

EAST LAKE ACADEMY

To build a community school that reflects a passion for learning and the arts for the students and adults of East Lake Academy.

Mission:

To provide experiences that ensure productive, responsible students for high school through academics, arts, and technology. We believe that all students deserve a high quality instructional program that nurtures their own talents and abilities. Our faculty values collaboration to focus in our practice and improve student achievement in a safe and orderly environment. Each child deserves an educational program that holds every child to high expectations, mutual respect and ownership of their learning. Students deserve a rich, relevant curriculum with accountability and assessment to continue to target instruction to meet their learning needs.

Narrative:

East Lake Academy, an urban magnet school, serves a diverse middle school population with a common demographic, poverty. Targeted as a high priority school, ELA made average yearly progress last year, but one third of our students are not proficient in math and reading. Using four goals from Middle School for a New Society, personalization, flexibility, rigorous, relevant curriculum, and a strong professional learning community, we will increase proficiency and close the academic gap for economically disadvantaged students by building a passion for learning.

Our vision which includes the key phrase, “reflects a passion for learning,” will be strengthened and fulfilled by increasing the rigor and relevancy of our curriculum while increasing personalization. We will use a lesson study model to improve rigor in weak content skill areas while strengthening our professional learning community. Our curriculum must be more consistent and focused on relevant materials that compel and motivate our middle school community members. Mapping professional development this summer will focus on community thematic units and products.

Personalization means providing experiences that build productive citizens by ensuring opportunities for success by meeting the needs of all learners both non-proficient and advanced. Advisory programs and relationships must be strengthened to build safety nets and motivation for students who have frequently experienced academic failure in their school careers. To make a curriculum relevant, we need to know their interests, listen to their voices, and provide school opportunities for choice and differentiated instruction. Teachers need to understand middle school development and needs, to create a passion for learning and to provide the skills to succeed at the next level.

Flexibility, a strength of our school, has maximized learning for special education students and 6th grade students while failing to meet the needs of advanced proficiency students and most 7th grade students. We will restructure our 7th grade team, provide summer opportunities for 7th grade students and continue strong transition programs for rising 6th grade students. With an extremely low graduation rate at our feeder school, we will initiate 8th grade transition programs to fulfill our mission.

Our professional learning community has successfully deprivatized its practice, but we need to streamline and focus vertical planning, lesson design and peer observation into a focused and

powerful lesson study model that will improve the rigor of content area instruction. Our mission to prepare productive citizens for the next level of learning cannot succeed without understanding what they have experienced as learners in elementary school and what they will need to prepare for as viable high school students. We will use learning walks and Data in a Day protocols to visit our K-12 collaborative schools. Content area teachers will observe and network with peak performers across the system.

East Lake Academy utilized data and a strong vision and mission to begin a powerful reform journey as an NEA grant recipient. With the lens of the four MSNS goals, we will increase the effectiveness of our current goals and refine the work of our professional community to fulfill our mission of productive, responsive students for the next level of learning. We will use our love of learning and the knowledge of our students to build a school community with a passion for learning.