacher feedback surveys*
- Teachers are experiencing increased pedagogical demand [a demand for new ways of teaching] around trauma informed practice [in order to deal with trauma-based behavioral issues]; and there [is a need for us to] strengthen, coordinate [and make more consistent] our practices at the Tier 2 level. *Source: Teacher Interviews and surveys*

II. Based on the identified broad focus areas [above], describe the prioritized problems for which you intend to seek innovative solutions/interventions (Goals / Problems of Practice)

Note: The “prioritized problems for which we intend to seek innovated solutions/interventions” [i.e. the problems of practice] are related solely to Academic Proficiency and Safe and Healthy Schools

Problem of Practice (Goal) I:

Although significant gains have been made, we still have some gaps in total alignment in practice for curriculum delivery, assessment, data analysis and instruction cycles across some grade levels.

Root Cause Analysis for Problem of Practice (Goal) I

Primary Driver 1: Curriculum delivery, team level assessment practices, and [how we utilize] assessments to inform instruction at Tier I is not consistent and is not aligned across all grade levels and content areas. We lack common performance indicators that are aligned at formative and summative assessments, and then [measured against] reporting standards.

Secondary Drivers:

Assessments

When it comes to learning, students are “assessed” so that the school can analyze their understanding level and progress.

Formative assessments are conducted during the learning process.

Summative assessments are conducted at the end of a course or unit.

- We need to increase teacher and administrator knowledge of current best practice in differentiated instruction for Tier I.
- Our teacher accountability, goals, and support system needs resources and continued alignment.
- We lack an easily accessible and usable system for data collection and retrieval.
- We lack common knowledge and practice in analyzing data and informing instruction at all steps.
- We identify an over-reliance, by teachers, on intervention systems (LLI, Math Lab, etc) to deal with the academic needs of students who are not meeting the standards.
- We identify a lack of comfort and trust in sharing student work, or in the data review process w/ peers.

Problem of Practice (Goal) II:

All students may not get the level of support that they need because our system does not have the capacity to support all of their needs in a consistent way, and pedagogical [teaching and instruction] practices have not been consistent across all grade levels in all schools.

Root Cause Analysis for Problem of Practice (Goal) II

Primary Driver 1: The number of students coming to us experiencing Adverse Childhood Experiences [ACES] is increasing, as is evidenced in our behavioral, attendance/tardy, and homeless data.

- We see a decrease in the social/emotional skill set of our youngest learners.
- We acknowledge a lack of consistency in the tier 2 level response for social / emotional needs. (Lack of adequate staffing, training, and multiple agencies providing support all contribute to the ineffectiveness of [our current] system.
- We acknowledge a lack of well-designed, responsive Tier II interventions that are classroom based.

Secondary Drivers:

- We acknowledge a lack of common understanding and implementation of trauma informed practices.
- We acknowledge inconsistent feedback around classroom expectations for trauma informed practices.

III. 2019-2020 CIP Action Steps

Problem of Practice (Goal) 1: We will implement a system of coordinated and aligned curriculum, instruction, and assessment that defines, measures, and communicates clear student learning objectives.

Theory Of Action

1. If we continue to build teacher capacity through the analysis of data, observation, and support of teaching in a proficiency based system; and if we can increase [teacher] knowledge about the instructional core and standards, THEN we will have an informed and purposeful school improvement process that will lead to improved outcomes for all students.
2. If Professional Learning Groups are data informed and teachers have the curriculum tools they need through comprehensive and cohesive performance indicators, THEN students will be able to access learning opportunities at a deeper level, more diverse learners' needs will be met, and achievement will improve.

Action Steps:

Action 1A: To increase collective teacher efficacy, we will continue to offer training, leadership and consultation for curriculum, department chairs and PLG-teacher-leaders to utilize the data cycle process and pedagogically lead teams in PLG/C work.

Action 1B: We will continue to work on aligning performance indicators to standards across all grade levels and content which will assist us with data collection, entry and differentiation as we continue to instruct and assess in a proficiency-based system

Action 1C: Agreed-upon programs, elements of effective instruction and units will be implemented with fidelity and we will strengthen our system of effective teacher feedback. Teachers will receive professional development opportunities that align with the programs, elements and units as needed

Action 1D: All teams will continue to strengthen and utilize PLG/C structure and increase capacity to review student work with fidelity and use that work to inform instruction.

Action 1E: We will provide opportunity for teacher goal setting, reflection and deeper understanding of best practices/ updated pedagogy in Tier 1 instructional strategies

Action 1F: We will create and share an MTSS document that clarifies the process for MTSS tiered systems of supports. Knowledge in MTSS best practices will be updated

Problem of Practice (Goal) 2: We will strive to meet the academic and socio-emotional needs of all students by implementing curriculum, programs and strategies including: PBIS, Developmental Designs, Responsive Classroom and trauma informed practices at tiers 1 and 2.

Theory Of Action

1. If we establish consistency in practice and intervention for social and emotional and academic needs, THEN we can remove barriers to student learning, increase time in the classroom for students, and therefore students will spend more time learning and we will close equity gaps for our students.

Action Steps:

2A: Within our Multi-Tiered Systems of Support [MTSS] model: We will continue to implement and strengthen consistent Tier 1 universal instruction, including differentiation and common trauma informed practices in all classrooms.

2B: Within our MTSS model: We will clarify the roles and responsibilities of responsive Tier 2 interventions for academic areas and trauma informed social emotional development.

2C: We will continue to systemically train administrators, teachers and support staff in Trauma Informed Practices and support this in our schools.