



Eau Claire Area
School District

Equity: Preparing ALL Students for Post-Secondary Success

Providing an aligned and integrated educational program for our
21st Century Learners



Introduction & Overview

Germane Concepts

Equity:

Equity recognizes that people have different backgrounds and have unequal access to opportunity and experience. Addressing this disparity through a lens of equity assures that all students will have the opportunity and support to succeed. Equity does not mean that every student receives an equal level of resources and support toward her/his educational goals. Rather, equity means that the students of greatest need receive the greatest level of support to guarantee academic success.

Learning:

The premise all students can learn is based on research that indicates children learn in different ways and at different rates. Further, research recognizes that learning is not linear, and that the role of timing, opportunity, luck, and exposure influence a person's level of academic achievement. Inherent intelligence (IQ) plays a role only to a certain degree. Once a specific inherent intelligence threshold is experienced, the environmental factors noted above play the most significant role in a person's academic progress.

Transformational Process:

Transform – to change in composition, structure, or character

The Readiness Standards Model is based on educating all students to a minimum level of educational proficiency based on measurable outcomes. These measurable outcomes include areas of academics, career awareness, social/emotional, and individual enhancements. This is a change from the current educational model which bases the minimum level of educational proficiency on the number of credits earned in predetermined content areas. The content areas include 4 credits of English, 3 credits of social studies, 2.5 credits of science, 2 credits of math, 1.5 credits of physical education, .5 credit of health, and a predetermined number of elective credits based on local school district requirements.

Culturally Relevant Teaching

Participating in culturally relevant teaching means that teachers create a bridge between students' home and school lives while still meeting the expectations of the district and state curricular requirements. Culturally relevant teaching utilizes the backgrounds, knowledge, and experiences of the students to inform the teacher's lessons and methodology. Culturally relevant teaching is a strategy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Characteristics of Culturally Relevant Teachers:

1. View teaching as an art rather than a science.
2. Believe all students can achieve at high levels.
3. Maintain fluid relationships with students, parents, and the community.
4. Demonstrate connectedness with students.
5. Believe in shared knowledge between teachers and students.
6. Help students make connections between community, national, and global identities.

Essential Domains of Culturally Relevant Teaching:

Relationships, Relevance, Rigor

Culturally relevant schools and educators

- Recognize the full educational potential of each student and provide the support and challenges necessary for them to achieve that potential.
- Reflect a climate of caring, respect and the valuing of students' cultures that is fostered in the school and classroom.
- Use curriculum that integrates knowledge derived from diverse ways of knowing and connects to students' backgrounds.
- Learn from and about their students' cultures; languages; and learning styles, and make instruction and assessment meaningful and relevant to their students' lives.
- Engage in extensive on-going participation, communication and interaction between school and community.

Supporting resources:

www.equityalliance.org

www.uwec.edu/RTI-CCP

<http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/students/learning/lr1cre.htm>

<http://www.nea.org/home/AchievementGaps.html>

<http://www.createwisconsin.net>

We Can't Teach What We Don't Know, Gary R. Howard (2006)

Other People's Children, Lisa Delpit (2006)

The Dreamkeepers, Gloria Ladson-Billings (2009)

Practicing What We Teach – How Culturally Responsive Literacy Classrooms Make a Difference, Patricia Ruggiano Schmidt and Althier M. Lazar (2011)

Culturally Responsive Standards-Based Teaching – Classroom to Community and Back, Steffen Saifer, Keisha Edwards, Debbie Ellis, Lena Ko, Amy Stuczynski (2011)

Social Emotional Learning

adopted from Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

Social emotional learning (SEL) refers to the process by which children and adults develop the fundamental social and emotional competencies essential to success in school and in the workplace. Social emotional competencies are the skills, attitudes, and values necessary to understand and manage life tasks such as cognitive learning, forming relationships, and adapting to the demands of a complex society.

The theory underlying social emotional learning is based on research indicating that individuals learn in many different ways and that learning is influenced by a variety of social emotional factors. SEL programming provides systematic classroom instruction that enhances children's capacity to recognize and manage emotions, understand and appreciate multiple perspectives, establish and attain goals, identify and solve problems, and use a variety of interpersonal skills.

SEL is the "how" to learn and achieve at high levels.

Supporting resources:

www.casel.org

www.isbe.state.il.us/ils/social_emotional/standards.htm

Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More than IQ, Daniel Goleman (1995)

Better, Atul Gawande (2007)



Core Academics

To be prepared for success in post-secondary education it is essential that all children attain academic proficiency in literacy, mathematics, science, and social sciences. The level of proficiency is measured by an academic standard or benchmark. Periodic (formative) assessments are used to monitor student progress and to make instructional adjustments as needed. Academic interventions are used to accelerate student learning for those students not yet performing at the necessary level.

The State of Wisconsin has adopted the national Common Core Standards in English language arts and mathematics. A test has not yet been created to measure student performance on the Common Core Standards. While a test is developed, the Eau Claire Area School District uses district-developed standards based assessments in the elementary grades, and uses the EXPLORE & PLAN (ACT) standards based assessments at the secondary level. Using standards based assessments, as opposed to percentage based grading, allows the instructional program to meet the needs of all children while having similar academic expectations for all children.

Core academics are part of the “what” is taught at high academic levels.

Supporting resources:

www.corestandards.org

www.dpi.state.wi.us/standards/index.html (WI Dept. of Public Instruction)

www.achieve.org (American Diploma Project)

www.act.org

Whatever It Takes, Paul Tough (2008)

The Core Academic Standards or the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks are not mandated by the State of Wisconsin. The ECASD has imbedded these standards into the curriculum as this content is significantly more rigorous than the State mandated curriculum assessed on the current State test, the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concept Exam (WKCE). Therefore, given DPI requirements, public school students are still required to take the traditional courses mandated by DPI and high school students must still earn a minimum of credit to obtain a high school diploma.



Career Awareness/Aptitudes & Interests

Equally important to the Core Academic Standards is content that provides both personal meaning/value to students as well as content that exposes students to various career opportunities. Success in a post-secondary educational setting requires students to pursue passions, take educational risks, and to prepare for employment. Historically labeled as “elective courses,” content that allows for career awareness and for the development of aptitudes and interest is an essential component for preparing all children for post-secondary education.

Career Awareness/Aptitudes & Interests is part of the “what” is taught at a high academic level.

Supporting resources:

www.careerclusters.org (National Career Clusters Initiative)

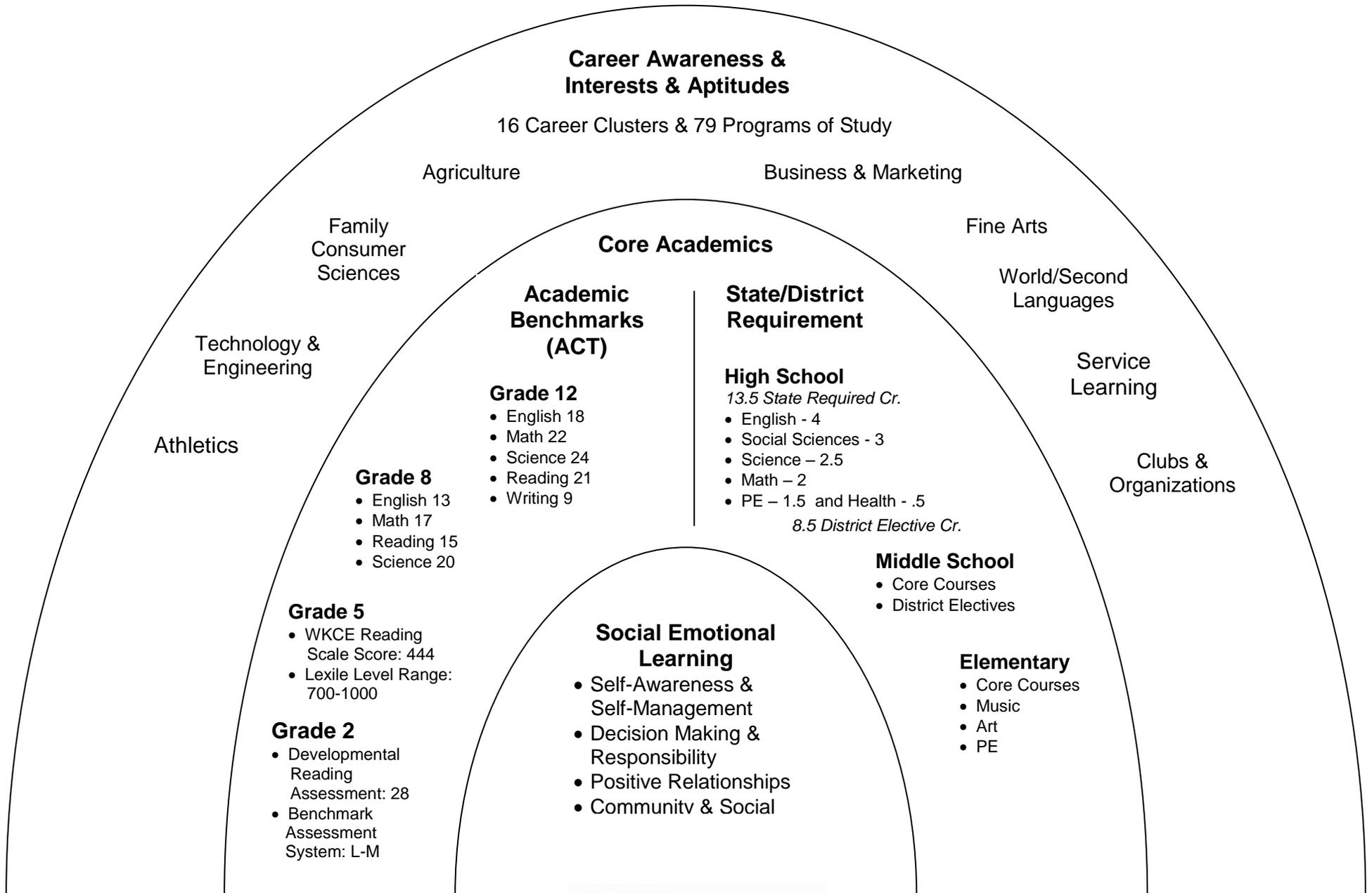
www.dpi.state.wi.us/cte/careerclustershome (WI DPI link)

The Element, Ken Robinson (2009)

A Whole New Mind, Daniel Pink (2005)

EDUCATION PROGRAM FRAMEWORK

Post-Secondary Readiness



EDUCATION PROGRAM FRAMEWORK

Post-Secondary Readiness

At the base of our education framework is the development of social emotional learning traits. Traits such as perseverance, problem-solving, self-awareness, and effective planning are just a few of the skills necessary to overcome learning challenges.

With adequate social emotional skills students can acquire the necessary academic skills to access post-secondary education. These academic skills must be measurable, so that teachers and schools can effectively respond to students in need of additional assistance. On the chart, "core academics" are divided into two categories. The "academic benchmarks" on the left represent developmental performance scores. The benchmark scores for grade 12 reflect the cut scores used by ACT for probable success in entry level post-secondary classes. The right side of this category represents the current (and traditional) academic requirements in all grade levels. You will note that there are no measurable standards, other than credits earned (graded A - F), to monitor and adjust to student performance. While the State continues to mandate these traditional requirements, our district is changing the curriculum we deliver within the traditional framework to reflect the performance and skill-based model.

Educating children is more than just teaching math, science, social studies, and language arts. Learning allows for both personal development and employment. For this reason it is critical to provide students the opportunity to develop their interests and aptitudes, as well as to be exposed to career areas.

Albert Einstein summarized this educational framework nicely when he said, "After a certain high level of technical skill is achieved, science and art tend to coalesce in esthetics, plasticity, and form. The greatest scientists are artists as well."



Education Structural Framework

Post-Secondary Readiness

Social/Emotional	Academic Standards		Enhancements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culturally Relevant Curric/Instruction • Universal Curric/Assessment • Tiered Interventions • Fidelity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culturally Relevant Curric/Instruction • Universal Curric/Assessment • Tiered Interventions • Fidelity 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Supports • Sports • Clubs • Organizations
	State/District Benchmarks and Assessments	Career Awareness	
	Math, Writing, Science, and Reading/Language Arts	Interests and Aptitudes/Programs of Study	
Grade 12 ↑ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Grade 12 ↑ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Grade 12 ↑ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Grade 12 • • • •
Grade 8 ↑ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Grade 8 ↑ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Grade 8 ↑ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Grade 8 • • • •
Grade 5 ↑ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Grade 5 ↑ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Grade 5 ↑ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Grade 5 • • • •
Grade 2 ↑ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Grade 2 ↑ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Grade 2 ↑ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Grade 2 • • • •
Grade PreK ↑ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Grade PreK ↑ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Grade PreK ↑ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Grade PreK • • • •

Education Structural Framework

Post-Secondary Readiness

An organizational structure is needed to implement an educational program. The framework depicted in this chart reflects several components of our structure. First, as noted in the program framework, there are different inter-related learning areas for students. This is depicted by the boxes on the top of the chart: social/emotional, academic standards (both academic benchmarks and interests/aptitudes and career awareness), and enhancements. We separated the types of services provided in enhancements as non-classroom activities.

To prepare all children for post-secondary education we need to organize our resources and thinking in a way that supports the education program. This is depicted in the boxes under the headings “social/emotional” and “academic standards.” Starting with pre-kindergarten, we instruct children to acquire and perform specific skills. These skills are then further developed as the child progresses from one grade level to the next. How we think of this structure is very important, as a teacher of kindergarten students has a significant impact on the academic performance of a high school senior. In Eau Claire our schools are divided K-5, 6-8, and 9-12. It is easy to view these levels as independent of one another. A defined structure showing the inter-connectedness of the grade levels helps to eliminate the perception of grade level separation.

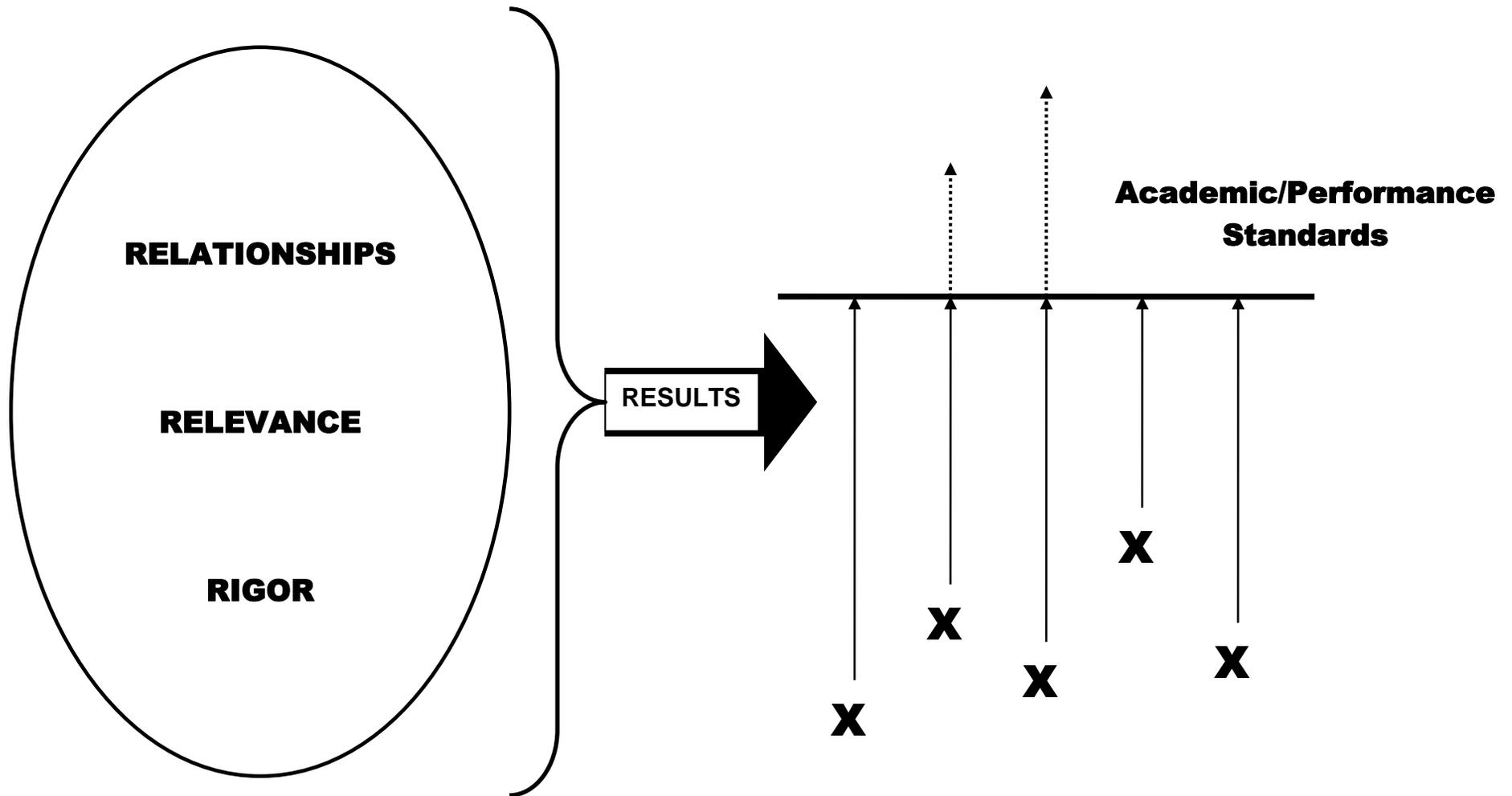
The triangles in the boxes represent an instructional model called Response to Interventions, or RtI. In short this model has teachers assessing student performance (academic and social/emotional) and adjusting instruction based on the students’ understanding and performance. Academic interventions are used to accelerate a student’s learning if the child is not progressing to meet the academic or behavioral benchmark. A traditional instructional model was based on the belief that some children can learn while others are limited in their learning (the bell curve). We now know this is not the case. While some children learn quicker or differently than others, with few exceptions, all children are capable of learning at high levels. The RtI model increases learning for students who need more time as well as for those who have already met the benchmark.

Enhancements do not include arrows to reflect progressive programs or triangles to reflect assessment and instruction. While enhancements play a significant role in the academic and social/emotional development of children, they do not necessarily build from one grade level to the next.



PERSONAL/CLASSROOM/SCHOOL FRAMEWORK

Post-Secondary Readiness



PERSONAL/CLASSROOM/SCHOOL FRAMEWORK

Post-Secondary Readiness

Ultimately the teacher/classroom/school must deliver the educational program to ensure all children are prepared for post-secondary education. Teaching is a highly technical skill. The use of assessments, instructional techniques, and interpersonal relations is complex. The classroom framework provides a simple visualization of how this complex interaction occurs.

The horizontal line on the right of the diagram represents an academic or performance benchmark. The X's represent students at various levels of skill/performance. The arrows that rise to the horizontal line indicate how RtI is used to accelerate all students to a specific measurable outcome, with the dotted arrows representing the need to allow those students who meet the standard to continue their learning. You will note that each X/student rises at different rates. This indicates that learning is not a fixed trait or a linear process. The rate of learning for each of us varies depending upon a number of variables. But we all can learn.

The oval at the left of the diagram indicates the classroom/teacher conditions necessary to have all students achieve at high levels. First are relationships. Educators must be personally engaged with students to effectively teach them. This includes knowing a student's background, their personal experiences and perspectives, and how to motivate the child. The traditional view is that teachers worked "for" students – some students got it, while others did not. Our program requires staff to work "with" students – to unconditionally accept each student and to instruct them from their current level to a predetermined outcome. Learning difficult material is hard work. The teacher and school must demonstrate to each student that the work is important, that the student is capable of accomplishing the task, and that the teacher/school will not give up on the child – no matter how much the child may struggle.

Relevance refers to both the curriculum and how the curriculum is taught. There is more than one way to teach and there is more than one way to learn. Staff must be aware of these multiple perspectives in order to reach each child, and for the child to experience "their life" in the lessons. The importance of culturally relevant instruction and curriculum is at the core of relevance.

All classes need to have a high degree of rigor. Rigor is not defined as more work; it is defined as more complex work. With the appropriate relationship and relevance, along with effective assessment and instruction, children are capable of learning complex material at a young age than previously believed. These are not just "the bright kids." These are all children. The development of social emotional learning skills in children is essential to their ability to learn and apply rigorous material.

Relationships, relevance, and rigor are grouped together to represent the interdependence of the three. An effective classroom requires all three to work in harmony.

Readiness System Definitions 2009 (Last updated 12/15/10)



Post-Secondary Readiness

Post-secondary readiness is an educational framework designed to ensure all students are academically, socially, and emotionally prepared for continued training and education after high school. Below are some frequently asked questions and answers regarding post-secondary readiness and what it means in the Eau Claire School District.

What does post-secondary readiness mean for students?

For some students, post-secondary readiness may mean a four-year university; for some, it may mean technical college; for others, the military, etc. Post-secondary readiness means students will have the choice after they exit our system of which path they wish to follow. This choice will not be made for them because they did not receive the necessary preparation.

Nationally, statistics show only 50% of students who enter a four-year university end up with a bachelor's degree (*Colleges are Failing in Graduation Rates*; New York Times; Sep. 2009). Not being prepared academically may only be one of the issues leading to this low graduation rate. An integral part of post-secondary success includes social/emotional competencies such as cultural awareness, perseverance, forming relationships, and adapting to the demands of a complex society.

Equally important to academics and social/emotional learning are opportunities that provide both personal meaning and value to students, as well as experiences that allow students to explore potential career interests.

Hasn't our goal always been to prepare students for post-secondary education?

Yes, but our system allowed students to opt for less rigorous coursework that did not necessarily lead to post-secondary opportunities. In addition, we did not have assessments in place that helped measure if students were "on track" academically for success at the next level. We are developing an assessment system that will help us measure whether or not students are meeting grade level academic benchmarks aligned with post-secondary readiness, as well as interventions at every level to assist students who are falling behind. In the past, many of our students were prepared for post-secondary success. Now the goal is for all students to be prepared for post-secondary success.

Last Updated 12/15/10



Does post-secondary readiness for all mean the district will no longer offer enrichments and AP (Advanced Placement) options for students?

We recognize there are students who are ready for post-secondary success earlier than others. We are committed to providing AP (advanced placement) classes, other advanced coursework, and enrichment opportunities for students who meet and exceed grade level benchmarks.

My child is in elementary school. Isn't it too early to think about post-secondary education?

The foundation for post-secondary success begins as early as pre-kindergarten. When students are identified as being below grade level academically, we must intervene as soon as possible to get that child back on track. If skill deficits are not identified and corrected early, the child will continue to fall further behind, and the gap will become even wider by the time the child enters middle and high school. Pre-kindergarten through grade five are critical years on the road to being prepared for post-secondary success.

Where can I find more information?

You can find more information on post-secondary readiness by visiting the district home page at <http://www.ecasd.k12.wi.us/>. You may also contact Tim Leibham, Executive Director of Administration, at 715-852-3007 or tleibham@ecasd.k12.wi.us.

ECASD Post-Secondary Readiness Standards

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