Maybrook Elementary School, Valley Central

In Valley Central, the goals and indicators for district and school levels are shared with the community.

COMPREHENSIVE ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN

Presented to Board of Education

on August 27, 2007
Revised July 25, 2008
Table of Contents

SECTION 1.0 Executive Summary

SECTION 2.0 District Accountability Structure
  2.1 Introduction
  2.2 State and District Expectations
  2.3 District-Wide Indicators
  2.4 School / Division Indicators
  2.5 Reflections / Recommendations

SECTION 3.0 Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP)
  3.1 Introduction

SECTION 4.0 Professional Development Plan
  4.1 Introduction
  4.2 District-Wide Professional Development
  4.3 Professional Development for Teachers and Related Service Providers
  4.4 Professional Development for Building Level Administrators
  4.5 Professional Development for District Level Administrators
  4.6 Professional Development for School Related Professionals (SRPs)
  4.7 District Sponsored Parent Training

SECTION 5.0 Communication Plan
  5.1 Introduction
  5.2 Reporting on Strategic Improvement Plans (SIPs)
  5.3 Community Report
  5.4 State Report
  5.5 Policy Recommendations

SECTION 6.0 Rewards, Incentives, and Solutions
  6.1 Introduction
  6.2 District, School, Student Rewards and Incentives (VC Stars)
  6.3 Solutions

SECTION 7.0 Timeline

APPENDICES
  Appendix A Accountability Task Force Members
  Appendix B District-Wide Indicators
  Appendix C School / Division Indicators
  Appendix D Strategic Improvement Plan Template
  Appendix E Rewards and Incentives
  Appendix F Standards Alignment Graphic

Revised 7-25-08
Comprehensive Accountability Plan

1.0 Executive Summary

On February 7, 2007, Deputy Superintendent assembled the Valley Central School District Accountability Task Force (ATF). The ATF was comprised of approximately 40 members representing an array of stakeholders including parents, teachers, Board of Education members, building-level administrators and central office administrators. The goal of the ATF was to create a District Comprehensive Accountability Plan.

This District Comprehensive Accountability Plan provides a comprehensive framework which will serve to guide the Valley Central community in meeting the following strategic goals:

- **Student Achievement** - Prioritize continuous improvement for all students at all levels.

- **Knowledgeable and Dedicated Staff** - Maintain and support a highly qualified, diverse staff whose members are student centered, reflective, enthusiastic, and committed to professional excellence.

- **Safe (Innovative) Environment** - Maintain an innovative learning environment that is safe, efficient, nurturing, and supportive of quality teaching and learning.

- **Partnership with Community** - Foster strong partnerships with home, school, business, and the community to ensure that citizens are well-informed.

Included in the District Comprehensive Accountability Plan are District-Wide and School/Division Indicators that put the District’s strategic goals into measurable terms that the district, the schools, and the various district-wide departments can use to assess their progress toward meeting their goals. The document will serve as a constructive tool by focusing policy, leadership initiatives and specific strategies on continuous improvement. This plan presents and analyzes relevant assessment data and other pertinent information with the ultimate goal of improving academic achievement for all students. Furthermore, this plan establishes the framework for communication between students, parents, teachers and the community. The District Comprehensive Accountability Plan will assist in ensuring that the Valley Central School District continues developing into an outstanding school district that celebrates teaching and learning.
2.0 District Accountability Structure

2.1 Introduction

The primary responsibility for developing the District Comprehensive Accountability Plan for the Valley Central School District lies with the Valley Central Accountability Task Force (ATF). The ATF replaces the former Comprehensive District Education Plan (CDEP) Committee. A complete listing of members for the ATF can be found in Appendix A. The group began meeting on a monthly basis in February 2007 and targeted early June 2007 as the date for a final draft of the District Comprehensive Accountability Plan. After approval of the District Plan, members of the ATF will meet quarterly beginning in September 2007. In addition, the ATF will continue to monitor district and school-level progress toward meeting the established goals and objectives.

The architecture of the District Comprehensive Accountability Plan differs from previous CDEP and School Improvement Plans (SIP) both in scope and focus. The new Plan not only involves attention to State assessment scores, but also includes other measures of student achievement. By using multiple measures of achievement, students, staff, parents, and the community are all responsible for student learning.

The architecture of the Valley Central School District Comprehensive Accountability Plan includes three indicators from which to monitor progress:

- **District-Wide Indicators:** These indicators are designed to measure the District’s progress toward achieving the strategic goals.

- **School/Division Indicators:** These indicators are school and division specific and are aligned with District-Wide Indicators. They are designed to measure progress toward achieving goals at the school and district-wide department levels.

- **Reflections & Recommendations:** This is the qualitative portion of the District Comprehensive Accountability Plan which requires a narrative description by each of the schools and each of the district-wide departments that is focused on the impact of the strategies and programs that they are implementing.

The District Comprehensive Accountability Plan is designed to be comprehensive, yet focused on continuous improvement for each Valley Central school and district-wide department. Inherent in the term “comprehensive” is the idea that accountability is the responsibility of all the stakeholders in the District. Stakeholders include students, parents, businesses, teachers, administrators, school related personnel, and the community as a whole. Each stakeholder has a vested interest in this process from the following perspectives:
Valley Central
School District

- Parents want the best education possible for their children
- Businesses that wish to be competitive must employ highly skilled workers
- Teachers, administrators, and SRPs play a significant role in supporting, nurturing, and developing each student’s education
- The community is judged by the quality of the public schools in the district in which they live

The District Comprehensive Accountability Plan helps ensure that each student reaches or exceeds the standards for performance by establishing a methodology to continuously monitor and adjust the impact of programs and strategies on student achievement.

While developing the District Comprehensive Accountability Plan, members of the ATF agreed on the following guiding principles of accountability:

- **Congruence:** The District’s rewards and incentives are compatible with the goals and indicators emphasized in the District Comprehensive Accountability Plan.

- **Respect for Diversity:** The District Comprehensive Accountability Plan includes multiple measures of student achievement, some of which apply to all schools (District-Wide Indicators), and some of which apply to individual schools based on school needs (School/Division Indicators).

- **Accuracy:** The measures outlined for the District Comprehensive Accountability Plan reflect both the use of State and local assessments.

- **Specificity:** The District Comprehensive Accountability Plan clearly delineates the indicators that measure what is being done to help students achieve.

- **Feedback for Continuous Improvement:** The District Comprehensive Accountability Plan focuses on indicators that emphasize student achievement. It uses results to make informed decisions about improvement and new initiatives.

- **Universality:** The District Comprehensive Accountability Plan holds all stakeholders in the District accountable: central office personnel, members of the board of education, school administrators, teachers, SRPs, parents, and students.

- **Fairness:** The District Comprehensive Accountability Plan is structured so that all schools and departments have the opportunity to know and play by the same rules.

- **Resiliency:** The District Comprehensive Accountability Plan is designed to consistently guide the District even as changes occur in personnel and policy.
2.2  State and District Expectations

At the approach of the twenty-first century, the Board of Regents approved a new set of learning standards for all students in New York State. They represent the core of what all people should know, understand and be able to do as a result of their schooling. As such, these learning standards are to form the basis for a re-vision of education in New York. With this re-vision, students may expect an intellectually powerful education no matter where they live; in which teaching, assessment, and the provision of supports for learning are closely linked; and in which schools and parents share the same high expectations of youngsters. Learning standards have two primary dimensions. Content standards describe what students should know, understand and be able to do. Performance standards define levels of student achievement pertaining to content. The State of New York provides a New York State Report Card for each public school within the State. These reports are produced to inform the people of New York State about the recent performance of their schools. (New York State Department of Education)

The Valley Central School District uses these New York State Standards as a guide when developing curriculum, report cards, evaluation tools, school board goals, and District-Wide indicators. In addition to State assessments, the District is committed to utilizing multiple measures to determine student mastery of the Standards. These assessments currently include district-wide assessments for grades K-2. Data teams will work collaboratively to develop benchmark/common formative assessments that are in alignment with the Standards and that will be used throughout the year for all grade levels.

2.3  District-Wide Indicators

"District-Wide Indicators are those measures of educational performance that are used by every building and department in the system. These indicators represent the core values of stakeholders. They must be measured and considered at every grade in every school." (p. 115 Accountability in Action). They will be measured through State assessments, District assessments, and District benchmarks. The following District-Wide Indicators were developed by the ATF to monitor progress toward reaching the District’s strategic goals:

Goal # 1 - “Prioritize continuous improvement for all students at all levels.”

District-Wide Indicators:
- Percentage of students scoring proficient or higher in mathematics
- Percentage of students scoring proficient or higher in ELA
- Percentage of students scoring proficient or higher in science
- Percentage of students scoring proficient or higher in social studies
- Percentage of students attending school 95% or more of the time
- Percentage of students graduating from high school
Goal # 2—"Maintain and support a highly qualified, diverse staff whose members are student centered, reflective, enthusiastic, and committed to professional excellence."

District-Wide Indicators:
- Percentage of teachers and administrators who are certified/highly qualified
- Percentage of staff in attendance 97% or more of the school year (excluding district approved leaves, i.e. leaves of absence, long-term medical leaves, school business, etc.)
- Percentage of staff pursuing "continuing education" (beyond requirements for certification) and/or professional development

Goal # 3—"Maintain an innovative learning environment that is safe, efficient, nurturing, and supportive of quality teaching and learning."

District-Wide Indicators:
- Number of innovative programs offered within the District
- Percentage of students not receiving referrals
- Number of accidents involving students or staff that result in significant injury and in lost days of school/work
- Percentage of work orders completed in a timely manner

Goal # 4—"Foster strong partnerships with home, school, business, and the community to ensure that citizens are well-informed."

District-Wide Indicators:
- Percentage of parents/community members attending the following meetings and events: Open House, parent-teacher conferences, Committee on Special Education/SO4 meetings, and Citizens Advisory Budget Committee meetings
- Number of businesses and organizations involved in school related activities
- Number of external visits to District website
- Number of community and school related events that community members are invited to in school buildings

There is additional information about data sources for each indicator provided in Appendix B.

2.4 School/Division Indicators

Each school and district-wide department is held accountable for appropriate District-Wide Indicators that are monitored at the State and District level. In addition, each school and district-wide department selects four to six School/Division Indicators from the list in Appendix C. These School/Division Indicators measure the impact of selected strategies and directly support the District-Wide Indicators. Schools and district-wide departments may include School/Division Indicators not on this list if there is a need.
Valley Central
School District

based on data. New indicators should be stated in the same manner as the current
indicators in Appendix C, which are stated using a positive metric. The indicators listed
in Appendix C will be reviewed and adjusted yearly.

Schools and district-wide departments are requested to develop their annual Strategic
Improvement Plan (SIP) based on the four to six selected indicators. (Additional
information on the SIP can be found in Section 5.2.)

Each District-wide Goal must be addressed when School/Division Indicators are selected:
- One must support the student academic achievement goal
- One must support the knowledgeable and dedicated staff goal
- One must support the safe (innovative) learning environment goal
- One must support the partnership with community goal

At least two indicators must address academic achievement if more than four indicators
are selected.

In each school and district-wide department, the Strategic Accountability Team (SAT)
determines the School/Division Indicators based on a careful analysis of current data,
programs, needs, and goals. Data for the selected School/Division Indicators are
collected by the schools and district-wide departments and used to continuously monitor
progress. Each year, administrators report on what they have learned from the analysis of
the data in the SIP. They also report on obvious gaps in the data, determining what
additional information and further research are needed.

Each fall, schools and district-wide departments select indicators at the school/division
level, based on the State and District expectations. Successes in meeting past and present
indicators, assessed needs, and the changes in priorities in each school are the basis of
setting these indicators. Thus, schools and district-wide departments focus on those areas
in need of most improvement.

Throughout the year, schools and district-wide departments must constantly and
consistently monitor data and adjust instruction using formative evaluations created by
data teams to support the SIP. This process provides for continuous improvement.
Members of the SAT will meet on a monthly basis to analyze data from the formative
evaluations.

2.5 Reflections/Recommendations

This narrative portion of the SIP referred to as “Reflections and Recommendations”
allows schools and district-wide departments the opportunity to include qualitative
information that may not be readily apparent in the District-Wide and School/Division
Indicators. This section should be approximately three-fourths to one page in length and
should explain the school or department’s performance on the District-Wide and
School/Division Indicators. Included in this narrative is the context of the school’s
accountability results, special programs, new curriculum, projects, and strategies that are
3.0 Strategic Improvement Plan

3.1 Introduction

Each school/district-wide department within the District will generate an annual Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP), which will be developed by building principals and district-wide department directors in partnership with the Strategic Accountability Teams (SATs). The SIPs will contain data reflecting the demographics of the school, achievement indicators, and academic results from the last several years, as well as strategies used by the school to assist with student academic growth. In addition, a short narrative gives schools/divisions a chance to tell the story behind the reported numbers. The SIP becomes part of the Comprehensive District Education Plan (CDEP).

In the fall, SATs will develop SIPs (template found in Appendix D) using achievement data from the prior year to set school/district-wide department goals in alignment with the District-Wide Indicators and strategic goals. The SIP will be shared with the building staff and members of the district-wide departments in the fall of each academic year. The general goals for the academic year will be communicated at this level. Grade levels or academic departments will develop goals and review them with the whole staff. Progress in achieving building goals will be discussed with staff during meetings (faculty, staff, SATs, department, and grade level).

4.0 Professional Development Plan

4.1 Introduction

Accountability Task Force (ATF) members attended one full-day workshop on “Data Teams,” one full-day workshop on “Data Driven Decision Making,” and seven full-day workshops aimed at the District Comprehensive Accountability Plan. These presentations enabled Task Force members to consider the structure of effective accountability systems, the importance of using data to make informed decisions, and the variety of ways that professionals across the District can come together to effectively use data for ongoing academic improvements.

Revised 7-25-08
4.2 District-Wide Professional Development

Professional development for the entire Valley Central School District staff is crucial to the success of the District Comprehensive Accountability Plan. Staff members need to be given the opportunity to clearly understand the Plan and how it will be used to improve the learning environment.

There is representation on the Professional Development Team from all schools and the District Office. As part of the District Comprehensive Accountability Plan, the Professional Development Team will be the District’s standing committee for professional development in accordance with New York State Education Commissioner’s Regulations.

The professional development offered by the District will align with the stated goals of the Valley Central School District. In addition, professional development will be provided to support the goals, strategies, and indicators selected by schools and central office departments.

4.3 Professional Development for Teachers and Related Service Providers

Key ideas and concepts surrounding the District Comprehensive Accountability Plan will be explained to teachers and related service providers throughout the school year through various professional development sessions. To ensure that the goals of the Plan are articulated clearly, professional development will be ongoing and in-depth. Each year, it will be the responsibility of the Superintendent and the Board of Education to ensure that professional conference time is made available.

Professional development for teachers and related service providers will be aligned with district-wide goals, focus on data-driven decision making, and target identified school/division needs.

4.4 Professional Development for Building Level Administrators

The professional development for building level administrators will focus on coaching, mentoring, and supervising instruction to support the success and implementation of the District Comprehensive Accountability Plan. Professional development will be provided by the District for building level administrators in accordance with the New York State Education Commissioner’s Regulations. In conjunction with the CAP goals, building level administrative professional development will be determined at the Cabinet level.

4.5 Professional Development for District Level Administrators

District level administrators will have the responsibility of coordinating and funding ongoing professional development. District level administrators will provide information
from the state and federal government so that the District will be in compliance with any and all state and federal mandates. They will keep the Board of Education apprised of the success of the District Comprehensive Accountability Plan and any need to review and amend the strategic goals. In conjunction with the CAP goals, District level administrative professional development will be determined by the Superintendent.

4.6 Professional Development for School Related Personnel (SRP)

Professional development for SRPs is crucial to the success of the District Comprehensive Accountability Plan. SRPs will be introduced to the Plan and be provided professional development consistent with the goals of the District. Professional development will focus on the supportive role of staff specific to their area. In conjunction with the CAP goals and recommendations from the ATF, SRP professional development will be determined at the Cabinet level.

4.7 District-Sponsored Parent Training

Parent involvement is paramount to the success of the District Comprehensive Accountability Plan. Parents will be provided with workshops and seminars to enhance their comprehension of the philosophy and components of the District Comprehensive Accountability Plan. Workshops that reflect strategies to meet School/Division and District-Wide indicators will be designed and provided for parents. Workshops will enable parents to interpret the data and to understand how data is utilized daily in the classroom, school, and district to improve student learning.

5.0 Communication Plan

5.1 Introduction

One of the main goals of the Valley Central School District’s Accountability Task Force is to foster a strong partnership between school, home, business, and the community to ensure that stakeholders are well informed. Communication about data and goals will be shared with the New York State Education Department, the Valley Central School Board, Superintendent, administrators, teachers, staff, and members of the community. A variety of techniques and venues will be used to share information about the Plan to ensure that stakeholders stay clearly informed.

5.2 Reporting on Strategic Improvement Plans

Each fall, schools and district-wide departments report progress toward reaching goals outlined in the prior year’s SIP to the Board of Education. Also in the fall, goals contained in the current SIP are shared with stakeholders. These goals are also included in publications and websites generated for each school and district-wide department.
Building administration, in conjunction with the SATs, will publicize progress, quarterly, on key indicators reflecting how the objectives of the building are being met.

5.3 Community Report

The community will be updated quarterly throughout the year. These quarterly reports will be based on data from the SIPs, and include the challenges faced, the strategies used to address those challenges, and results of the strategies with supporting data. By highlighting these successes and areas of need, stakeholders will be continually informed about the effectiveness of each school’s educational strategies.

The Superintendent will present a State of the District Report to the community each spring in a public forum at a local school. At the school/district-wide department level, the SAT will generate reports of results on both District-Wide and School/Division Indicators using data walls (updated quarterly) displayed in public areas. At the building level, the SATs will designate responsibility for data walls in each building. Data will also be presented at an evening event each semester. In addition, other means of communication such as the District’s websites, periodic announcements on local television, Viking Press, school newsletters, newspapers, Citizens’ Advisory Budget Committee (CABC), and Board meetings will be employed to review progress on District-Wide Indicators and School/Division Indicators.

5.4 State Report

Reports on the District-Wide Indicators are routinely made to the New York State Department of Education by the District’s Department of Data, Testing, and Federal Programs. Mandated academic progress reports include Basic Educational Data System (BEDS), Regents Reports, test results for Grades 3-8 ELA and Math, Grades 4 & 8 Science, and Grades 5 & 8 Social Studies tests. Additionally, Violent and Disruptive Incident Report (VADIR), Career and Technical Education Data System (CTEDS), Program Information Report (PIR) are provided to the State as well. The Special Education Department and the Business Office also prepare and submit reports for various purposes. The State uses data from the aforementioned reports to create the School Report Cards, which are distributed to the public before local budget votes in May.

The Valley Central School District will submit the CAP and school and division SIPs to the State in lieu of CDEP (Comprehensive District Education Plan).

5.5 Policy Recommendations

The approval, drafting, and reviewing of district policies is the continuous purview of the Board of Education. Nonetheless, suggestions about changes or new policies come to the Board from the District’s attorneys, New York School Boards Association, Central Office Administrators, Cabinet members, and through union grievances.
The ATF is a conduit to the Board for the consideration, development and/or changes in policy or practice.

Beyond policies, the ATF will assist in defining procedures which support this Plan. To be effective, procedures need to be written down and shared.

6.0 **Rewards, Incentives, and Solutions**

6.1 **Introduction**

It is important that schools, faculty, staff, and students are recognized for their hard work and dedication. Recognizing the motivational impact that rewards and incentives can have, the District will maintain an accurate system of rewards and supports to ensure the achievement of goals. All Valley Central schools, faculty, staff, and students are eligible for the VC Stars (Rewards and Incentives) program. Underperforming schools and district-wide departments will be provided with support in order to improve student learning, teaching practices, and overall school performance.

6.2 **District, School, Student Rewards and Incentives (VC Stars)**

Recipients for recognition through the Rewards and Incentives Program are identified based on District-Wide and School/Division Indicators.

**Forms of Rewards and Incentives**

**Viking Award:** This prestigious award is presented by the Board of Education to schools and district-wide departments for achieving two of their selected indicators. At least one of the school's indicators must be academic.

**School Newsletters:** Newsletters include a section that highlights accomplishments of staff and students. Elementary and middle school newsletters will be produced monthly, while the high school newsletter will be produced quarterly. The newsletters will be printed and posted on each school's website.

**Student Awards:** These awards are presented to students at the school level and guided by the following criteria:

- **Elementary Student of the Month (K-5):** Classroom teachers (special areas included) may select up to three students per building per month for their outstanding achievement based on good citizenship and/or academic improvement. Each honored student will have his/her photograph displayed prominently in school that month. In addition, a letter will be sent to his/her home.

Revised 7-25-08
Secondary Student of the Month (MS) - Each faculty or staff member may select one student for his/her outstanding achievement based on good citizenship and/or academic improvement. Each honored student receives an invitation to a recognition ceremony, a photograph displayed prominently in school that month, and a letter sent to his/her home.

Secondary Student of the Quarter (HS) - Each faculty or staff member may select one student for his/her outstanding achievement based on good citizenship and/or academic improvement. Each honored student will have his/her photograph displayed in school that month and a letter sent to his/her home.

See Appendix E for additional rewards already being presented in the district.

6.3 Solutions

It is understood that the purpose of the District Comprehensive Accountability Plan is to improve student learning, improve teaching practices and improve school performance overall. The data analysis and subsequent SIPs are to be used to address school-wide issues.

Under-performing schools may face sanctions imposed by the federal and state government and the New York State Commissioner of Education. Relief from sanctions can be found by taking the following actions:

- Schools that are Title I eligible are governed by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Legislation. Compliance with the regulations and guidelines associated with the NCLB legislation will lead to a relief from accountability sanctions.
- Under-performing schools must prepare Local Assistance Plans (Federal) or Comprehensive Education Plans (State) based on data analysis and aligned to the School/Division Indicators of the SIP. The School/Division Indicators may include but are not limited to professional development, curriculum revision, reassignment of staff, and extended school day/year.
- Meeting the Student Performance expectations mandated by the NCLB Act will lead to a relief from sanctions.
- Schools that are not Title I eligible have New York State expectations to meet. These expectations are similar to the NCLB expectations but the sanctions imposed are different. Compliance with the regulations and guidelines associated with the New York State accountability plan will lead to relief from sanctions.
- Student and School performance for grades Kindergarten through Two will be assessed by the use of benchmark reading assessments. The End of Year Math Assessment will also be used as one of our benchmarks. The district will develop cut points to determine which students and schools are below the benchmark (under-performing), at the benchmark, and above the benchmark.
- Schools at, or below the benchmark must address the areas of under-performance identified through the data analysis in SIPs.