

Northpointe Intermediate School
N2 Learning Innovative Schools Application
Northpointe Intermediate School
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Overview and Background

Northpointe Intermediate School, established in 2003, was initially recognized for its excellence, but it wasn't until 2020 the school focused on assessing student learning gaps to ensure students were prepared for the following year. Teachers became more data-driven, analyzing student data to tailor instruction and pacing. The administrative team prioritized creating dedicated collaboration time for teachers and utilized resources like Global PD to support the development of a formal PLC model. In the 2021-2022 school year, a new principal set expectations for deeper collaboration, establishing a PLC data room where teachers could meet weekly to analyze student data, celebrate growth, and identify areas for improvement. The following year, 2022-2023, saw further growth with teacher-led cadres and the consistent use of formative and summative assessments to guide instruction. Student data trackers became integral in monitoring progress, fostering a collaborative partnership between teachers and students to ensure ongoing learning and success. After feeling confident in our assessment usage and data tracking, the campus decided it was time to dive deeper into lesson engagement for our students as well as building capacity in our future leaders on campus. This deep dive led the campus into conversations around how to engage students in the classroom while still focusing on the content that is necessary for students to be successful.

Focus Areas

According to Article V: Organizational Transformation in the Creating a New Vision for Public Education in Texas document, “the teacher’s most important role is to be a designer of engaging experiences for students, supporting students in their work by incorporating more traditional roles as planner, presenter, instructor, and performer”. Our teacher teams took this statement and ran with it by creating engaging and immersive lessons that are not only fun for students but are also focused on standards students need to learn. In addition, Article V states that “profound learning as opposed to superficial learning comes more from engagement and commitment than from various forms of compliance, coercion, sanctions, or rewards”. These two statements have really driven decisions that are being made at every level at Northpointe this year by staff members and administration. Our focus is and has always been on student success, but in order to meet the needs of all students, our teachers also have to be confident in their teaching and leading abilities. Our staff will continually need to revisit and revise our teaching practices, collaboration, and student engagement aspects of teaching, but we are excited to see the growth on campus so far.

Work

While it is easy for teachers and staff members to get laser focused on state testing, Northpointe Intermediate staff decided to create lessons that are focused on the standards necessary for students to know while also providing a fun and exciting teaching environment. Our teams have decided to choose

one unit a nine weeks that they will make into a “room transformation” activity where the classroom transforms into something different for students to experience. This “change” in the learning environment gets students excited for the lesson and learning that is taking place, puts energy into the classroom, and has teachers positively collaborating about the lesson. When our teachers are excited and happy to be at work, it is infectious to the students and makes for an overall more positive learning environment and experience for everyone. These engaging room transformations have also provided an opportunity for teachers to provide more differentiated, personalized, and intentional learning experiences for all students. In addition, we have implemented instructional rounds for teachers to spend time in each other’s classrooms. This has been a school-wide initiative because it requires planning from the entire campus for class coverage and intentional conversations so other teachers from different content and grade levels are able to see room transformations in action and figure out how they can do something similar in their own classroom to benefit the students. This cross curricular and grade level collaboration has been a game-changer at Northpointe to continue to expand room transformations and teacher collaboration at every avenue possible.

Results

The greatest result of having room transformations take place among teams is to see the joy and fun teachers are having in their classrooms along with the collaboration that happens throughout not only the team, but the campus. A lot of times teachers are getting burnt out and tired of all the behind the scenes paperwork and requirements that come with being in education. It is a breath of fresh air when we see the excitement and joy room transformations bring to our campus each time a team does them. Also, having stronger collaboration among the teams and vertical teams when it comes to planning the room transformations has also changed the collaborative culture on our campus. According to our Panorama Education Survey, our school climate improved 6% from 82% to 88% favorable response. This survey area includes questions around the perceptions of the overall social and learning climate of the school. Additionally, the response around staff relationships improved 5% from 90% to 95% favorable response. This improvement in data focuses on questions around trust, how staff members face challenges and adversity together, relationships with each other and leadership, and respect of colleagues. This school year, our data driven conversations take place around room transformations and summative assessments to ensure students are learning and our teaching is focused on areas of need for each student. Our teachers and staff members are excited to bring new opportunities and learning activities to our students in order to give our best each day while they are at Northpointe. We have also seen results in pouring into our leaders through our Dominate Leadership sessions. In order for our teachers to pour into their teams and students, they must also get the attention and support needed to continue growing as a leader. It has been exciting to see our leaders take information and lessons learned from our leadership sessions and translate them into their classrooms and with their teams. By growing our own staff members it encourages others on campus to grow and stretch themselves as well. Northpointe is excited to continue monitoring how students have been positively impacted by the changes we have made throughout the school year through data driven student conversations, room transformations, and leadership development from the beginning of the year to end of year.