



New School Improvement Planning Protocols

Submitted by Todd Nickelsen,
Foothills Regional Director for Data, Technology & Accountability

Starting last spring, and into the summer, Foothills leadership, spearheaded by Todd Nickelsen, has worked on a more consistent and effective School Improvement Planning process. As of this writing, those new protocols are already underway. Nickelsen has provided the following outline of our progress to date.

- In July, site directors learned about the new SIP template, running agenda, and the year-long process for site improvement planning, which includes a mid-year check and will culminate with a root-cause analysis at the end of the year.
- In September, sites held their first site improvement planning meetings, most of which were facilitated by the site improvement facilitators.
- Site improvement facilitators assumed many of the responsibilities formerly led by instructional coaches and members of the data teams. They had their first meeting at the end of August where they were given a ton of information and access to new data. Despite only having a short time to prepare for their first SIP meetings, they did a phenomenal job jumping right into the work.
- The three primary goals for the September SIP meeting included: 1) Identifying data targets for the two common goals: Graduation Rate as measured by credit earned, and Student Performance as measured by weighted content mastery. 2) Developing measurable theories of actions designed to monitor progress towards achieving the goals. Sites focused on what worked last year and eliminated practices that either were not as effective as desired or were not measurable. Once action steps were agreed upon, teams identified which strategic plan goals the steps were most aligned with. 3) After receiving feedback from the SIP team to update the data targets for both goals and developing measurable action steps, teams began to review strategic plan performance objectives, from the perspective of their site.
- The FY23 Strategic Plan End of Year Check was designed to allow all faculty and staff the opportunity to comment on progress made towards the strategic plan performance objectives. Data and evidence to support progress was included, and teams discussed the fact that while the Site Improvement Plan goals are measured annually, the goal and corresponding performance objectives are long term and measured over the course of 5-6 years. As sites make annual progress towards achieving their SIP goals, Foothills as a whole simultaneously makes progress towards achieving its long-term goals.

Message from the Superintendent

The central message in school improvement planning—in any area—is that you are never done. As soon as you think you are done, you ARE done, so to speak! That's why I am so excited about the new protocols we have put together for site-based school improvement work. It is designed to tie our continuous improvement efforts coherently to our strategic planning while still respecting the unique needs of all of our sites.

For Foothills, our improvement efforts have always extended beyond our sites to our families and communities. With that in mind, we are proud to support the work of the Athens Area Diaper Bank. You will enjoy reading the update on this program and how it has supported student Jasmene Polite and her adorable son, Ja'Karee.

In This Issue

- **New School Improvement Planning Protocols**
- **Diaper Bank Update, and the Story of Jasmene and Ja'Karee**

Continued from page 1...

- The next SIP meeting isn't until November, where teams will use the "Say Something" protocol for data trend analysis, but data will continue to be monitored, shared and discussed at faculty, admin, student services and department meetings.

Athens Area Diaper Bank—Providing Support for Jasmene and Ja’Karee Submitted by Dawn Meyers, Regional Director for Student Services

If you are out and about and meet an adorable 9 month old baby named Ja’Karee, make sure to tell him how lucky he is to have Jasmene Polite as his mommy! Jasmene is a student at Foothills Virtual. When Jasmene found out that she was pregnant at 16 years of age, she knew she needed to do school a little differently. “Finishing school is a priority to me,” said Jasmene, “but I needed a way to do school my own way.” She said, “Some people choose work or school—I chose both.” Jasmene works from 6:00 a.m.—6:00 p.m. five days a week at the daycare where Ja’Karee attends. Passionate about finishing school, Jasmene shared that she sometimes squeezes in schoolwork during naptimes and appreciates the help from Virtual teachers when she gets home in the evening and logs on. Her eventual career goals are either to become a pediatric dental hygienist or pediatric nurse.



Jasmene shared what she likes most about Foothills is that the teachers and staff motivate her to finish. She said that the focus is always “about me and about me progressing in school.” Jasmene also receives a monthly supply of diapers for Ja’Karee through the Foothills partnership with the Athens Area Diaper Bank. She says that the diapers are “real helpful” and that the Foothills Social Worker, Shenica Hunter, always seems to “come out of nowhere” to provide support.

The Athens Area Diaper Bank is celebrating [Diaper Needs Awareness Week](#) from September 18-24. Anyone who would like to help to support students like Jasmene can click [here](#) to find out more and to donate diapers.



2415 Jefferson Road, Suite B
Athens, GA 30607
www.foothillsrhs.org
706-395-9775

The Foothills Vision

Foothills Regional High School strives to be an accessible, high-quality high school option that is flexible and responsive to the needs of the People of Georgia and its communities.