

Salem Elementary
SIP Meeting Agenda
October 22, 2015

The mission of Salem Elementary is to foster a safe and caring learning environment that celebrates individual uniqueness and promotes high expectations and critical thinking. By doing so, our students will be empowered to reach their full potential, becoming responsible members of society.

- I. Call to Order 7:45 a.m.
- II. General Announcement
- III. Upcoming Events
 - a. Fall Festival 10/23
 - b. Halloween Parade and Celebrations 10/30
 - c. Curriculum Day – No School 11/3
 - d. Student Council Elections – 11/6
 - e. Blue Ribbon Ceremony – 11/8-11/9
 - f. Turkey Trot 11/9-11/13
 - g. Conferences 11/17 and 11/19
- IV. School Improvement/NCA
 - a. Timeline of tasks
 - b. Executive summary
- V. Title I/Parental Involvement
 - a. Title 1 Plan
 - b. Rank in district for continued services
- VI. Budget Update
 - a. Recent transactions
 - b. Enrollment Adjustment
- VII. Old Business
- VIII. New Business
- IX. Additional Agenda Items
 - a. _____
- X. Items for next meeting.
 - a. _____
- XI. Adjournment 8:45 a.m.



Executive Summary

Salem Elementary School

South Lyon Community Schools

Mr. Raymond J Metcalf, Principal
7806 Salem Road
Salem, MI 48175

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Introduction

Every school has its own story to tell. The context in which teaching and learning takes place influences the processes and procedures by which the school makes decisions around curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The context also impacts the way a school stays faithful to its vision. Many factors contribute to the overall narrative such as an identification of stakeholders, a description of stakeholder engagement, the trends and issues affecting the school, and the kinds of programs and services that a school implements to support student learning.

The purpose of the Executive Summary (ES) is to provide a school with an opportunity to describe in narrative form the strengths and challenges it encounters. By doing so, the public and members of the school community will have a more complete picture of how the school perceives itself and the process of self-reflection for continuous improvement. This summary is structured for the school to reflect on how it provides teaching and learning on a day to day basis.

Description of the School

Describe the school's size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced in the last three years. Include demographic information about the students, staff, and community at large. What unique features and challenges are associated with the community/communities the school serves?

Salem Elementary School is one of seven elementary schools within the South Lyon Community School District. The school district encompasses approximately 83 square miles and Salem Elementary services approximately 36 square miles of that population. This school year, 402 students are enrolled at Salem 10 percent of that population being non-Caucasian. Salem Elementary is a Title I Targeted Assistance building with approximately thirty percent of the population receiving free or reduced lunch. The instructional staff of the school building is composed of 16 general education classroom teachers, two full-time and one part-time Reading Recovery teachers, one full-time and two part-time special education teachers, one speech and language pathologist, one half-time general education social worker, one part-time special education social worker and additional ancillary and ELL services as determined necessary by individual need. The building has one principal. The average class size within the building is approximately 25. Special education student certifications within the building range from Speech/Language Impairment, Autistic Impairment, Emotional Impairment, Learning Disabled and Other Health Impairments. Additionally we provide appropriate accommodations for students who qualify under section 504.

All schools in the South Lyon Community School District participate in what is called the Shared Involvement Process (SIP). "These teams, made up of parents, teachers, students (at the high school), support staff, and the principal make decisions for individual schools...Goals are set, strategies for achieving the goals are developed and [there is] evaluation of goal accomplishments" (SLCS Annual Report, 2009). These SIP teams are an integral part of building-level decision making including input regarding the school mission statement, and helping to ensure that decisions at the building level encompass community goals and concerns. The SIP team utilizes school district policy, guiding principles and Salem Elementary's mission statement to guide the decision making process.

The area of Salem Township and the Salem Township Hamlet are rural. Salem prides itself on being "an attractive place to live [having] been unaltered by non-residential land uses in the immediate and general environs" (Salem Area Historical Society). There are students whose families still earn a living through farming or whose families breed, train, and/or board horses. The Corner Store, less than one quarter of a mile from the school, is said to be original to the Hamlet and functions as an "old time" general store. While there has been little change in much of the land, there have been some environmental changes. There is a large manufactured home community within the Salem Elementary boundary and many of these families have relocated from more urban environments making for a varied composition within the school building. Additionally, as a result of boundary changes, Salem Elementary has acquired two new real estate developments within its boundaries.

The South Lyon school community, including Salem, is unique in that our greatest sense of diversity is economic. We serve students who come from affluence, middle class and some from poverty. Our low socio-economic status students come from one of two very different experiences/settings. We have large groups of lower socio-economic status (SES) students from both rural and urban type settings. While these students come from varied backgrounds, we recognize the need to teach the hidden rules of the middle class (under which schools generally operate) so students can continue to be successful.

Another challenge faced by Salem is the need for increased use of Habits of Mind. We are undergoing a change toward a school that has a culture of thinking, as opposed to the traditional work culture; this transformation is happening with staff and starting with students and

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families. It is our charge to have students focus on the thinking involved in the learning process and not just getting assignments and assessments "done". We are hopeful that this systemic change will bring about increases in student achievement.

In previous years, declining enrollment has been a challenge at Salem as it directly affected our budget and staffing. The past two school years have brought about a pleasant change to this. To offset the overcrowding in some schools and declining enrollment at Salem Elementary, the district moved forward with elementary boundary changes throughout the district.

Early on, this proved to be a challenge for some families, especially those who would be moving from a school that was less than two miles from their home to one that is nearly five miles away. However, as the year has progressed, many families have expressed their gratitude, thanks and pleasure with the transition. They have reported that they enjoy the close-knit community and the care the staff shows for each individual child. Many families who were redistricted still utilize the district's school-of-choice option, but we are confident that the recent positive experiences of new families will urge more families to attend Salem as it is their boundary school.

School's Purpose

Provide the school's purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs. Describe how the school embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students.

The vision of Salem Elementary School is to create a quality learning community that provides and promotes diverse educational opportunities for all. The mission of Salem Elementary is to foster a safe and caring learning environment that celebrates individual uniqueness and promotes high expectations and critical thinking. By doing so, our students will be empowered to reach their full potential, becoming responsible members of society. This is more than just our school's mission statement; this is the culture of our building. At Salem Elementary, we firmly believe every student can learn and grow if provided with the most conducive environment. In order to ensure that we are indeed living our mission and vision, the following special programs and services are provided/implemented:

- Instruction in Habits of Mind. South Lyon Community Schools implemented the teachings of Habits of Mind (HOM) nearly 15 years ago and it is systemic throughout the entire district. The 16 Habits identified are those that successful individuals demonstrate. These habits are explicitly taught in classrooms, in small groups, through school-wide practice, videos as well as individualized lessons with classroom teachers, social workers and the principal. Habits of Mind are scored on each child's report card, monitored through credentialing plans (part of the district's MTSS), and also tracked by teachers as part of their SMART goals for student progress.

- Our staff has been trained, and receives on-going training, on differentiating instruction through the workshop model of instruction. This professional learning ensures that individual student needs are being met when it comes to the core content areas.

- Staff and students participate in diversity awareness month as well as various acceptance building activities, especially for students with special needs. Our staff has spent a great deal of time working with students, families and other staff members to foster an awareness and appreciation for differences so that students are in an environment that is safe for them to grow academically, socially and emotionally. A new initiative this year, entitled "Caring Coyotes", focuses on students demonstrating kindness towards all members of our school community and students have an opportunity to extend this caring through our annual St. Jude's Mathathon fundraiser. Additionally, students have the opportunity to work together and demonstrate leadership skills through Safety Squad and our Student Council.

- Salem staff continues to be a district and county leader in the Culture of Thinking initiative. Three years ago, Salem was approached with an opportunity to become part of a cohort of schools who were interested in raising the level and frequency of thinking in their building. Buildings that chose to participate agreed to undergo a complete culture shift that will emphasize and value student thinking as opposed to work completion. Schools that are fostering a culture of thinking make thinking visible to all members of the school community and strive to have the adults engage in productive thinking as well.

The aforementioned programs/services are embedded in the culture of our school. Simply stated, it's the way things are done at Salem. A common language is shared so that all students know the expectations academically and socially in our school. Additionally, families are informed through various avenues of communication about our programs and services. By informing families as well as students, we aim to make sure all members of the school community are living our mission and vision.

Finally, to foster the relationship between home and school, Salem Elementary School takes many steps to ensure parent and community involvement. Parents are quite involved at Salem. Parent/Teacher conferences and Curriculum Nights are very well attended, as are the grade level musical programs and various PTO sponsored events. These events include Ice Cream Social, Muffins with Mom, Donuts with

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Dad, Fall Family Fun Night, Flag Day 5K, and Teacher Appreciation Week activities. Parents also generously offer their time by volunteering through the CHEERS (Citizens Helping Educators Encourage Responsible Students) program. Over the last several years, there has been an average of 2,200 hours worked in various capacities throughout the school. A Kids Hope Mentoring Program was implemented during the 2007/2008 school year in partnership with Fellowship Presbyterian Church in South Lyon, Michigan. This program continues to be successful. Each year, Salem participates in the Rouge Education Project water testing activities. This event draws over two dozen parent and former student volunteers annually. Additionally, the Salem Elementary School Community participates in the Shared Involvement Process (SIP). The SIP Team currently consists of three classroom teachers, one support staff member, three parents, one community member, and the building principal. As a Title 1 building we ensure that at least one of the parent members has a student who is receiving Title 1 services. The SIP Team sets building policy in line with district policy and develops a detailed budget focused on meeting both the material and staff development needs of the teachers and students.

Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

Describe the school's notable achievements and areas of improvement in the last three years. Additionally, describe areas for improvement that the school is striving to achieve in the next three years.

Salem Elementary Notable Assessment Achievement:

- Maintaining an average achievement level on the MEAP that exceeds that of the state and county in most academic areas.
 - Exceeding the state, county and district average for our economically disadvantaged subgroup on the MEAP.
- For these efforts, Salem was nominated to be a National Blue Ribbon School by the MDE.

Salem Elementary Notable Achievements/Points of Pride/Improvements:

- Salem Elementary continues to be a district and county leader in the Culture of Thinking initiative. We have conducted several tours for staff from other schools to share our growth in this learning. We are continuing our transformation toward becoming a Culture of Thinking as opposed to a "Culture of Work." Staff is engaged in professional learning experiences to increase efficacy and effectiveness in this transformation.
- Salem maintains a sensory closet with a wide variety of sensory tools available for all students so that they can receive any necessary sensory input/output. Several schools in the district seek guidance from Salem staff regarding this endeavor.
- Salem Elementary is heralded for its continued Green School initiatives, especially in the form of annual river testing. Friends of the Rouge Education Project work with 4th graders to test Johnson Creek, a nearby tributary of the Rouge River. The testing conducted on this day is used by the Friends of the Rouge organization. This special day correlates directly with the 4th grade science curriculum.
- Salem Elementary utilizes the Kids HOPE mentor program to provide many students with a connection to another adult who cares about them, The Kids HOPE mentors meet weekly with students and provide a positive experience with Habits of Mind, personal connections, and support with curriculum.

Salem Opportunities for Growth:

- While Salem is increasing in academic achievement in Math and ELA, we notice that our increase in achievement in math is not at the rate of ELA. We will continue to work toward developing strong mathematical thinkers through professional development and analysis of student products.
- In science, we recognize that our scores were below district, county, and state averages for the 2013 MEAP. We also notice that some students demonstrate difficulty with informational writing, specifically in the content areas in the form of constructed responses on district assessments.
- Our achievement gap data suggests that the gap is narrowing but not at the rate we would expect. We are continuing to address this in our School Improvement Plan and through district and school-driven initiatives.
- Continuing to educate families is an additional area that needs improvement. We use various methods of communication, but we can always improve to reach more families and educate them more about curriculum, instruction and how to help their child excel.
- In our small school, we have a strong group of core volunteers; however, for our school to continue to provide services to kids and families, more are needed. We are working toward increasing parental involvement in the form of volunteering.

Additional Information

Provide any additional information you would like to share with the public and community that were not prompted in the previous sections.

A district administrator once called Salem Elementary "the hidden gem of South Lyon." A truer statement couldn't be made. Salem is tucked away at the south end of the district and is unknown to many who pass by; however, those who do take a moment to stop by and get to know the school are pleasantly surprised. The students, families and staff have a tremendous sense of pride about this wonderful place for kids, and we cannot wait to share it with future families. Salem is a place where learning, thinking and community is valued, supported and lived. Student learning and safety is our charge, and we consistently use our resources to meet the needs of our students.