

Coxsackie – Athens Central School District, Strategic Plan, 2007 – 2012

Action Plan 2008 – 2009

Third Quarter Report (April 2009)

Introduction: This is the third Quarterly report of progress being made under the Action Plan for 2008 – 2009. What follows is a summary of the third quarter information reported by each building principal and department chairperson. This report will be rendered in summary form in writing only, and the final report at the conclusion of the school year will be rendered in writing and presented formally to the Board of Education at a regular monthly meeting. All reports will be disseminated to various constituent groups and will be posted on the school district's webpage.

1. Goal Number One. Coxsackie – Athens will ensure that every student exceeds the learning standards set by State and Federal regulations.

- a. Strategy Number One. *Provide students with reading instruction, steeped in the latest research to ensure that they will develop the necessary skills to read on grade level by the end of grade 2.*
At each elementary school, particular attention has been given to providing instructional opportunities to allow students to be reading on grade level by the end of grade 2. Instruction and classroom practices have been grounded in research-based best practices which focus on sight word recognition, fluency and comprehension, ultimately leading to improved reading performance in both schools.
Coxsackie Elementary: As the number of sight words introduced has increased, the vast majority (greater than 90%) of the students in grades K-2 continue to master the words introduced. Likewise, there has been improved performance in fluency across each of the grade levels. Reading performance has been positively impacted by each of these: 98% of Kindergarten students have successfully completed the Concepts About Print (CAP) test. At grade one, the number of students reading in excess of the designated benchmark has increased by 9%. The number of second grade students reading at or above grade level continues to increase: 61% first quarter, 81% second quarter, and now 87% for third quarter.
E.J. Arthur Elementary: A significant uninterrupted block of dedicated time for reading instruction has positively impacted student performance. It allows ample time for students to be grouped appropriately for instruction. At the kindergarten level, 100% of the students are able to recognize letters and sounds, up from 88% at last report. Additionally 85% of kindergarten students are able to write a sentence with appropriate capitalization, punctuation, and spacing. Across grades K-2 practices implemented to increase student recognition of sight words has shown improved performance. Guided reading levels at these grade levels have improved.
Middle School: Teachers across all subjects continue to expand use and mastery of content area vocabulary by utilizing vocabulary in daily instruction and assessment. The continued use of study guides encourages improvement in content area comprehension. Instruction continues in the proper use of expository text in assignment completion.
High School: With the assistance of the guidance staff, a pilot program has been developed to identify students who are at risk of failing, and provide them support services during period 9 on Tuesdays and

Thursdays. Students work with teaching assistants to complete assignments and projects. All stakeholders have been included in meetings to assess the effectiveness of the program.

Across all buildings AIS services are being provided to provide additional targeted instruction to students experiencing difficulty in achieving the goal. Student performance continues to show improvement as a result of these services.

Strategy Number Two.

Coxsackie Elementary: Grade three writing assessments consistent with NYS standards continue to be utilized, and measured using a rubric consistent with state assessments. Notable is the improvement in mechanics, with 87% of students meeting or exceeding proficiency, compared to 76% last quarter. In grade 4 a significant amount of instructional time daily in reading and opportunities for student writing have resulted in significant increases in performance on quarterly reading and writing assessments. 86% of fourth grade students are currently meeting or exceeding expectations on quarterly reading and writing assessments.

E.J. Arthur Elementary School: At grade three, significant blocks of time for reading and writing instruction has been allocated. Instruction aligns with state standards, and assessments are graded using a rubric which parallels state assessments. There has been an increase in the number of students reading at or above grade level, as measured by Fountas and Pinnell. Comparable instructional strategies and student opportunities in grade four have proven successful in that 86% of students are meeting or exceeding expectations in writing as measured by Fountas and Pinnell assessments up from 72% at last report.

Middle School: Upon conclusion of the January 2009 NYS ELA assessments, analysis of student performance was conducted, and subsequently the “Tools for Success” motivation program came to a conclusion. Performance and results continued to be analyzed at the March Superintendent’s Conference Day. Both opportunities for analysis resulted in adjustments in curriculum and instructional practices in response to student needs.

High School: Despite the cancellation of Part 2 of the January Regents exam, high school English teachers have utilized the January Regents exams in a variety of ways. They have met with students individually to review their completed Part 1 to identify areas in need of improvement and have developed strategies to accomplish this. They are using the not completed Part 2 essays as part of classroom instruction. They continue to develop activities and assignments in response to student need and curricular parameters as the June Regents Exam approaches.

Special Education: In grades 3 - 8 students have shown improvement in performance on writing assessments. Particular growth was noted at the sixth grade level. Student writing at the high school continues to be monitored and assessed by high school special education teachers to increase readability. The goal established for readability has on average been surpassed; the benchmark for students receiving consultant services in English was to provide written work at a 6.0 grade level readability. The average performance for these students is currently a 7.6 grade level.

- b. Strategy Number Three. *Teach the students the necessary skills to meet or exceed Level 4 Mathematics requirements at grades 4, 6, 8, and on Algebra as measured on statewide assessments.*

District Office: The district through the office of the Chief of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment continues to support the embedded staff development being conducted the middle school by a math specialist from Questar III. Said specialist also provided training in math literacy to elementary staff at the March Superintendent’s conference day.

Coxsackie Elementary: Kindergarten students have been assessed to determine their readiness for addition and subtraction; 87% are reported as ready. Instruction in math fact fluency in grades one and two have shown favorable results. Ninety percent of second graders are meeting the established benchmarks for addition. Chapter test results at grades three and four indicate positive student performance.

E.J. Arthur Elementary: Instruction is provided across all grade levels to enhance student performance in math fact fluency and problem solving skills. Notable progress has been shown in grade one as measured by daily work and assessments of problem solving skills, that is, 80% of students are meeting success as compared to 70% last quarter. At grade three student performance on problem solving has shown improvement, while at grade four math fact fluency has increased for both multiplication and division.

Middle School: Teachers have participated in training in “Hands-on-Equations,” a manipulative tool used for instruction of solving algebraic problems. They have begun to utilize the tool in their classrooms.

High School: Ongoing assessment of student needs continues, with instruction and lessons being modified accordingly. Meetings have been scheduled with professors from local institutions of higher education to discuss current programs. The information gathered will be considered when developing curriculum and instruction.

Special Education: There has been a significant increase in the number of identified students demonstrating significant and continuous progress in math fluency: 82% up from 67% at last report. Results were used in recommending modifications to programs during the annual review process. A high school special education teacher has developed a means to monitor student progress in various topics in Algebra, which provides the opportunity to adjust instruction accordingly.

- c. Strategy Number Four. *Teach students the necessary skills to meet or exceed Level 4 Science requirements at Grades 4, 8 and in high school as measured on the statewide assessments.*

Coxsackie Elementary: Third grade instruction and practices are in place so that students better understand and utilize science vocabulary identified in the NYS standards. Students have successfully implemented the scientific method across multiple units of study. At grade four, 95% of students are performing on science assessments at or above the expected levels, up from 78% last quarter.

E.J. Arthur Elementary: Third grade teachers have implemented the use of Smartboard lessons in science which has had a positive impact on student involvement in lessons. Fourth grade instruction focuses on inquiry skills and student understanding and utilization of vocabulary in context, discussions, and written work. Eighty – six percent of students are meeting or exceeding expectations.

Middle School: Instructional practices indicated in the action plan that will allow students to meet or exceed mastery are ongoing and will continue throughout the remainder of the school year.

High School: The science department continues to utilize monthly meetings to revise Labs that are then incorporated into the curriculum.

- d. Strategy Number Five. *Teach students the necessary skills to meet or exceed Level 4 Social Studies requirements at Grades 5, 8, 10, and 11 as measured on the statewide assessments.*

Coxsackie Elementary: At grade three, instruction continues relative to social studies and geography concepts and vocabulary, as well as citizenship. At grade four instructions in concepts and skills relative to NYS history continues, with 90% of students performing at or above expected levels.

E.J. Arthur Elementary: At grade four students are provided instructional opportunities to interpret historical documents and maps that align with the curriculum. Eighty – two percent of the students are meeting or exceeding expected performance levels.

Middle School: Continued implementation of action steps is evidenced in student performance on assignments and assessments.

High School: The increased utilization of technology, particularly Smartboard lessons has heightened student involvement in lessons. Instructional information has been made available to both students and parents through EdLine.

- e. Strategy Number Six. *Teach students the necessary skills to meet or exceed Level 4 Language Other Than English requirements on the Proficiency Test and the Comprehensive Regents examination.*

High School: Opportunities have been provided to bolster conversational Spanish skills: A native speaker of Spanish presented lessons and materials to numerous classes.

- f. Strategy Number Seven. *Establish Level 4 benchmarks in which students do not complete statewide written assessments.*

High School: As a result of the encouragement of teachers in the art department, student's participation in several area art shows has increased. Three students had work chosen for juried shows. Several music students participated in the NYSSMA Solo Festival recently with favorable results. Recording software has been utilized to capture student performances so they can be assessed using the established benchmarks.

2. Goal Number Two. Cossackie – Athens will promote continued professional growth of current and future teachers, administrators, and support staff members by providing a coordinated program of affordable, needs – based staff development.

- a. Strategy Number One. *Provide professional development that will give staff members the knowledge, skills, and abilities to bring students beyond the State and Federal standards.*

District Office: Superintendent's Conference Days have occurred to address areas of need identified by the Professional Development Planning Committee as well as to review and analyze pertinent data. Opportunities have been facilitated at both the elementary and middle school level to support initiatives to improve student writing. Attendance at conferences and workshops has been provided to the extent the current economic situation allows.

- b. Strategy Number Two. *Give staff members the tools to deal with events in school relative to health and safety consistent with State and Federal guidelines as well as New York State law.*

District Office: Discussions have been held relative to the prospect Influenza a (H1N1) . Information continues to be reviewed and disseminated in this regard.

3. Goal Number Three. Cossackie – Athens will deliver the highest quality programs and services by incorporating quality management principles and practices in all operations and by empowering all staff members to engage in continuous progress improvement.

- a. Strategy Number Two. *Develop and retain leaders with the tools to propel C-A to that of being a flagship district.*

District Office: The Chief of Curriculum Instruction and Assessment continues to hold informal discussions with two staff members currently pursuing administrative certification. Information has

been provided to each of them to assist in course work completion. There have been initial discussions relative to internship opportunities for these individuals.

- b. Strategy Number Three. *Provide professional development that will give staff members the knowledge, skills, and abilities to bring students beyond the State and Federal standards.*

District Office: Review and discussion of professional literature pertaining to issues currently impacting the district is ongoing at monthly meetings of the administrative team. Additional research and information is shared as necessitated by particular circumstances.

4. Goal Number Four. Cossackie – Athens will operate with optimum efficiency consistent with the delivery of high quality, cost effective programs and actively search for non – district funding sources to aid in accomplishing its goals.

- a. Strategy Number Two. *Establish an Educational Foundation consistent with Section 501.(c)(3) of the Internal revenue Service.*

District Office: The Boards New Visions Committee held a meeting with Rita Lashaway from the New York School Board’s Association to discuss this possibility. Ms. Lashaway then presented to the entire board at the April 21, 2009 meeting.

- b. Strategy Number Four. *Collaborate with others to lower costs and to evaluate program offerings.*

District Office: The District’s Chief Financial Officer through collaboration with other Greene County schools has realized cost savings in fuel oil purchases and transportation costs. It is expected continued collaboration will yield additional savings. Transportation contracts were able to be renegotiated, and savings realized. We are utilizing BOCES for purchases and services in order to maximize BOCES aid, where it is cost effective to so.

5. Goal Number Five. Cossackie – Athens will develop and use an integrated system of technology to improve communication, enhance operational and instructional effectiveness and efficiency and foster increased student achievement.

- a. Strategy Number One: *Integrate technology into curriculum support and instruction.*

District Office: The district continues to support the recommendations of the Technology Committee and provide professional development relative to technology. The Chief of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment has completed Value Added training. The district awaits information from SED as to the growth model to be implemented.

Technology Services: Plans for the Technology Institute to be held over the summer are well underway. The technology committee has developed offerings that will heighten technology integration. Seventeen wall mounted Smart boards have now been installed throughout the district, and fully integrated into daily classroom instruction. An additional wall mounted unit will be installed at EJ Arthur thanks to a donation from the PTO. The third round of building level smart board training will occur in the near future. At the conclusion of these this round of training, all K-12 faculty will have been given exposure to the use and function of this technology. Elementary staff has been trained in and are utilizing Smart Senteo responders. The utilization of web cameras continues; conversations were able to occur between first graders at both elementary schools and members of high school French classes. An extensive number of staff members submitted and completed technology proposals

during the March Superintendent's Conference Day. Lessons and activities submitted are of high quality.

6. Goal Number Six. Coxsackie – Athens will ensure that sufficient, appropriate space is available for all programs and services on a continuing basis in a safe and stable environment.

- a. Strategy Number One. *Prepare a Long – Range Facilities Plan.*

Board of Education: Completed.

- b. Strategy Number Two. *Consider and act upon the Long-Range Facilities Plan.*

Board of Education: Given the defeat of the proposition on December 16, the Board must now turn to dealing with critical infrastructure needs such as leaky roofs. The facilities committee will continue to meet and consider options.

7. Goal Number Seven. Coxsackie – Athens will ensure that all students, staff members, parents, and community members are fully informed in a timely manner as well as involved in addressing issues that affect them.

- a. Strategy Number One. *Develop enhanced communication protocols.*

District Office: The Shared decision Making Plan has been revised and submitted to SED. The district-wide committee has been reorganized and meets regularly. They developed a staff recognition program: The C-A Star Award which was successfully implemented this spring. Building level teams have been established, and have participated in the reporting on action plans. Synervoice is being utilized consistently and effectively.

Technology Services: Technology services has facilitated the continued implementation of EdLine to serve as a communication tool. Needed trainings for Grade Quick and EdLine have been provided, and faculty has been trained to provide turn key instruction. Web site pictures and banners have been updated. News Portal is ready for launch and should be installed in the near future. Curriculum leaders are beginning to assess the extent to which technology benchmarks are being addressed in curriculum.

- b. Strategy Number Three. *Initiate processes and procedures for input into the budget process.*

District Office: Information for review has been obtained from Greenville relative to the feasibility and logistics of developing a Budget Advisory Committee. Input was solicited and gathered from staff during the most recent budget development process.

8. Goal Number Eight. Coxsackie – Athens will enhance its organizational value by recruiting and retaining a highly qualified and fully diversified staff to meet the present and future needs of its students.

- a. Strategy Number Three. *Develop retention practices for existing staff members.*

District Office and Coxsackie-Athens Teachers Association: The Chief of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment continues to meet with the coordinators of the Professional Partners program. New hires inclusive of administrators have been provided support.

9. Goal Number Nine: Cossackie – Athens will identify and prioritize its major goals and align resources on an annual basis with appropriate input from stakeholders.

- a. Strategy Number One. *Use a continuous improvement model on a yearly basis whereby goals, strategies, and priorities are reviewed and have impact on the budget process.*

District Office: As evidenced in this report, ongoing assessment of progress toward Action Plan completion continues.