

Best Practices in SSHS Sustainability

Bradley County and Cleveland City School Districts
State of Tennessee



Best Practices in SSHS Sustainability

- Bradley County and Cleveland City TN School Districts
- Location: Southeast Tennessee
- Estimated Student Population: 15,000
- 24 campus facilities, 2 administrative facilities
- City and county government
 - Two mayors
 - 14 County Commissioners
 - 7 City Council members
- Estimated county population: 110,000

Best Practices in SSHS Sustainability

■ Capacity Building

- Professional development activities for staff
- EBI Training
 - **Certified staff on *Second Step, Life Skills***
 - **Currently have four Trainer of Trainers for *Second Step* and 10 Trainer of Trainers for *Life Skills***
 - **A Faith-Based Community Coordinator is trained on *Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol***
- Mental Health
 - **Certified trainers on Suicide Prevention – a required workshop for all schools**
- School Safety and Security
 - **Teachers and staff trained on Emergency Procedures**
 - **Staff trained on new inter and intra- school communication devices**
 - **Public School Safety and Security Coordinator trained on OSHA standards and CPTED [crime prevention through environmental design]**

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■ Communications/Marketing

- Weekly SSHS column in the local newspaper written by the SSHS Project Director
- Monthly newsletters e-mailed to partners, school administrators and Boards of Education members, local media, other interested citizens
- SSHS Brochure
- SSHS Partners' Brochure
- “Plugged In: Social Media and Non-Profits” – required workshop for all partners on social marketing and communications by a local university Communications professor
- 100s of articles submitted to the local and regional newspapers on SSHS activities and features on partners
- Several interviews on local radio station featuring SSHS Project Director

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■ Communications/Marketing

- Numerous presentations on SSHS implementation activities to both Boards of Education
- Presentations to the County Commission and City Council
- Numerous presentations to both city and county school administrative groups
- Presentation to Parent Advisory Groups
- Presentations to area civic groups, local ministerial association and churches
- Administrative Assistant responsible for communications materials is regular member of the Cleveland Media Association

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■ Cultural Competence

- Key partner – Ocoee Regional Multicultural Services
 - **Offers translation services for English as Second Language [ESL] parents and students during the following:**
 - School registration
 - Parent conferences
 - **Assists ESL parents in accessing community social services**
 - **Produced The Mosaic Guide – community resources specifically designed for ESL citizens**
- Formed culturally diverse student advisory group for ATOD usage prevention [GRAAB]
- Funded diverse student group to attend CADCA conference for two years in DC
- Hired a Inspiring Tomorrow's Leaders Today [ITLT] Director to promote leadership skills among our most diverse middle and high school populations
- Printed an anti-drug brochure in Spanish

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■ Evaluation

- Formed an evaluation team consisting of three college professors, Project Director, and community organizer
- Held monthly meetings to discuss SSHS project implementation activities, to review data collection process and to forecast outcomes effectiveness
- Designated one evaluation team member to conduct regular on-site visits with each partner
- Designed, administered, and evaluated three annual School Climate Surveys with comparative three-year trend data
- Presented three-year data to both school administrative groups
- Referred to the School Climate Survey data in the weekly newspaper column written by the SSHS Project Director

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■ Evaluation

- Required campus administrators to use this school climate data in their respective School Leadership Teams working on the School Improvement Plans
- Conducting a study of the outcome effectiveness of *Life Skills* with middle schools using pre and post test data
- Established GRPA measures and reported three-year data on each of these measures to NET and local school administrators
- Presented evaluation data to partners to support changes needed to address Initiative goals
- Purchased a scanner and printed scan sheets for the two districts to continue the annual administration and evaluation of the School Climate Survey
- Designed and used the Logic Model for evaluation monitoring

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■ Finance

- Hired our own SSHS Bookkeeper/Human Resources Director
- Used *Quick Books* software for all financial records
- Produced monthly financial reports in an Excel spreadsheet format showing the percentage of funds expended, each partner's allocation, expenditure amount and percentage and amount of federal draw downs
- Compiled a series of personnel forms for leave time and travel consistent with the fiscal agent's policies
- Presented our financial records keeping systems at a SSHS conference for 2008 Project Directors and school district budget managers
- Had two successful “no-find” audits of our financial records
- Sought additional grant funding for partners by writing and assisted in writing future grants
- Completed contracts for each partner with specific requirements regarding financial records and an attached annual budget
- Partners know that invoices are due the 20th of each month with attached receipts

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■ Implementation of Programs/Activities

- *Second Step* training has now occurred in all elementary schools
- *Life Skills* is taught to all city middle school students and 7th & 8th graders at a county middle school
- Created a system of care for helping students whose social/emotional problems mitigate against academic achievement
 - **A referral process for students with behavioral problems or mental health issues is in place and observations and follow-up is done by Learning Support Specialists [LSS] in each district**
 - **A team of mental health counselors offers free in-school counseling to students referred from the LSS**
- Updated District Safety Plans are now available in secure online versions
- Each school has a School Safety Team trained on how to conduct Security and Vulnerability Assessments

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- Implementation of Programs/Activities
 - Behavioral Assistants work with pre-school teachers in dealing with disruptive pre-schoolers and identify those students/families who need further counseling
 - Anger management classes are now offered to pre-k – 12 students through a SSHS partner
 - An anti-underage drinking organization [AUDIO-C], a spin off of SSHS, presents programs regularly in all middle and high schools
 - An ATOD usage prevention coalition, Going Respectfully Against Addictive Behavior [GRAAB] another spinoff of SSHS, has strong student participation and a middle school student recommended the title for the organization

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■ Leadership

- Through discussions with the SSHS Project Director, the entire Juvenile Justice Department has changed its operation from a punitive model to one based on prevention/intervention
- SSHS Project Director is linked closely with all Board of Education members, two Directors of Schools, city and county governmental officials and actively participates in the political and governmental process
- All partners are issued contracts annually which include specific requirements regarding data collection and submission and federal report deadlines; annual budgets are attached to each contract

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■ Management and Governance

- Monthly partners' meetings keep all partners aware of the Initiative's implementation and management structure
- Staff decisions are made collaboratively and with input from the evaluation team based on quantitative data
- Partners express their concerns directly to the on-site evaluator and/or to the Project Director
- Issues or concerns are addressed within the same day by the Project Director through e-mail

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■ Partnerships

- Three SSHS partners [YMCA, Boys' & Girls' Club, and Bradley Initiative for Church and Community] jointly fund a Mentoring Coordinator to work with most economically disadvantaged youth
- A partner, Bradley/Cleveland Rehab Services, has joined forces with the two districts and LSS and through SSHS funding, established a Youth Counseling Center providing free counseling; future funding will be come from a phased-in third party reimbursement
- Clear expectations for all partners to work together and to attend monthly partners' meetings were initiated at the beginning of the project and listed on their annual contract
- Various partners have had responsibility for presenting topics at the monthly meetings

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■ Partnerships

- Partners have collaborated on numerous community events at various locations
- From the beginning, the Logic Model was presented to partners taking one Element at a time and looking at the specific goals, objectives, activities, and GPRA measures associated with each
- At every Partners' Meeting, there is a Powerpoint presentation which lists various activities sponsored by the respective partners

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■ Policy

- SSHS Initiative goals were discussed with both school district administrators and alignment with their School Improvement Plans were made
- Detailed minutes of all Partner's Meetings are kept and distributed to each partner
- All partners understand the policies and procedures for submitting annual budget requests

Best Practices in SSHS Sustainability

■ Strategic Planning

- From the beginning, the project was always referred to as an INITIATIVE and NOT a grant!
- A specific retreat was held during FY2 which was attended by 56 people including partners, Board of Education members, and local elected officials to draft a Strategic Plan document with a timeline that carries the activities forward through 2011
- A sequel organization, called Community Action Network [CAN], was introduced at the SSHS Legacy Luncheon held at the end of FY3
 - New organization will operate with the SSHS partners funded during FY4 and other community organizations under the direction of the United Way

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■ Strategic Planning

- Strategic plan retreat was facilitated by an external facilitator with a guest speaker [Knoxville Mayor] who shared a vision of community collaboration for problem solving
- Individual spokes of the Legacy Wheel were presented at monthly Partners' Meetings with discussion as to how each partner could contribute to sustainability
- SSHS Project Director routinely notified and assisted partners of additional funding sources

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