

**THE DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION
OF A NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION PROGRAM
FOR A GROWING SCHOOL DISTRICT**

by

Jeffrey Klein

An education leadership portfolio submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

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Approved:

Ralph P. Ferretti, Ph.D.
Director of the School of Education

Approved:

Carol Vukelich, Ph.D.
Dean of the College of Education and Human Development

Approved:

Ann L. Ardis, Ph.D.
Senior Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Education

I certify that I have read this education leadership portfolio and that in my opinion it meets the academic and professional standard required by the University as an education leadership portfolio for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Signed:

Carol Wong, Ph.D.
Professor in charge of education leadership portfolio

I certify that I have read this education leadership portfolio and that in my opinion it meets the academic and professional standard required by the University as an education leadership portfolio for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Signed:

Joan Buttram, Ph.D.
Member of education leadership portfolio committee

I certify that I have read this education leadership portfolio and that in my opinion it meets the academic and professional standard required by the University as an education leadership portfolio for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Signed:

Elizabeth Farley-Ripple, Ph.D.
Member of education leadership portfolio committee

I certify that I have read this education leadership portfolio and that in my opinion it meets the academic and professional standard required by the University as an education leadership portfolio for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Signed:

Marion Proffitt, Ed.D.
Member of education leadership portfolio committee

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ABSTRACT

In 2009, district data revealed that new students at Appoquinimink School District (ASD) were struggling academically and socially. Several specific steps were taken to improve the outcomes of these new students. First, an in-depth review of the relevant data regarding new students in the district was conducted. A white paper on relevant research about new students and successful strategies to support them was created to guide district efforts going forward. Based on these first two steps, goals were created and formalized in the district's strategic plan to address new students' needs. To achieve these goals, ASD adopted two key strategies: a beginning-of-year data sheet and a New Student Orientation Handbook. The beginning-of-year data sheet provided school staff with valuable information on new students while the Handbook listed the supports that should be provided to new students.

Based upon a "status check" conducted shortly after the New Student Orientation, improvement strategies were enacted. We concluded that the program was effective in increasing instructional staff awareness of who the new students were in their classes as well as their instructional needs. Additionally, there was evidence that some reduction in the discrepancy of discipline referrals between new and established students took place.

An evaluation at the end of the school year examined both the fidelity of implementation of the orientation program and students' and parents' satisfaction with the program. An audit to determine whether student orientation procedures were followed revealed that many schools seemed to be inconsistently implementing key

elements of the orientation program. Procedures were followed with more fidelity at the elementary level than at the secondary level. Although the majority of the schools provided welcome packets, completed the new student inventories, and provided the incoming students with at least some type of orientation to the school, the secondary schools often did not have their teachers or counselors provide a phone call home or create success plans for new students. Results of the student and parent surveys indicated that school staff were typically very welcoming to new students and opened to assisting them when they needed help. Additionally, the students and parents both reported relatively positive experiences and reported being largely satisfied with their new school. Analyses of academic achievement data suggested that both new and established students saw the same amount of within-year scale score growth, but new students started the school year significantly underperforming established students (in both ELA and Math) and also ended the year underperforming, too.

Based upon these findings, three recommendations were made. First, we should focus our efforts on providing new students a formal orientation to the school and strengthening communication regarding their child's progress to the parents of new students. Orientation activities promised to parents and students upon registration need to be provided. All students should be provided an orientation to the school itself, including being shown the layout of the buildings and location of classes. Parents should be contacted via email or phone to be given feedback on their child's academic performance and adjustment to their new school. Next, we should

understand that not all new students are coming to our district's schools from similar circumstances and enter with a variety of strengths and weaknesses. It is important not to develop a "one-size-fits-all" approach to meeting their diverse needs. Doing so will result in time and resources being devoted to unwarranted circumstances and will decrease the effectiveness of efforts to assist new students. Instead, interventions and supports need to be tailored to meet each individual student's needs. The final recommendation is that we should identify academic struggles early and provide additional support immediately. Our evidence indicates that new students enter the school district performing worse than their established peers and finish the school year behind these peers, too. Although new students are making the same amount of growth as established students and thus not falling further behind after entry in our schools, students who are in need of additional academic supports should receive these interventions in a timely manner in order to close the gap.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

A number of studies have found that student mobility appears to have a negative effect on both academic achievement (Isernhagen & Bulkin, 2011; Mao, Whitsett, & Mellor, 1997) and social outcomes (Eckenrode, Rowe, Laird & Brathwaite, 1995; Fowler-Finn, 2001; Mehana, 1997; Reynolds, 2000; Rumberger & Larson, 1998). Appoquinimink School District (ASD) is a rapidly growing district and due to this growth, ASD sees a large number of students, approximately 500 new students per a school year, who were not enrolled in the district the previous year. Several specific steps were taken to improve the outcomes of these new students. First, an in-depth review of the relevant data regarding new students in the district was conducted. A white paper on relevant research and successful strategies to support new students was created to guide district efforts going forward. Based on these first two steps, goals were created and formalized in the district's strategic plan to address new students' needs. To achieve these goals, ASD adopted two key strategies: a beginning-of year data sheet and a New Student Orientation Handbook. The beginning-of-year data sheet provided school staff with valuable information on new students while the Handbook listed the supports that were supposed to be provided to new students. Next, a status check was performed early in the implementation of the program and an evaluation was conducted later on. Finally, a presentation of the

current status of the program was developed. Additional details regarding this improvement process will be discussed at length within this document.

There are six chapters and appendices included within this document. This first chapter acts as an introduction to the work and provides a general outline on how we addressed the problem of new student performance at Appoquinimink. Chapter 2 details the nature of the problem while Chapter 3 describes some of the improvement strategies we took to attempt to address the problem. Chapter 4 provides information on how we measured and tracked the success of our improvement efforts. In Chapter 5, I share some of my reflections regarding our improvement efforts. In Chapter 6, my thoughts on my own leadership development can be found. Finally, the appendices include my original proposal as well as eight artifacts that address my problem statement. The artifacts are as follows:

Artifact 1: Initial Data Review and Presentation of Findings

Artifact 2: White Paper on New Students

Artifact 3: Appoquinimink Race to the Top Plan/ Strategic Plan

Artifact 4: Beginning of Year Data Sheet

Artifact 5: New Student Orientation Handbook

Artifact 6: Early Status Check of Program

Artifact 7: Evaluation of Program

Artifact 8: Board Presentation of Results

Chapter 2

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

In the 2009-2010 school year, 7.7% of all students enrolled in Delaware public schools did not attend the school they initially enrolled in during the fall for the full academic school year (Delaware Department of Education, 2011). In other words, these students could be described as transient in that they are students who enroll in one school at the beginning of the year and end up transferring to another sometime during the subsequent school year or dropped out of school entirely. Historically, more attention has been given to the impact of various student characteristics on academic performance such as race, low-income status, English language proficiency, and special education status than on the enrollment history of the student. For example, the state of Delaware's focus on these non-enrollment related student characteristics is reflected in the subgroups measured for Adequate Yearly Progress according to Delaware's Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook (United States Department of Education, 2011).

Many current school, district, and state policies often assume that student enrollment occurs in a linear fashion, whereby student progresses sequentially from kindergarten to 12th grade in 13 years) and circumscribed manner, whereby a student starts their education in a school or school district and graduates from there years later. I believe that this failure to recognize the existence and effects of student mobility culminates in many lost opportunities to help students both academically and socially.

Several studies have found that student mobility appears to have a negative effect on academic achievement. For example, Osher, Morrison, and Bailey (2003) found that high school students (grades 9-12) who changed schools were more likely to have academic problems and eventually leave school altogether without obtaining a diploma than those students who remained in the same school. Additionally, based on examination of statewide assessments, studies have found that student mobility seems to have a negative effect on academic achievement (Isernhagen & Bulkin, 2011; Mao, Whitsett, & Mellor, 1997) and on a school's ability to make Adequate Yearly Progress (Mao, Whitsett, & Mellor, 1997; Thompson, Meyers, & Oshima, 2011).

Not surprisingly, student mobility can result in not only negative academic outcomes, but social outcomes as well (Eckenrode, Rowe, Laird & Brathwaite, 1995; Fowler-Finn, 2001; Mehana, 1997; Reynolds, 2000; Rumberger & Larson, 1998). Rumberger (2003) pointed out that both the academic performance of new students and their socialization might be related to each other. Through this research, new students needed time to adjust to a new curriculum and new academic norms as well as a new social environment with new classmates. Research also revealed that weak peer relationships, which are typically seen by high mobility students, appear to increase the risk of these students struggling academically (Reynolds, et. al, 2009).

Problem Statement

Appoquinimink School District (ASD) is a rapidly growing district. On almost all district publications, Appoquinimink is referred to as “Delaware’s fastest growing school district.” Since 2000, ASD has seen its student population grow from 5,474 to 10,644 in 2016 (almost doubling in size). Because of this growth, ASD sees a large number of students who were not enrolled in the district the previous year. Although a number of students typically move to the school district during the summer and enroll for the first time at the start of the school year, 5.4% of the student body does not remain enrolled in the same school for the entire school year. While this rate is below that of the state of Delaware, it still encompasses a large number of students in ASD, approximately 500 per year.

Through some early data analysis, I found that students new to the district appeared to have significantly lower score academic achievement compared to students who attended ASD the year before. For example, Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) data from the Fall administration during the 2011-2012 school year (depicted in Table 1) indicated that about 58% of established students meet the reading standard and 46% of new students meet that same standard. Likewise, for the math portion of the DCAS assessment, 45% of established students met the standard during the fall administration compared to 32.7% of new students

Table 1 Percentage of Students Meeting the Standard Fall 2011

Type of student	n	Math	ELA
New	452	32.7	46.2
Established	5539	45	58.5

In order to assess social integration of news students, discipline referrals were examined. For the 2010-2011 school year, students new to the district were found to have slightly more discipline referrals when compared to students who have been in the district longer than one year. These results are depicted in Table 2.

Table 2 Discipline Referrals by Student Type for the 2010/2011 School Year

Type of student	n	M (SD)
New	452	0.35 (1.22)
Established	5539	0.20 (0.81)

An examination of district and school plans revealed that we did not have in place any protocols to help schools deal with new students. For example, the majority of schools did not have welcome packet for new students, and most did not provide parents and students an orientation to their new school. Furthermore, based upon discussions with school administrators and teachers, many were unaware of who the new students actually were, especially if the student moved to the district during the summer break). Finally, although our pupil accounting system (eSchool) did provide a

record of new student entry information, these data can be very difficult to retrieve and interpret.

Based upon this initial round of analysis, I was able to determine several things. First, our district had a large number of new students coming into the district annually. Second, based upon Fall DCAS scores from the 2010-2011 school year, these new students were struggling more academically when compared to peers who attended a school within the district the previous school year. Third, students new to the district were being written up for more discipline incidents compared to their peers as well. Finally, no procedures were in place to assist these new students and their families in their transition to ASD.

Organizational Role

During this time, I performed the following duties related to my position as Coordinator of Research, Development and Evaluation at Appoquinimink School District:

1. Coordinate research, planning and evaluation of special projects and programs.
2. Lead in the preparation of the district's strategic plan, balanced scorecard, and school profiles.
3. Oversee databases, information flow and the interpretation of data related to student achievement.

4. Assist the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Business Office and other administrative personnel in the preparation and analysis of statistical data as required.
5. Assist curriculum staff, principals, and district administrators in developing and using methods and procedures pertinent to instruction, assessment, and achievement reporting.
6. Assess existing programs for impact and value to student achievement and district mission and make recommendations for improvement.
7. Research and recommend best practices to improve student achievement and operational efficiency.
8. Provide information on most effective strategies to implement state and federal mandates.
9. Collaborate with Directors, Principals, and other appropriate staff within the district to ensure coordination of resources and planning.
10. Provides data and reports for district departments and state requirements.
11. Provide consulting services to administrators and staff on data interpretation and use.

In summary, through my role at Appoquinimink, I was responsible for identifying potential areas where the district was either excelling or underperforming and to suggest ways to improve the way the district operates. It was through these attempts to identify gaps in student performance that the issues related to new students in the district first came to my attention.

Fortunately, a great deal of my job responsibilities fit in perfectly with the scope of this project. In general, my data analysis and research skills allowed me to access the information needed to assess the success of the orientation program. At the same time, my responsibilities did not involve the direct supervision of any other employee at ASD. It was thus essential that I effectively communicate concerns to supervisors and work with them to mobilize their staff to meet the strategies that I believed would help students.

Organizational Improvement Goal

As the data showed, one of the critical areas where improvement was needed was the academic performance of students new to Appoquinimink. We also recognized that there were data suggesting that the students might be struggling socially, too. Most notably, new students were observed having more discipline referrals than established students were. Based upon this information, we set the improvement goal for new students in Appoquinimink's strategic plan as follows:

“Students new to the district will meet with academic success, meeting or exceeding the state and local standards within one year of enrolling in our school district.”

Although this is a good general goal to have, we understood that to meet this goal several strategies would have to be followed through in order to support the academic needs of new students. To achieve this goal, we would need to create a new student orientation committee that could explore and develop new ways to support and

monitor the academic and social needs of our students. It was imperative that we focused not just on the academic needs of the students, but the social needs, too, since the level of social integration within the school likely had an impact on student academic performance. Using this approach, we decided to follow the recommendations by Isernhagen and Bulkin (2011). Their research on mobility-related issues provided the following recommendations: The district should create and maintain a transition program that works to obtain and share new student records, connect the student to the new academic environment, and facilitate social integration with their peers.

Chapter 3

IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

Several specific steps were taken to improve the outcomes of new students in Appoquinimink School District. First, I conducted an in-depth review of the relevant data on new students in the district and communicated these findings to administration and other stakeholders. Next, a white paper on relevant research about new students and successful strategies to support them was created to be shared with school administration and to inform the development of our interventions for new students. We also formalized our efforts to assist new students by including goals related to these improvement strategies in our Race to the Top and District Strategic Plans. Our improvement strategy was further carried out through the development of two key components: a beginning-of-year data sheet and a New Student Orientation Handbook. The beginning-of-year data sheet provided school staff with valuable information on new students while the Handbook outlined the supports that were expected to be provided to new students.

Initial Data Review and Presentation of Findings

Prior to our administrative retreat in June of 2010, I analyzed achievement and enrollment data and prepared a presentation of my findings. First, I wanted to do a “deeper dive” with the enrollment data to see if I could pinpoint any trends in student enrollment. Using data from 1998 to 2010, I observed that Appoquinimink typically saw an 8% increase in students from the previous school year, excluding years that

were anomalies, such as 2002 when MOT Charter School opened). Although this rate was somewhat slowing compared to what was seen in the late 1990s, it is important to note that the district still saw an influx of over 200 new students compared to the previous year. Additionally, the growth in students did not appear to be occurring within one particular grade or school-level (elementary, middle or high). Instead, each grade appeared to be seeing steady increases in students, and this rate was only interrupted by the opening of new non-district schools in the Middletown-Odessa-Townsend area, such as MOT Charter or St. Georges Technical High School.

Although I had previously determined that new students were underperforming established students on the Delaware state assessment (DSTP), I was interested in seeing if this underperformance was due to a gap in abilities between the two groups of students or if it was due to established students' familiarity with the state test. To accomplish this, I looked into their performance on NWEA's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment. This is a computer adaptive, nationally normed assessment that we administered three times per year to students in grades 1 through 10. These achievement data revealed relatively small differences in the scores for new and established students indicated that there were different types of new students based upon two factors: (1) where they attended school previously and (2) what time of year they entered the school district. This early analysis suggested that out-of-state struggled more than in-state new students did, especially if the student entered the school mid-year.

After examining these results from our district-administered assessment (MAP), I decided to look at the results from the DSTP again. This time, however, I wanted to answer a question posed by principals regarding how much of an effect new students had on their accountability results. To do this, I calculated the effect that new students had on their overall percentage of students meeting the standard by grade and by building. In other words, I calculated the percentage of students meeting the standard with new students removed and then found the difference between the percentage of students meeting the standard with all students, including new students and students who attended Appoquinimink the previous school year)

I examined the results of this analysis by school and grade. Most schools saw their overall percentage of students meeting the standard negatively affected with the inclusion of new students. One school saw a large negative impact with its overall percentage of students meeting the standard dropping by 7.5 points due to the inclusion of new students. A few schools, on the other hand, appeared to be relatively unaffected by the influx of new students. In general, the secondary schools appeared to be much more negatively impacted by the inclusion of new students compared to the elementary schools; both high schools saw some of the largest drops in their percentage of students meeting the standard when new students were included in the sample. Ninth grade reading performance was particularly affected by the inclusion of new students: There was a drop of 5.4 points at one high school and 6.4 points at the other high school. Mathematics revealed similar results, a drop of 5.4 points at one school and 5.9 points at the other.

Although the administrators were somewhat receptive to the presentation of the MAP data, the proficiency- and accountability-related DSTP results seemed to catch their interest more. This is not surprising since administrators typically viewed the MAP data as a tool to gain information on what specific students were likely to struggle meeting proficiency at the end of the year. In other words, although the administrators found the MAP data interesting, they really took note of the DSTP data because it told them that by continuing to not adequately meet the needs of this subgroup of students, they were possibly putting themselves danger of missing AYP.

White Paper on New Students

Next, a white paper on new students was developed to inform school and district staff on best practices for assisting new students. To accomplish this, I first conducted a search of the existing research using the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) website. ERIC is an online library of education research and information, sponsored by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) of the U.S. Department of Education. To conduct the search, I utilized search terms such as “new students”, “student mobility”, and “student transience.” In combination with these terms, I further narrowed the results by searching for the terms “outcomes” and “strategies.” Finally, due the large number of articles that were identified using these methods, I narrowed my pool by filtering to include only peer-reviewed research. This provided me with a much more manageable and relevant series of articles to review.

Based upon this literature review, I found that many students experience changes in schools in the United States. In fact, it is estimated that one in six U.S. households will experience a geographic move each year (Pribesh & Downey, 1999). Additionally, mobility has been shown to have a negative effect on academic performance, grade retention, and graduation rate (Isernhagen & Bulkin, 2011; Mao, Whitsett, & Mellor, 1997). Highly mobile students have also been shown to have weaker peer relationships and higher rates of discipline issue in schools, such as suspensions (Eckenrode, Rowe, Laird & Brathwaite, 1995; Fowler-Finn, 2001; Mehana, 1997; Reynolds, 2000; Rumberger & Larson, 1998). Having a larger number of mobile students has also been shown to affect a school's overall performance on standardized assessments (both norm and criterion referenced). These results often make it more difficult for these schools to meet accountability requirements, such as AYP (Thompson, Meyers, & Oshima, 2011; Mao, Whitsett, & Mellor, 1997).

Highly mobile students have also been found to more likely come from disadvantaged backgrounds and to live in single-parent homes when compared to their less mobile peers. These students also were more likely to experience adverse childhood experiences, such as abuse or neglect. Research indicated that it is likely that these underlying background characteristics of mobile students accounted for the bulk of the negative academic and social effects experienced by these students (Alexander, Entwisle & Dauber, 1996).

Several effective interventions for mobile students were identified within the literature. First, teacher engagement with the new students was found to be effective

in transitioning the student to their new school (Gruman, Harachi, Abbot, Catalano, & Fleming, 2008). Success was also seen in offering new students peer-led orientation programs and various attempts to foster strong school-home bonds (Bogat, Jones, & Jason, 1980). Finally, intense home- and school-based tutoring was found to be effective in assisting the most high-risk mobile students (Jason and Danner, 1993).

Based upon the findings of this literature review, I developed three recommendations. First, we should understand that students move to new schools for many reasons and consequently, we should not develop a uniform strategy for meeting the diverse needs of new students. A student may be new to Appoquinimink because their parents “choiced” them in, the family built a new home, or the family was forced to find a new place to live due to financial hardship. Moreover, different interventions may be needed for students who entered the school mid-year than for those who entered the school at the beginning of the year, such as additional monitoring for academic and social difficulties. In order to develop the most appropriate strategy for meeting the needs and strengths of each student, the school staff needed to secure strong student and parent engagement.

Second, we needed to provide interventions for new students. Peer-led orientation activities should be developed and implemented at all schools to assist new students in their transition to their new school. Efforts should be made to inform teachers of new students and encourage the teachers to purposefully engage these students and their families. Indicators of abuse and neglect should be monitored closely for new students, especially those who join the school mid-year. Follow-up

support by our social workers and school counselors should be provided to these students as appropriate. Finally, intensive tutoring should be considered for these high-risk students, too.

Finally, student mobility should be considered when evaluating overall school performance. Since having a high number of mobile students has been correlated with decreased school performance, the overall mobility rate of those schools should be examined when making accountability determinations.

Appoquinimink Race to the Top/Strategic Plan

In June of each year, around the third week, Appoquinimink School District schedules a two-day administrator retreat. The retreat in June of 2010 took place at St. Andrew's School in Middletown, DE. On the first day of the retreat, all district office administrators, school administrators, and school board members focused on recapping the previous school year. This included an analysis of school- and district-level data as well as administrators highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the academic year. The second day focused on using the information covered during the first day to develop our plan for the upcoming school year. As the Coordinator of Research, Development, and Evaluation, my job was to lead the discussion of the previous year's results and then assist the Superintendent in the strategic planning activities. It was at this time that I shared my findings about new students and their academic and social struggles at Appoquinimink.

After my presentation, the majority of those in attendance agreed that we, as a district, should be more concerned about supporting the academic and social needs of new students. My next step was to make sure that the urgency to help these students would not be lost after the retreat adjourned.

In the months after the retreat in June of 2010, we engaged in further discussions about the key parts of the strategic plan at various meetings and workshops. During that time, district staff and the school board continued to agree that ensuring the success of new students should somehow be included as a new goal in the district's strategic plan. Based upon this feedback, I wrote the following goal with the assistance of other district office staff: "students new to the district will meet with academic success; meeting or exceeding the state and local standards within one year of enrolling in our school district."

Once the goal was created, the next step was to formally include it in our plan, create targets to measure whether this goal (and the others in the plan) were being met, and communicate it to our staff. For the majority of targets that I created, the targets were chosen to align with the guidance we received from the state related to the Race to the Top (RTTT) grant. Since we were already obligated to set targets under our RTTT grant, I aligned our strategic plan goals to the state's expectations to avoid having two separate guiding documents for the district.

The state's preferred method of target setting at the time was setting a goal of a 50% reduction of the undesired outcome by 2015. So, for example, if a district had a 90% graduation rate in 2010, the target graduation rate in 2015 would be 95%. When

creating the targets for the new student orientation program, I found that such an approach did not quite fit for this particular goal because I believed that it was possible to eliminate the gap entirely by 2015. Instead, I looked at the existing gap between new and established students of roughly ten percentage points in both reading and math DCAS and set a goal of a two-percentage “shrinkage” of this gap every year. Ultimately, using this method, the goal was to have no gap between these two groups of students during the 2015-2016 school year.

Once the goal of assisting the needs of new students was included in the strategic plan and specific targets created to measure progress, the final step was to communicate this new effort to staff. Since a large number of staff members at all levels of schooling would be expected to support this effort, it was important to find an opportunity to effectively communicate the reason why we were doing these additional activities to support new students. I suggested that we include a few slides at our August “Back to School” event for staff. The superintendent agreed that this was a good idea and asked me to supply the information to include in his keynote presentation that day.

First, to frame the problem for the staff in attendance, I gave some background on the number of new students Appoquinmink School District saw during the 2010 school year. Knowing that a large number of the staff in attendance were classroom teachers, I made sure to include figures that showed how many new students would be included in a typical Appoquinimink classroom.

After the number of new students was discussed, I included two slides that attempted to summarize the gap in performance that was observed between new and established students. Although I usually would have used a bar graph to depict this difference, we decided to go with a line graph since it simply depicted the difference and was easier to project in the large high school auditorium. The graphs depicted new and established 2009-2010 DCAS performance in terms of percentage of students meeting the standard.

The final slide I created provided a brief overview of the strategies that we would be using that upcoming year in order to assist the new students in their transition to a new school. This was perhaps the most important information regarding the new student orientation program that was shared with the staff since a large number of them would be directly involved in the process.

Beginning of Year Data Sheet

One of the most important steps to support new students was to provide schools with an accurate and up-to-date listing of the new students. In addition to providing a list of who the new students were, we provided as much relevant educational data we had on these students to the schools. To assist in this effort, I created a Microsoft Excel database of all relevant academic data for the new and established students each school. This information was sent via the state email system to the designated school liaison and the administrative staff at each school at the

beginning of the school year, after the first MAP administration in early Fall, and after the Winter MAP administration in February. The information was then passed on to individual teachers and shared during each school's professional learning communities (PLCs).

The file contained a large amount of data. First, the file contained basic student data such as student name, grade, and school. In addition to this information, demographic data on each student, including gender, race, special education status, and English language learner status, were provided. The file also included some data specifically related to the new student orientation process. For example, using registration data, I included a field that indicated what Delaware district or charter school the student attended the previous school year. It also indicated if the student was home schooled or educated out of state or out of country the previous school year. Once the first round of MAP testing was completed in September, the file was updated to include the name of the student's math and ELA teacher. Finally, DSTP and/or MAP data from the previous school were provided if the student took either of those assessments during the previous spring testing window. DSTP data were provided for the Mathematics and Reading assessments, including both scale scores and performance levels. For MAP, the student's percentile ranks for the mathematics and reading assessments were provided, along with their projected DSTP performance, which was based upon an alignment study conducted between the two assessments.

Understanding that this is a lot of information for school staff to digest, I sought to simplify the data by creating a metric that attempted to classify the students

based upon their prior year assessment results. I named this metric simply “Math Risk”, “ELA Risk”, and “Total Risk.” The metric was created so that for each tested subject, a scale ranging from -10 (denoting the highest academic risk) to +10 (least risk) was created. The actual performance level from the DSTP and the projected DSTP performance level from the MAP was utilized. The way that the risk points were allocated can be found below in Table 3.

Table 3 Allocation of Risk Factor Points based upon Performance Level

Performance Level	Risk Points	
	DSTP	MAP
1	-8	-2
2	-4	-1
3	0	0
4	4	1
5	8	2

Using this system, a student who was a PL2 on the DSTP would receive -4 risk points. Based upon MAP data, if that student was projected to be a PL2 on the Spring DSTP, they would receive -1 risk points. In this example, the student would have a total risk score of -5 for that tested subject. I chose to weigh actual DSTP results more heavily than the MAP assessment projections since the DSTP was aligned with the Delaware State Standards while the MAP assessment was not. When sharing this risk

metric with the schools, I took special care to inform them of the relatively rudimentary nature of the metric and its uses and misuses.

New Student Orientation Handbook

Next, the new student orientation handbook was created to establish a set of procedures for schools to engage in to ensure the success of students new to Appoquinimink. This handbook was created late in the summer of 2010.

To create the handbook, we worked to formalize a process in which new students' academic and social needs were monitored in every school within the district. To accomplish this goal, I shared my ideas with our district's Supervisor of Student Services. I knew that this feat of rolling out a new district-wide process could not be accomplished through my one-person office alone. With the assistance of Student Services, we involved a diverse subset of school staff, including teachers, counselors and principals in the creation of the handbook and the recommended practices that it contained. Recognizing that students were struggling at all grade levels, we made sure that all four school levels (early childhood, elementary, middle, and high school) were represented in our committee.

One of the first steps for our committee was to review the existing data regarding the performance of new students in Appoquinimink. To accomplish this task, I shared a great deal of the data that was discussed earlier in this chapter. Next, I shared relevant research to help the committee better understand not only the

academic and social impact of being a new student, but more importantly, to introduce the committee members to the various research-supported interventions for new students. Based upon this research, we believed that teacher engagement, an orientation program (preferably peer-led), school-home communication, and intensive interventions for students with academic needs would all be necessary components for this program to be effective. We also decided to use Isernhagen and Bulkin's (2011) recommendations to create and maintain a transition program that obtains and shares new student records, connects student to the new academic environment, and facilitates social integration with their peers as guiding principles in the development of the handbook and its related procedures.

As part of this process, forms were developed to assist in the academic and social monitoring of new students. A full listing of procedures, including the appropriate forms, were developed for the following grade levels: early childhood/elementary, middle, and high school. Based on our review of the data, existing literature, and the committee's input, we developed the New Student Orientation Procedures. Details regarding these procedures can be found below.

When a new student registers in the Appoquinimink School District, we asked that four things be completed within the child's first week of entry. First, at registration, a New Student Inventory should be completed by the child's parent or guardian for grades K-5 or by the student him or herself for grades 6-12. The purpose of the inventory was to gather information about the student's favorite and least favorite subjects in school, their hobbies, and the clubs or groups they belonged to at

their previous school. In summary, we were trying to learn about the student's interests and abilities, so that we could better connect them to relevant extracurricular activities at the school and to assist the guidance department in the development of their class schedule.

To assist in building the home-school relationship and set up channels for effective communication between both parties, we asked that the building administrator meet with each parent/guardian and that the teacher place a phone call to the home within the first week of school. Finally, an orientation to the school, its norms, and its culture was to be held. Sample topics to be covered during this orientation included a review of the Student Code of Conduct, Positive Behavior Support (PBS) expectations, the academic requirements, and a tour of the school. We also noted that this orientation could be done by staff or, ideally, by a group of students. The school orientation was expected to be conducted in person. In addition, each school was asked to create a welcome packet for students and their families that included items such as the Code of Conduct and the school's agenda book, which(his is used to communicate and remind the student of homework and important dates during the school year.

Within the second week of student registration, three additional forms were to be completed. First, a teacher feedback form was developed for the teacher to provide feedback to the school administration on how well the student was adjusting socially and academically to the new school. The purpose of this form was to give the school administration "advance warning" that the student appeared to be struggling

behaviorally or academically in order to provide interventions as soon as possible. Based upon this feedback, the school administration or the school counselor would combine all information from the teacher feedback forms in order to complete a more inclusive “Adjustment to School Review.” This latter form included information on how the student was doing academically in all the new student’s classes, their attendance, as well as how the student was adjusting both socially and behaviorally.

Based upon this review, the student would be assigned to various interventions such as academic support, mentoring, check-ins with school staff, or peer support, if needed. These supports were outlined in another form called “New Student Success Plan.” We also asked each school to organize a team that would be responsible for monitoring the progress of each new student. This team could be an existing team as long as this process fits with the team's mission; for example, many schools had existing academic support teams. This plan asked the team to write the area of emphasis for the student (academic, social, or attendance) as well as the corresponding intervention, who was providing the intervention, and a time frame for when the intervention will be occurring. Progress monitoring for each intervention was asked to be completed during each report card cycle. Finally, if the interventions were successful, we asked that the dismissal date from the intervention be provided as well as a rationale for why the intervention should be stopped. Finally, within 30 days of student registration, we asked that the school counselor provide a telephone call to the home to share the information collected on the student’s progress and adjustment to their new school.

Included in the handbook was also our plans of monitoring the schools. In it, we shared that the new student orientation process would be audited after the first six weeks of school and then several times throughout the school year. Once these materials were developed, the information was then reproduced into a handbook and distributed to all schools within the district.

Chapter 4

EFFICACY OF IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

To assess the efficacy of the improvement strategies described in the previous chapter, two steps were taken to assess the status of the new student orientation program. The first was a status check that provided preliminary insight into the progress of the orientation program. The second was a more in-depth evaluation, having a greater focus on student outcomes after the program was in place for a longer period of time. In addition to these two steps, I also made efforts to communicate the results of these findings by creating a PowerPoint presentation that summarized the program, its results, and suggestions for future steps. All three of these will be discussed below.

Status Check on the Program

This status check was conducted with the hopes of gaining insight into how the newly created student orientation program was progressing. This step was done in late fall. Two questions were developed to guide this status check, one focused on the process of the program and the other examined the student-level outcomes of the program. The process-related question was: “Were ASD instructional staff aware of who the new students were in their classrooms based on the data provided to them at the beginning of the year?” The outcome-related question was: “Was there a decrease in the number of discipline referrals for new students compared to previous year’s data?” Instructional staff were surveyed to gauge how effective they believe they

were in the identification of new students in their classes and whether they thought they were getting more data to assist in this identification when compared to previous years. Student discipline data were also collected to assess whether there was a decrease in the number of discipline referrals of new students.

Analysis of survey data revealed that the majority (81.6%) of instructional staff either “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that they can identify the new students in their classes. Additionally, the majority of teachers (51.1%) indicated that they were receiving “more” or “much more” information and data assisting in the identification of these students than in the past.

Analysis of the discipline data revealed that the discrepancy in discipline referrals that existed in previous years between new and established students had disappeared. For example, for the 2009-2010 school year, which was before the new student orientation program was developed, students who attended ASD the previous year had fewer discipline referrals ($M=0.203$, $SD=0.81$), compared to students who were new to ASD ($M=.0353$, $SD=1.22$). To see if there were any differences between the two groups of students, an independent samples t-test was performed. The analysis revealed that new students did have significantly more discipline referrals than students who attended ASD the year before, $t = -4.01$, ($df=8193$), $p<0.0001$.

For the 2010-2011 school year, which was after the new student orientation program was implemented, the discipline referrals for the students who attended ASD the previous year were again compared to those students who were new to ASD for the months of September, October, and November. The new students ($M=0.166$,

SD=0.68) appeared to have the same amount of discipline referrals when compared to students who attended last year (M=0.177, SD=0.86). An independent t-test confirmed that there were no significant difference between the two groups of students for the 2010-2011 school year, $t = 0.30$, (df=8418), $p=0.7652$.

End of Year Evaluation

An evaluation was conducted at the conclusion of the school year, after the new student orientation program was fully rolled out to schools. For this evaluation, two surveys were used: a new student survey conducted at Appoquinimink High School (AHS), which included a sample of high school students and a district-wide survey distributed to parents of new children at all grade levels. To measure academic performance, DCAS ELA and mathematics results were analyzed. Finally, an audit was conducted to make sure that the new student orientation was conducted in all schools within the district.

From the results of the high school student survey, 50% of new students reported that they were now attending AHS as the result of their entire family relocating to Appoquinimink School District's feeder. A third of students reported that this change of schools was made for the explicit purpose of making sure that the student was attending a better school. The data indicated that some of the students had experienced several moves: 11% of parents reported that their child had made four or more changes in schools, and 27% of the students at AHS reported the same.

The data regarding the fidelity of implementation of the orientation program and parental and student satisfaction with the program were mixed. Although parents and students reported that school staff was friendly and willing to help, evidence from both the surveys and the new student orientation audit revealed that many schools seemed to be inconsistently implementing key elements of the orientation program. Procedures were followed with more fidelity at the elementary level than at the middle or high schools. Although the majority of the schools provided welcome packets, completed the new student inventories, and provided the incoming students with some type of school orientation, the secondary school teachers and counselors often did not provide a phone call home or create success plans for new students. Results of the student and parent surveys indicated that school staff was typically welcoming to new students and open to assisting them when they needed help. Additionally, the students and parents reported relatively positive experiences and reported being largely satisfied with their new school.

Survey data on academic and social integration, academic performance, and student behavior did not appear to show any specific area that received much lower ratings than the others did. However, it should be noted that students did report problems with academic performance at a higher rate compared to the other measures of student adjustment. When asked to compare their experiences at their new school compared to their previous school, the majority of parents (80% and up) reported that their child was doing the same or better academically, socially and emotionally.

Academic achievement data were analyzed to look at within-year growth and proficiency at the beginning and end of the school year. Although new and established students saw the same amount of within-year scale score growth on the DCAS, new students started the school year significantly underperforming established students in both ELA and mathematics and also ended the year underperforming, too. This suggests that the gaps that were present between these two groups of students at the outset seemed to persist throughout the school year because the new students were experiencing the same amount of growth as the established students. In other words, to close this gap, new students will need to experience significantly higher within-year growth than established students in order to close this gap in academic performance.

Board Presentation of Results

Finally, a presentation was created to share the results of our review of the orientation program to the Appoquinimink School District Board of Education. There were several reasons why this presentation was developed. The first was to remind the local educational community (parents, administrators, teachers, and the school board) why this program was started in the first place. To accomplish this, I first showed a graph that depicted the amount of student enrollment growth that has occurred within the past 20 years. Next, I highlighted our construction history to show the investment we have made in building new schools to address this influx of students. Then, I showed the gaps we observed in both academic performance and student discipline

between new and established students to illustrate that we were missing some opportunities to assist new students.

I gave a brief overview of the general purpose of the program or what we expected the new student orientation to accomplish. First, I shared the overall goal of the program as stated within our strategic plan:

Students new to the district will meet with academic success. Students entering the Appoquinimink School District will meet or exceed state and local standards within one year of enrolling in our school district.

I then outlined the key steps and supports that each school was expected to provide for new students. Additionally, the timelines and their associated steps described within the New Student Orientation Handbook were then summarized. For example, I listed the actions that should be taken within one week of entry, two weeks of entry, and one month prior to entry.

To provide the audience with some context regarding the status of the orientation program, I then shared some key data that were obtained through the two steps that were described earlier in this chapter. First, I gave an overview of the characteristics of new students, including when they start school, where they lived previously, and why they were attending Appoquinimink. Then, I gave the results of our audit of the program, noting the issues the secondary schools seem to be having in implementing the program fully. Next, I covered student academic outcomes using the DCAS scores as well as some highlights from the survey regarding the adjustment of new students.

The final purpose of the presentation was to provide some recommendations that were based on my data analyses. This was first accomplished by reiterating that implementing a “one-size-fits-all” model to support new students would not work. Instead, we should personalize our interventions for new students. Next, I suggested that we need to work to identify academic struggles of new students as early as possible and then immediately provide effective interventions. This recommendation was based on evidence that indicated that new students entering the school district performed worse than their established peers upon entry as well as the end of the school year. In other words, new students who were in need of additional academic supports should receive these interventions in a timely manner in order to close that gap. My final recommendation was that we should focus our efforts on providing a meaningful orientation to school as well as maintaining effective communication with the parents of new students. Based upon our survey, too many students requested that the school provide an orientation, which was a service that was expected to be provided to all new students. Our survey results also suggested that parents wanted more communication about their child’s adjustment to their new school.

Chapter 5

REFLECTION OF EFFICACY OF IMPROVEMENT EFFORT

Based upon the evidence collected, I believe that we were somewhat successful in meeting our improvement goal. Overall, the program was effective in several ways. First, based upon our efforts, I believe that district staff was more mindful to the needs of new students. At the very least, due to the increased sharing of data regarding new students, school staff was more aware of who the new students were in their classes as well as their academic strengths and weaknesses upon entry. The majority of schools implemented the orientation program as directed. This process spurred the development of welcome packets for each school as well the creation for new student orientation activities for most of the schools. The surveys allowed us to acquire new information about the families who moved to our district and why they decided to enroll their child in our district. Lastly, there was evidence that some reduction in the discrepancy of discipline referrals between new and established students took place.

Unfortunately, I believe that the program was less successful in meeting the academic needs of new students. When asked to compare their experiences at their new school compared to their previous school, the majority of parents (80% and up) reported that their child was doing the same or better academically. However, our analysis using DCAS data indicated that new students started the school year significantly underperforming established students (in both ELA and Mathematics)

and remained underperforming at the end of the school year. This suggests that the gaps that were present between these two groups of students at the beginning of the year seemed to persist throughout the school year because the new students were experiencing the same amount of growth as the established students. In other words, there was little evidence that demonstrated that our program was successful in closing the academic achievement gap between new and established students.

As mentioned earlier, there were some successes related to this program, most notably around the development of new student orientation activities and materials for students and their families. In addition, the development of the new student database was very well received by the schools. Previously, they were often unaware of who the new students were when the student moved during the summer months, especially those students entering 1st, 6th, or 9th grade. School staff also appreciated the academic risk index I created to help them quickly identify students who were in possible need of additional supports.

The one aspect that I believe needed redesign was the nature of the sharing of the new student data and the forms utilized to progress monitor new students. From the outset, I explored ways to try to make that information easier for school staff to access. For example, I contacted the state to see if they could add new student status as an indicator on eSchool's student information page. Unfortunately, they were unable to do this due to additional costs the vendor would charge them. I also tried to migrate the paper forms onto Google Apps for Education, but ran into many issues

trying to ensure access to the staff who needed access while at the same time restricting access to those who did not need access. The one aspect of the orientation program that should be dropped is the additional academic monitoring of new students. Specifically, the new student success plan should be eliminated because, ideally, it should overlap with the school's existing Response to Intervention (RTI) procedures. In other words, if RTI is working effectively in the school, the student should be identified as a candidate for intervention via this school-wide method and not through an additional monitoring system designed solely for new students.

Upon reflecting on our efforts, I would likely encourage other school districts to approach supporting new students a little differently. Although I believe that it was good to provide some supports to new students, such as orientation activities, I have some regrets that I may have pulled the district's attention towards this problem while at the same time not properly addressing other gaps that were in existence at Appoquinimink. For example, while focusing on this gap between new and established students, we were still experiencing racial, socioeconomic, and special-education-related achievement gaps within the district. While focusing on providing appropriate and timely interventions and supports for new students, our RTI process could have been improved, which would benefit all children within the district. While some good did come out of doing this project, one should also weigh the missed opportunities that took place while the district was focused on addressing this particular problem.

Before I left Appoquinimink, I began to take some steps that I would like to see the district continue to help address this problem. First, I would like to see the district continue to find ways to easily share with school staff relevant and actionable student data. For example, based upon my experiences creating the new student data sheet and the risk index, I expanded this concept to create a dropout early warning tool that was effective in reducing our dropout rate at Appoquinimink. Finally, I would also encourage the district to continue to survey students and their families to obtain information on their thoughts and beliefs. Before we administered surveys related to this project, school and district staff would assume who was moving into the area and why. By obtaining the actual information related to these questions, we were better equipped to effectively serve our growing and changing community.

Chapter 6

REFLECTIONS ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

My time and experience as a student at the University of Delaware has been instrumental in my development as a leader. The most notable change that occurred during my time as a student at UD was in strengthening my skills as a researcher. Without these experiences, I would have not been hired in my position as the Coordinator of Research, Development, and Evaluation at Appoquinimink, let alone experience any measure of success while employed in this position. Looking back, I will now discuss how I grew as a scholar, problem solver, and partner.

My Growth as a Scholar

The area of greatest growth is my growth as a scholar. I entered the program having a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and a Master's degree in College Counseling. Both experiences introduced me to using statistical analysis software packages and conducting new and consulting existing research, but it was my time working on my doctorate that I really honed these abilities and began to develop a specialization.

My first intensive experience in utilizing educational and developmental research took place within one of my first doctoral classes, EDUC 823: Learning and Development. This course had an intensive reading and writing workload and the instructor had high expectations regarding not only scholarly writing but also scholarly discourse. During the class, I often found myself engaging in a massive amount of

self-doubt. I thought that the instructor and my classmates were superior to me due to their past educational experiences because many of my classmates went to elite schools as undergraduates while I went to Slippery Rock University. Although it was difficult, my writing skills were improved and more importantly, I learned to think and communicate more like a researcher. This course taught me that if you cannot effectively communicate the research, it probably means that you did not put enough work into truly understanding the nature of it. Ultimately, I learned that the one of the biggest errors one can make is to communicate unclearly or poorly. Doing this can lead your audience to conclude that you do not know what you are talking about, or what you said may be misinterpreted, which could lead to poor practice and policy, especially in the field of education).

Two courses on statistics (EDUC 812 Regression Models in Education and PSYC 867 Hierarchical Linear Modeling) greatly improved not only my skills in conducting data analysis and research, but also helped me to better understand the nature of student performance and outcomes. For example, within my regression class I learned techniques to control for things such as socioeconomic status when evaluating a school's performance. These skills were invaluable when doing accountability work at a school district. By controlling for various outside variables, we were able to get a better sense of a school's true performance. Although I was unable to conduct any research using Hierarchical Linear Modeling during my time at Appoquinimink, it greatly helped me think about and understand the nature of student success within a district. For example, the one aspect of this model that was very

salient to me was thinking about classrooms nested within schools, schools nested within districts, and districts nested within the overall state. Although the teacher is a powerful force in student outcomes, it is important to remember that the teacher is within a school that has certain policies and practices that impacts what he or she can or cannot do. –Furthermore, that school is also implementing various policies and practices often dictated by the school district. In other words, it can be difficult to separate what is going on within a classroom without considering the larger context in which it is placed.

The final way that I grew as a scholar was by completing some of my pre-candidacy work here at the University of Delaware using data from the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88). This was one of the first times that I analyzed a longitudinal data set. Through this work, I was able to experience the benefits and challenges of working with a very data set. The time I spent exploring the data and running various analyses allowed me to become comfortable working with this type of data. This experience was invaluable once I started working with district data that included 10,000 students with years upon years of longitudinal data.

My Growth as a Problem Solver

Solving problems has always been the reason why I am drawn to the world of education. Not only are we tasked with working on some of the most difficult problems in life also some of the most important. Two courses were especially helpful

in helping me develop my skills as a problem solver. The first was EDUC 850 Qualitative Research and Evaluation Design.

I initially went into the course on qualitative research feeling confident in my abilities. I always have been confident in my ability to connect with other people, and I had a great deal of experience through my Master's program in College Counseling working one-on-one with clients and co-leading group therapy sessions. Although I learned that many of the skills carried over, it was very different approaching interviews, focus groups, and observations with the purpose of gathering evidence. Another invaluable thing I learned during this course was a better understanding of the role of qualitative data. In terms of educational improvement efforts, quantitative data is valuable because it can tell you what, where, and for whom a problem is occurring: For example, 5th grade math scores for girls are lower than the state average at a specific school. What I learned is that although quantitative data are widely valued for providing this type of information, a researcher often needs to collect qualitative data in order to figure out why that problem is occurring at that specific grade, for that specific subject, and for that specific group of students. In other words, while identifying a problem can be done relatively easy with the vast amount of quantitative data I had access to, in order to truly understand the problem, I had to get out from my office in Odessa, go to the schools, and talk to staff and observe the practices that were taking place.

The other valuable course I had was EDUC 863 Program Evaluation in Education. This was my first experience in formal program evaluation, despite the

fact that I was in an evaluation role at my district). The course helped me approach evaluating schools and programs in a much more systematic way. Previously, I would evaluate programs mostly by only focusing on student outcomes. I had frustrated at work because I knew intuitively that many of the programs were not successful because of lack of fidelity in implementation rather than because of deficiencies with the program itself. What was great about my experience in this course was that it solidified my belief that it was important to focus on outcomes as well as processes. Finally, another way that this course was valuable was that it encouraged me to be much more organized in my approach when evaluating programs or schools. My introduction to logic models really helped me conceptualize school improvement efforts differently, and I believe this approach helped our school district greatly.

My Skills as a Partner

The final way my experiences here at UD helped me professionally was by improving my skills working as a partner. Although I believe it is in my nature to seek to help others, I often do not ask others for help myself. My time at UD was very helpful when I started my new job at Appoquinimink because I was able to seek out expertise from my professors at UD whenever I was not sure how to approach a problem. For example, I often sought out the help of faculty when the state was rolling out their new statewide assessment system.

Another way UD helped me develop my skills as a partner was through my graduate assistantship with the Vertical Model of Field Placement. During my time working with this program, I observed and assisted teacher candidates in their field placements as well as set up a seminar program, a mentoring program, and a program that supported recent graduates from the School of Education. This assistantship allowed me to spend many hours in various schools up and down the state observing preservice and student teachers. It was from these experiences that I was able to learn how classrooms operate and what the daily experience of teachers and students looked like in Delaware.

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Appendix A

EPP PROPOSAL DOCUMENT

Problem Statement/Organizational Context

According to state of Delaware school profile information, for the 2009/2010 school year, 7.7% of all students enrolled in Delaware public schools did not attend the school they initially enrolled in during the fall for the full academic school year (Delaware Department of Education, 2011). In other words, these students could be described as transient- in that they are students who enroll in one school at the beginning of the year and end up transferring to another (or dropping out of school entirely). In all of the metrics utilized to describe student characteristics, the measure of student transiency has often been underutilized. For example, the state of Delaware has just recently begun reporting the percentage of students classified as transient on their School Profiles website within the past year. Historically, more focus has been made of various student characteristics have on academic performance such as race, low-income status, English language proficiency, and whether or not the student has been classified as special education than on the enrollment history of the student. For example, the state of Delaware's focus on these non-enrollment related student characteristics is reflected in the subgroups measured for Adequate Yearly Progress according to Delaware's Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook (United States Department of Education, 2011).

Subsequently, many current school, district, and state policies often view student enrollment both as linear (the student progresses sequentially from Kindergarten to 12th grade in 13 years) and circumscribed (a student starts their education at one school or school district and graduates from there years later). I believe that this lack of focus on the existence and effects of student mobility culminates in many lost opportunities to help students both socially and academically.

Several studies have found that student mobility appears to have a negative effect on academic achievement. For example, Osher, Morrison, and Bailey (2003) found that high school students (grades 9-12) who changed schools were more likely to have academic problems and eventually leave school altogether without obtaining a diploma than those students who remained in the same school. Additionally, through examination of performance statewide academic assessments, studies have found that student mobility seems to have a negative effect on academic achievement (Isernhagen & Bulkin, 2011; Mao, Whitsett, & Mellor, 1997) and on a school's ability to make Adequate Yearly Progress (Thompson, Meyers, & Oshima, 2011; Mao, Whitsett, & Mellor, 1997).

Not surprisingly, it has also been indicated that student mobility can result in not only negative academic outcomes, but social outcomes as well (Eckenrode, Rowe, Laird & Brathwaite, 1995; Fowler-Finn, 2001; Mehana, 1997; Reynolds, 2000; Rumberger & Larson, 1998). Rumberger (2003) points out that both the academic performance of new students and their socialization may be related to each other.

Through this research, new students were found to need time to not only adjust to a new curriculum and new academic norms, but also to a new social environment populated by new classmates. Research has also been found to support the theory that weak peer relationships that are typically seen by high mobility students appear to increase the risk of these students struggling academically (Reynolds, et. al, 2009).

Unfortunately, Appoquinimink School District is one example of a school district that did not adequately address and support the needs of its mobile students even though it was evident that a large number of new students were entering the school district. This, despite the fact that on almost all district publications, Appoquinimink is referred to as “Delaware’s fastest growing school district.”

Appoquinimink School District (ASD) is, indeed, a rapidly growing district. Since 2000, ASD has seen its student population grow from 5,474 to 9,355 today (roughly a 70% increase). Because of this growth, ASD sees a large number of students who were not enrolled in the district the previous year. While a large amount of students typically move to the school district during the summertime and enroll for the first time at the start of the school year, 5.4% of the student body does not remain enrolled in the same school for the entire school year. While this rate is below that of the state of Delaware, it still encompasses a large number of students in ASD- about 500 per year. Additionally, while many of the students are moving to the Middletown-Odessa-Townsend area from within the state of Delaware, a sizable number also are transplants from New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and New York.

Recent internal studies have found that students new to the district appear to have significantly lower score academic achievement compared to students who attended ASD the year before. For example, (Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System) DCAS data from the Fall administration during the 2011-2012 school year indicates that about 58% of established students meet the reading standard and 46% of new students meet that same standard. Likewise, for the math portion of the DCAs assessment, 45% of established students met the standard during the fall administration compared to 32.7% of new students. Disaggregated fall DCAS results are presented below:

Table A.1: New and Established Student DCAS scores by Income Level

Entry Status	Category	N	% of Students	% Meets Fall Reading Standard	% Meets Fall Math Standard
New	Low Income	109	24.1%	31.5%	19.6%
New	Not Low Income	343	75.9%	50.9%	36.8%
New Total	Total	452	7.5%	46.2%	32.7%

Entry Status	Category	N	% of Students	% Meets Fall Reading Standard	% Meets Fall Math Standard
Established	Low Income	110	19.9%	36.7%	26.1%
Established	Not Low Income	443	80.1%	63.9%	49.7%
Established	Total	553	92.5%	58.5%	45.0%

Table A.2: New and Established Student DCAS scores by Education Type

Entry Status	Category	N	% of Students	% Meets Fall Reading Standard	% Meets Fall Math Standard
New	Regular Ed	413	91.4%	49.0%	34.5%
New	Special Ed	39	8.6%	15.8%	13.2%
New	Total	452	7.5%	46.2%	32.7%

Entry Status	Category	N	% of Students	% Meets Fall Reading Standard	% Meets Fall Math Standard
Established	Regular Ed	4967	89.7%	63.8%	49.2%
Established	Special Ed	571	10.3%	12.0%	8.0%
Established	Total	5538	92.5%	58.5%	45.0%

Table A.3: New and Established Student DCAS scores by Gender

Entry Status	Category	N	% of Students	% Meets Fall Reading Standard	% Meets Fall Math Standard
New	Female	228	50.4%	46.7%	30.7%
New	Male	224	49.6%	45.7%	34.7%
New	Total	452	7.5%	46.2%	32.7%

Entry Status	Category	N	% of Students	% Meets Fall Reading Standard	% Meets Fall Math Standard
Established	Female	2678	48.3%	61.7%	42.5%
Established	Male	2861	51.7%	55.5%	47.4%
Established	Total	5539	92.5%	58.5%	45.0%

Table A.4: New and Established Student DCAS scores by Race

Entry Status	Category	N	% of Students	% Meets Fall Reading Standard	% Meets Fall Math Standard
New	African American	137	30.3%	33.8%	18.2%
New	Asian	28	6.2%	76.9%	71.4%
New	Caucasian	228	50.4%	53.1%	38.7%
New	Hispanic	48	10.6%	34.0%	20.8%
New	Multiracial	11	2.4%	36.4%	44.4%
New	Total	452	7.5%	46.2%	32.7%
Entry Status	Category	N	% of Students	% Meets Fall Reading Standard	% Meets Fall Math Standard
Established	African American	1409	25.4%	44.3%	29.5%
Established	American Indian/AK	20	0.4%	45.0%	52.6%
Established	Asian	234	4.2%	76.5%	73.1%
Established	Caucasian	3496	63.1%	63.3%	50.4%
Established	Hispanic	291	5.3%	53.8%	34.4%
Established	Multiracial	89	1.6%	64.0%	38.2%
Established	Total	5539	92.5%	58.5%	45.0%

In order to assess social integration of new students, discipline referrals were examined. While student discipline involves only one part of social integration, this, along with performance on the DSTP were some the first areas that I reviewed. This initial analysis indicated to me that the needs of new students were not being properly addressed. For the current 2011-2012 school year, students new to the district have been found to have slightly more discipline referrals when compared to students who have been in the district longer than one year. It should be noted that Appoquinimink has seen a reduction in the number of discipline referrals given to new students since the new student orientation was enacted last year, as illustrated in the table below:

Table A.5: Mean Number of Discipline Referrals for New and Established Students

Student Type	Year	N	Mean Referrals	St. Dev.
Attended Last Year	2010-11 SY (Pre-Orientation Program)	7642	0.203	0.81
New	2010-11 SY (Pre-Orientation Program)	553	0.353	1.22
Attended Last Year	2011-2012 SY (beginning of year to 12/16/11)	8052	0.244	1.05
New	2011-2012 SY (beginning of year to 12/16/11)	719	0.281	1.28

Organizational Improvement Goal

As the data shows, the biggest area where improvement is needed is in the academic performance of students new to Appoquinimink. The overarching improvement goal for Appoquinimink in regards to the area of new students can be found in our strategic plan: “Students new to the district will meet with academic success, meeting or exceeding the state and local standards within one year of enrolling in our school district.” While this is a good general goal to have, we understood that in order to meet this goal several strategies would have to be followed through in order to support the academic needs of new students. In order to achieve this goal, we created a new student orientation committee that explored and developed new ways to support and monitor the academic and social needs of our students. Currently, I would like to see the district follow the recommendations by Isernhagen and Bulkin (2011). Their research on mobility-related issues led to the following recommendations: the district should create and maintain a transition program that works to obtain and share new student records, connect the student to the new academic environment, and facilitate social integration with their peers.

Organizational Role

Currently, I perform the following duties related to my position of Coordinator of Research, Development and Evaluation at Appoquinimink School District:

1. Coordinate research, planning and evaluation of special projects and programs.
2. Lead in the preparation of the district's strategic plan, balanced scorecard, and school profiles.
3. Oversee databases, information flow and the interpretation of data related to student achievement.
4. Assist the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Business Office and other administrative personnel in the preparation and analysis of statistical data as required.
5. Assist curriculum staff, principals, and district administrators in developing and using methods and procedures pertinent to instruction, assessment, and achievement reporting.
6. Assess existing programs for impact and value to student achievement and district mission and make recommendations for improvement.
7. Research and recommend best practices to improve student achievement and operational efficiency.
8. Provide information on most effective strategies to implement state and federal mandates.
9. Collaborate with Directors, Principals, and other appropriate staff within the district to ensure coordination of resources and planning.
10. Provides data and reports for district departments and state requirements.
11. Provide consulting services to administrators and staff on data interpretation and use.

In summary, I have a set of relatively diverse responsibilities with my job as Coordinator of Research, Development and Evaluation at Appoquinimink School District. It should be noted that none of my responsibilities involve the direct supervision of any other employee at ASD. Due to this, it is essential that I effectively communicate concerns to supervisors and work with them to mobilize their staff to meet some of the strategies that I believe will help students.

Several specific experiences related to the job responsibilities listed above, led to my involvement with trying to increase the academic performance of students new to

the district. After examining the enrollment data and having informal conversations with teachers and administrators regarding the academic and social behaviors of new students, I decided to examine the data to back up their assertion that new students seem to struggle more than students who attended ASD in the past. First, I compared the achievement data of students new to Appoquinimink to those students who attended a school in our district during the previous school year. After reviewing the data, new students did perform worse than their classmates who attended ASD in the past. Similar results were observed when I examined percentile ranks from the fall and winter administrations of the NWEA MAP assessment. Additionally, I compared students who attended an out of state school the previous school year to students who attended a non-ASD Delaware school but the results were rather mixed.

After reviewing this information, I knew that this group of students formed somewhat of a hidden subgroup of students whose academic progress we should be monitoring. From this moment, I started to form a plan on how to help ensure that these students would be successful at Appoquinimink. The first step in ensuring a successful transition for new students is to accurately record who they are. At the beginning of the year, I compile a list of all the new students and attempt to gather all existing academic data on the students to pass on to school principals. This information is shared with school staff so that academic placement decisions can be made both more quickly and more accurately.

Another way that information on new students is gathered is through periodic phone calls home and through a face-to-face meeting with a school administrator and

the parent and child. Through these conversations, student interests and abilities will be gathered and this information will be used to help guide the students to appropriate coursework and extracurricular activities. From this initial meeting, further meeting or phone calls are made based upon the evaluations of the student's academic or socioemotional needs.

The final component is progress monitoring specifically tailored for students new to Appoquinimink. All schools have special cards that are placed in teacher's mailboxes that ask for them to record information regarding the social and academic integration of new students into their classes. While "low tech", this approach has been found to be useful because it helps remind teachers of what students are new to the district and it does not get lost in the shuffle of electronic communication. The feedback gained from these quick progress monitoring cards helps the school staff further evaluate the student's needs.

Table A.6: Proposal Artifacts

	Artifact	Status	Artifact Type	Audience
1	Review of historical achievement data and presentation of findings	Existing	Data Analysis/Argument/Account	Administration, Board Members, Staff
2	Appoquinimink Strategic Plan/RTTT Plan	Existing	Goals/Strategies/Measures for Program	Administration, Board Members, Staff
3	Beginning of Year Spreadsheet	Existing	Tool	Principals/Teacher Leaders
4	New Student Orientation Handbook	Existing	Tool	Principals/Teachers/Counselors
5	Beginning of Year Program Evaluation	Existing	Analysis	Various Stakeholders
6	Parent Survey	New	Analysis	District Administration
7	Student Focus Group	New	Analysis	District Administration
8	White Paper on Research on Transient Students	New	Literature Synthesis	Various Stakeholders
9	End of Year Evaluation	New	Analysis	Various Stakeholders
10	Stakeholder Report/Board Presentation	New	Argument/Account	Various stakeholders

1. Review of historical achievement data and presentation of findings

First, enrollment growth was examined to illustrate how Appoquinimink School District has grown over the past fifteen or so years. During this time, ASD averaged around 400 students gained each year. It should be included that these 400 students just indicates the amount of students gained and not the total amount of new students. This number is considerably larger because it accounts for not only overall enrollment growth, but also includes students that transfer in and those who transfer out of the school district. After reviewing

this enrollment data and having informal discussions with district and school-level staff, I decided to see if there was any difference in the achievement scores of new and established students.

After the presentation to administrators was made, we held a discussion of whether or not this was a good area of focus for the school district. It was decided that it was a good area to focus on not only because of the scores of the new students negatively impacting state accountability assessment results, but also because the district has a moral obligation to make sure that these new students are put in a situation where they can successfully integrate both academically and socially. This end of year administrative retreat presentation was then modified and presented to the entire Appoquinimink staff at the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year “celebration.”

2. Appoquinimink Strategic Plan/RTTT Plan

After the retreat, district staff and the school board agreed that ensuring the success of new students should somehow be included as a new goal in the district’s strategic plan. The stakeholders then decided on the following goal following my presentation: “students new to the district will meet with academic success; meeting or exceeding the state and local standards within one year of enrolling in our school district.”

The next step was to create strategies in order to meet this goal. For this task, I formed a committee of people filling various roles within the district to identify potential strategies. This process is described below under

“Artifact 4: New Student Orientation Handbook.” In summary, four main strategies were identified:

1. Schools will implement the new student orientation process as designed by the committee
2. Each school would form a team that is responsible for monitoring the orientation process
3. New students would be assigned mentors
4. Orientation sessions would be scheduled on a bi-weekly basis for groups of new students.

Shortly after the process of including the new student-related goal was complete in our strategic plan, Appoquinimink’s superintendent asked me to identify around eight areas of focus that could be included in our district’s Race to the Top proposal. One of the eight areas of focus that I included in my report outlined the struggles our new students were experiencing in their transition year into ASD. After these eight potential areas of focus were identified, three were chosen to include in our proposal, with the focus on the needs of new students being one of them. Afterwards, my task was to present to the state on why these three areas were worthy of support. ASD’s final approved Race to the Top proposal highlighted this area, and the plan was approved in the summer of 2011. Finally, a parent and community-friendly summary of ASD’s Race to the Top plan was also created. This

communication also highlighted the need to address the academic success of our students new to the district.

3. Beginning of Year Spreadsheet

As mentioned earlier, one of the areas in our district that I identified as a weakness was that at the beginning of the schools year (and also, to a lesser extent during the school year), teachers and principals really did not have any idea of who the new students were in their school. The main reason for this is that the majority of students who are new to the district enroll during the summertime. Therefore, a teacher usually could not determine who attended Appoquinimink during the previous school year or not. More troubling, was that teachers has little information on these student's academic or social backgrounds in order to provide support.

Recognizing this need, I created listings of the all the enrolled students at each school and provided the school leadership with a spreadsheet that gave detailed demographic and achievement information. At the elementary level, the students were grouped according to teacher. This type of grouping was not done at the middle and high school levels due to students interacting with multiple teachers during their school day. A column on this spreadsheet indicated whether or not the student was new to Appoquinimink and also indicated what school district the student attended the previous year. Of the

student attended a district within the state of Delaware, the district name was provided, but if the student attended a school out of state or out of the country, the specific district was not available. Also, if the student did attend a public school in the state of Delaware the previous year, I was able to provide the school with that student's Delaware State Testing Program (DSTP) results from the spring administration. Using DSTP and NWEA MAP data (if available), I then assigned a "risk score" for each student that attempted to predict the likelihood of the student meeting the standard on the spring administration of the DSTP (now DCAS). Students with no achievement data on record (due to them usually being new to the state of Delaware or previously attending a private school) were highlighted so that school staff could prioritize their beginning of year testing schedule so that these students would be assessed earlier than those have standardized test scores on record. The purpose for doing this was so that interventions for these students could be provided in a timelier manner, if needed.

4. New Student Orientation Handbook

The new student orientation handbook was developed in order to develop a set of procedures for schools to engage in to ensure the success of students new to Appoquinimink. This handbook was created during the summer of 2010. To create the process outlined in the handbook, I knew that I wanted to create a formalized process in which new student academic and social needs were monitored in every school within the district.

To accomplish this goal, I shared my ideas with our district's Supervisor of Student Services. I knew that this feat of rolling out a new district-wide process could not be accomplished through my one-person office alone. With the assistance of Student Services, we identified a diverse subset of school staff, including teachers, counselors and principals in the creation of the handbook and the recommended practices that it contained. After the new student orientation process was outlined, forms were developed to assist in the academic and social monitoring of new students. As mentioned earlier, a full listing of procedures (with accompanying forms) were developed for each grade level: Early Childhood/Elementary, Middle, and High School. This information was then reproduced into a handbook and was distributed to all schools within the district.

5. Beginning of Year Program Evaluation

As part of the requirements for a course on program evaluation, an evaluation was conducted in the fall of 2010 to gain insight into the effectiveness of the new student orientation program. The evaluation focused on two main questions:

- 1) If ASD instructional staff were more aware of whom the new students are in their classrooms due to the information provided to them this year

- 2) If there has been a reduction in the number of discipline referrals for new students compared to last year's data (achievement data was unavailable at the time of the evaluation).

For the evaluation, the instructional staff completed an online survey regarding how effective they believe they are in the identification of new students in their classes and whether or not they thought that they were getting more information and data to assist in this identification when compared to previous years. Student discipline data from September, October and November of last year and this year was collected to assess whether or not there was a decrease in the number of discipline referrals of new students.

Analysis of the data revealed that the majority of instructional staff believed that they could identify the new students in their classes. Additionally, the majority indicated that they are receiving more information and data aiding in the identification of these students than in the past. Analysis of the discipline data revealed that the discrepancy in discipline referrals that existed last year between new and established students had all but disappeared.

From this evaluation, it was concluded that the program was effective in increasing instructional staff awareness of who the new students are in their classes as well as in reducing the discrepancy of discipline referrals between new and established students. It was noted that in the future, an evaluation

should be conducted in the near future to assess the academic impact the program has on new students to ASD.

6. Parent/Guardian Survey

A parent/guardian survey will be sent out to the parents of all new students in the winter of 2011-2012. It will be an online survey delivered via email (most of the new students have valid guardian emails on record due their recent registration) through our district's Survey Monkey subscription. The purpose of the survey will be twofold. First, I wish to audit the process in which schools are supposed to contact new parents. Secondly, I want to attempt to gain insight into ways that the parents and guardians think that the new student orientation process can be improved. In summary, I will be looking to see if orientation process is being implemented as designed, see if parents/guardians notice any strengths of the program, and identify any areas in which we need to strengthen the program.

7. Student Focus Group

The purpose of the student focus group is similar to the parent/guardian survey. I want to audit the program in order to make sure the students received all the support that was outlined in the new student orientation manual. Additionally, I wish to see if the students have any ideas on how the program could be modified in order to provide them a better transition into their new educational environment. To accomplish this, I plan on holding three student

focus groups consisting of around ten new students at three schools within the district. Schools will be selected so that each educational level of school is represented: one elementary, one middle and one high school.

8. White Paper on Research on Transient Students

Research relevant to our new student orientation program will be compiled and reviewed to see if there are any effective strategies that are not included in our program. Furthermore, it will be investigated whether or not the outcomes seen for new students in Appoquinimink are typical or atypical.

9. End of Year Evaluation

While a beginning of year evaluation has already been conducted, a summative evaluation that includes academic achievement and discipline referrals needs to be conducted to determine the effectiveness of the new student orientation process.

10. Stakeholder Report/Board Presentation

After the four new artifacts are completed, it will be necessary to report out to Appoquinimink's stakeholders about the resulting findings. These presentations will be in two formats. One will be a PowerPoint presentation to the Appoquinimink School Board that will describe what has already been done with the new student orientation process and what student outcomes have been observed as a result of its implementation. In addition to this presentation,

I would like to provide the staff of Appoquinimink a two-page summary of what has been done with the new student orientation program and the results of what has been accomplished thus far.

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Appendix B

INITIAL DATA REVIEW AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Below is a description of first types of data that I analyzed and shared with administrators in regards to the academic performance of new students at Appoquinimink School District. This is the first of ten artifacts that attempts to illustrate the steps that were taken within our district in order to first identify and understand this potential area of improvement.

In June of each year, around the third week or so, Appoquinimink School District schedules a two-day administrator retreat. It is typically scheduled around 2 weeks after the last student day. The retreat in June of 2010 took place at St. Andrew's private school in Middletown, DE. At the retreat, all the district office and school administrators meet with the first day devoted to a recap of the previous school year. This typically included an analysis of school- and district-level data as well as administrators sharing out what various celebrations and areas for growth they encountered. The second day allows for the group to do planning for the upcoming school year based upon the information shared the previous day. As the Coordinator of Research, Development, and Evaluation, my job was to lead the discussion of the previous year's results and then assist the Superintendent in the planning activities. Typically, I covered relevant assessment, discipline, attendance, and other accountability-related measures at these retreats. Frustrated by our stagnant results over the past several years, I decided to take a different approach since focusing solely on the accountability-based subgroups of students (race, special education, low income and English-language learner status) seemed to not be effective. The one area

that I decided to look into was the performance of students who recently moved into the school district.

Enrollment Data

While the majority of my work at Appoquinimink was devoted to analyzing academic data for students, I was also tasked with monitoring student enrollment and making enrollment projections for future school years. These projections assisted in the planning for hiring new teachers to the potential of building new schools. When I first started working at Appoquinimink in July of 2008, our enrollment (in terms of percentage growth over the previous year) was experiencing a relative slowdown compared to the rate seen in previous years. As seen in Figure 1, from 1998-2007, Appoquinimink typically saw an 8% increase in students from the previous school year (aside from anomaly years such as 2002 when MOT Charter School opened). While this rate was slowing (about 2% year over year growth in 2010), it is important to note that the district still saw an influx of over 200 new students compared to the previous year. Additionally, the growth in students did not appear to be occurring within one particular grade or school-level (elementary, middle or high). Instead, each grade appeared to be seeing steady increases in students only interrupted by the opening of new non-district schools in the Middletown-Odessa-Townsend area.

ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

		September 30														
Enr by grade		1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
	PK	38									35	25	34	65	104	99
	K	299	348	377	404	399	426	372	442	481	478	525	636	665	648	642
	1	337	335	399	447	480	512	438	530	533	601	617	685	744	768	736
	2	346	348	368	422	465	489	460	502	538	550	636	656	704	756	770
	3	371	362	392	392	445	519	474	525	534	601	568	680	665	723	763
	4	321	383	396	426	427	489	484	536	570	559	623	613	719	713	737
	5	356	334	403	405	470	479	441	544	583	615	592	668	650	740	718
	6	328	363	370	437	438	516	492	511	563	610	650	635	705	678	763
	7	329	345	407	421	479	481	543	534	537	590	631	681	701	736	709
	8	314	346	352	383	421	488	546	563	555	590	614	662	682	723	739
	9	282	322	301	315	379	416	478	557	508	633	526	608	679	775	760
	10	238	260	340	354	331	402	396	467	538	630	584	589	581	645	706
	11	164	225	221	273	295	294	349	319	399	417	528	540	567	628	614
	12	160	181	200	217	285	310	308	365	371	387	469	506	577	458	563
		3883	4152	4526	4896	5314	5821	5781	6395	6710	7296	7588	8193	8704	9095	9319
Percentage Growth			6.93%	9.01%	8.17%	8.54%	9.54%	-0.69%	#####	4.93%	8.73%	4.00%	7.97%	6.24%	4.49%	2.46%

Figure B.1: Appoquinimink Enrollment Data

It is very important to note, however, that the percentage growth depicted above does not account for all of the new students in the district. Even if there was no growth at all, there still would be students moving in and out of the district. Based upon an analysis comparing rosters from one school year to another in 2010, 5% of the current roster of students did not attend an Appoquinimink school the previous school year.

Achievement Data

There were two reasons for examining the academic performance. First, I was interested to see how well we, as a district, were doing to support this relatively large number of new students. Second, principals would often tell me of the struggles of new students who recently moved to the school district. Typically, the schools would express their frustration with their results on standardized tests and would attribute their lower than expected school-wide performance to the large numbers of students who were moving into the district.

Based upon this background information, I decided to examine performance on the NWEA's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment. This is a computer adaptive, nationally normed assessment that we administered 3 times per year to students in grades 1 through 10. Figure 2 depicts a summary of the mean and median math percentile rank for students of all grades who attended Appoquinimink schools the previous year, those who attended another district within the state of Delaware and those who attended a district outside of the state. Additionally, the results show the number of students in each category, as well as showing their results from the Fall and Winter test administrations.

Math All Grades MAP Performance						
Where?	Fall N	Winter N	Fall Mean %tile	Winter Mean %tile	Fall Median %tile	Winter Median %tile
Appo	6241	6248	48.9	51.7	49	52
In-State	264	366	47.2	49.5	46	48
Out-of-State	153	191	51.1	48.3	50	48

Figure B.2: Math standardized test percentiles by what school the student attended the previous school year

As you can see, the number of in- and out of state new students increases as the school year progresses from Fall to Spring. On the Fall mathematics MAP assessment, new students who attended an out-of-state school the previous school year outperformed both in-state new students and students who attended Appoquinimink the previous school year. In-state new students were outperformed by both existing students and out-of state new students. The Winter administration saw different

results, however. For this administration, existing Appoquinimink students outperformed both the in- and out-of-state new students.

The students were assessed on their reading achievement as well. Similar to the math results, a subset of new students, in this case in-state students, outperformed existing Appoquinimink students during the Fall, but not the Winter administration.

Out-of-state new students scored the lowest during both administrations.

Reading All Grades MAP Performance						
Where?	Fall N	Winter N	Fall Mean %tile	Winter Mean %tile	Fall Median %tile	Winter Median %tile
Appo	6262	6248	54.6	57.6	56	61
In-State	268	366	55.9	56.7	58	59
Out-of-State	157	191	51.1	52.9	53	53

Figure B.3: Reading standardized test percentiles by what school the student attended the previous school year

Overall, these results suggested several things. First, there seemed to be merit in the concern expressed by the principals that new students were coming into the district exhibiting some more academic difficulties than existing students. Looking at the mean scores from the winter administration, the mean percentile rank for in-state students was 2.2 points lower than existing students for math and .9 points lower for reading. For out-of-state students, the mean percentile rank was 3.4 points lower for math and 4.7 points lower for reading compared to their classmates who attended Appoquinimink the previous school year.

The gaps between new and existing students appeared to be greater in the winter than in the fall, suggesting that new students who entered the school district during the school year (instead of during the summer break) could possibly be encountering greater academic challenges. For example, when looking at mean percentile ranks, in-state new students at the beginning of the year outscored existing students by 1.3 for reading but were 0.9 points behind during the winter administration for reading. For math, the mean percentile rank for in-state new students was 1.7 points below existing students at the beginning of the school year and 2.2 points lower in the winter. Out-of-state new students saw a similar trend of worse results when compared to their peers who attended Appoquinimink the previous school year. Out-of-state new students at the beginning of the year outperformed existing students by 3.5 for reading and were 4.7 points behind during the winter administration for reading. For math, the mean percentile rank for out-of-state new students was 2.2 points above existing students at the beginning of the school year, yet fell to 3.4 points lower in the winter.

Accountability

After examining these results from our district-administered assessment (MAP), I decided to look at the results from the state-administered accountability assessment (the Delaware Student Testing Program or DSTP) next. To help answer the questions posed by principals regarding how much of an effect new students had on their accountability results, I calculated the effect that new students had on their overall percentage of students meeting the standard by grade and by building. In other words, I calculated the percentage of students meeting the standard with new students removed and then found the difference between the percentage of students meeting the

standard with all students included (both new and students who attended Appoquinimink the previous school year). Looking at Figure 3 below, it can be interpreted that the inclusion of new student scores dropped School A's percentage meeting the reading standard by 2.9 percentage points. For math, the performance of new student's at School A dropped their percentage meeting the standard in 3rd grade by 5.3 percentage points.

School	Grade	Read New-Old Diff.	Math New-Old Diff.
School A	3	-2.9	-5.3
School A	4	-0.1	1.1
School A	5	0.3	0.1
School B	3	-0.8	-0.4
School B	4	-1.5	0.4
School B	5	-0.2	0.6
School C	3	0.7	1.3
School C	4	-4.9	-3.7
School C	5	-7.5	-4.9
School D	3	0	0.2
School D	4	-0.2	1.2
School D	5	-0.6	0.9
School E	3	-1.6	-0.2
School E	4	-0.5	0.8
School E	5	-0.5	-1

Figure B.4: Estimated change in percentage of students meeting the standard on the 2009-2010 DSTP after accounting for new students by grade and elementary school

I used the automatic formatting feature in Excel to color code the results with the grades that saw a more negative impact on their percentage of students meeting the standard highlighted in a darker shade of red. Zero change was assigned no color and the largest difference was assigned the darkest color of red. The software automatically applied gradients of red for the scores in between. This was done to

draw attention to those schools and grades that new student performance seemed to have the greatest negative effect on their overall performance. School C appeared to have their overall school performance most negatively affected by the performance of new students, for example. This was especially evident in grades 4 and 5 for that school. Fifth grade reading at School C saw the largest negative impact, with their overall percentage of students meeting the standard dropping by 7.5 percentage points due to the inclusion of new students. Some schools, on the other hand, appeared to be relatively unaffected by their influx of new students. School D is one example. In fact, inclusion of new students into their overall student performance actually improved their percentage of students scoring proficient for math for grades 3, 4, and 5. Their 4th grade class saw their overall percentage of students meeting the standard increase by 1.2 percentage points due to the inclusion of new students.

As seen in Figure B.5, the secondary schools appeared to be much more negatively impacted by the inclusion of new students compared to the elementary schools. Aside from School C, most grades and schools saw a 3% or more drop in their proficiency when new students were accounted for in the calculations. Both high schools saw some of the largest drops in their percentage proficient when new students were included in the sample district-wide. Ninth grade was particularly affected by the inclusion of new students, seeing a drop of 5.4 points at School D and 6.4 points at School E for reading. Math saw similar results, with a drop of 5.4 points at School D and 5.9 points at School E.

School	Grade	Read New-Old Diff.	Math New-Old Diff.
School A	6	-3.2	-2.2
School A	7	-2.5	-4
School A	8	-3.7	-3.3
School B	6	-0.1	0.8
School B	7	-5.4	-3.7
School B	8	-2.3	-3.1
School C	6	-1.6	-0.5
School C	7	0	-0.5
School C	8	0	-1.1
School D	9	-5.4	-5.4
School D	10	-2.8	-4.2
School E	9	-6.4	-5.9
School E	10	-2.6	-3.7

Figure B.5: Estimated change in percentage of students meeting the standard on the 2009-2010 DSTP after accounting for new students by grade and secondary school

Discussion

The data discussed above was just a small portion of the overall data presented to the administrators at the retreat. However, it does give the reader a sense of the beginning stages we first took to identify and try to address the academic struggles of new students in the district. The MAP data, while showing what appeared to be relatively small differences in the scores for new and established students did give some indication that there were different types of new students based upon two factors- where they attended school previously and what time of year they entered into the school district. This early analysis suggested that out-of-state struggled more than in-state new students did, especially if the student entered the school mid-year.

While the administrators were somewhat receptive to the MAP data presented, the proficiency- and accountability-related DSTP results seemed to catch their interest more. This is not surprising since the MAP data was typically viewed by

administrators as a tool to gain information on what specific students were likely to struggle meeting proficiency at the end of the year. In other words, while the administrators found the MAP data was interesting, they really took note of the DSTP data because it told them that by continuing to neglect the needs of this subgroup of students, they were possibly putting themselves in a position of their schools missing AYP.

In summary, after my presentation the majority of administrators agreed that we, as a district, had to now be more concerned about supporting the academic and social needs of new students. My next step was to make sure that the urgency to help these students would not be lost after the retreat adjourned. In order to hold ourselves accountable to serving these students, we decided to make sure to explicitly state what supports we will provide to new students in our strategic plan, to set future benchmarks for their performance, and to progress monitor their performance.

Appendix C

WHITE PAPER ON NEW STUDENTS

In the United States, it is estimated that one in six households will experience a geographic move each year (Pribesh and Downey, 1999). This frequency of moving also appears to be a unique American phenomenon. For example, Long (1992) finds that children in the United States are much more likely to experience a move when compared to other children in Western countries and in Japan. These moves also end up causing significant changes within the study body at our schools. For example, Lash and Kirkpatrick (1990) found in their analysis of enrollment data that in a typical American classroom, about half of the students were enrolled for a full school year.

In Delaware (according to state of Delaware school profile information for the 2009/2010 school year) 7.7% of all students enrolled in Delaware public schools did not attend the school they initially enrolled in during the fall for the full academic school year. In other words, these students could be described as transient - the students who enroll in one school at the beginning of the year and end up transferring to another.

Appoquinimink School District (ASD) is a rapidly growing district that has seen significant student enrollment growth, and with that many new students to the district. For example, since 2000, ASD has seen its student population grow from 5,474 to 9,355 today (roughly a 70% increase). While a large number of students typically moves to the school district during the summertime and enrolls for the first

time at the start of the school year, 5.4% of the student body does not remain enrolled in the same school for the entire school year. While this rate is below that of the state of Delaware, it still encompasses a large number of students in ASD - about 500 per year.

Additionally, while many of the students are moving to the Middletown-Odessa-Townsend area from within the state of Delaware, a sizable number also are transplants from NJ, PA, and NY. Furthermore, internal research has indicated that new students at Appoquinimink are encountering academic and discipline-related difficulties at a rate higher than that of students who attending the district the previous school year. In order to understand this problem, a review of literature was conducted in order to better understand the nature of student mobility and to identify way to intervene on the behalf of new students.

Effect of Mobility on Student Outcomes

A large number of studies has found that student mobility is negatively related to various beneficial student outcomes. Notably, several studies have found that student mobility appears to have a negative effect on academic achievement. For example, Osher, Morrison, and Bailey (2003) found that high school students (grades 9-12) who changed schools were more likely to have academic problems and eventually leave school altogether without obtaining a diploma than those students who remained in the same school. Additionally, through examination of performance

statewide academic assessments, studies have found that student mobility seems to have a negative effect on academic achievement (Isernhagen & Bulkin, 2011; Mao, Whitsett, & Mellor, 1997). Another study found that student mobility was negatively related to both academic achievement and a measure used by the researchers to gauge school adjustment (Benson, Haycraft, Steyaert, & Weigel, 1979). Finally, Dunn, Kadane, & Garrow, (2003) estimate that one change in school during a three year period had the same effect on student academic performance as being absent 14 days of school.

Early school moves also seemed to affect later academic performance in high school, even if the student does not change schools during those grades. For example, students with a history of repeated school transfers (moving from one school to another) in grades K-8 saw lower academic performance and increased absences when they attended high school (Felner, Primavera, & Cauce, 1981).

Not surprisingly, it has also been indicated that student mobility can result in not only negative academic outcomes, but social outcomes as well (Eckenrode, Rowe, Laird & Brathwaite, 1995; Fowler-Finn, 2001; Mehana, 1997; Reynolds, 2000; Rumberger & Larson, 1998). One study found that high mobility students had a significantly higher suspension rate, as well (Engec, 2006).

Rumberger (2003) points out that both the academic performance of new students and their socialization may be related to each other. Through this research, new students were found to need time to not only adjust to a new curriculum and new academic norms, but also to a new social environment populated by new classmates.

Research has also been found to support the theory that weak peer relationships that are typically seen by high mobility students appear to increase the risk of these students struggling academically (Reynolds et. al., 2009).

Larger scale, longitudinal studies have also been conducted that appear to show a link between mobility and student outcomes. One such study of over 1,000 students found that school changes predicted declines in academic performance and classroom participation of students (Gruman, Harachi, Abbot, Catalano, & Fleming, 2008). Another found that the strongest predictors of grade retention in their study of over 1,000 low income, minority children were early school performance, gender, parental participation in schools and the number of school moves (McCoy and Reynolds, 1999). One larger study was a meta-analysis of 26 studies conducted between 1974 and 2004. In this study, the researchers evaluated the effects of school mobility on reading and mathematics achievement in the elementary grades. Their analysis revealed that the effect of school mobility on academic achievement was -0.25 for reading and -0.22 for math. In conclusion, the researchers stated that this effect was the equivalent to a 3 or 4-month disadvantage in academic achievement compared to students who did not make any school moves (Mehana & Reynolds, 2004)

Finally, some individuals have expressed concern over the effect of having many new peers in classes in terms of school culture and achievement. One study looked at these effects and concluded that there is no evidence that the mobility of

classmates lowers the achievement of stable (in terms of mobility) students (Heywood, Thomas, & White, 1997).

Effect of Mobility on School-wide Measures

Since mobility is known to have a negative effect on student outcomes, it is not surprising that having larger numbers of new students also correlates with negative school-wide measures as well. For example, the overall reading and mathematics performance of schools has been shown to be negatively correlated with its mobility rate (Audette & Algozzine, 2000; Audette, Algozzine, & Warden, 1993). A large number of new students entering the school during the school year seems to have more of an effect than having new students start at the beginning of the year. For instance, these within-year school moves negatively associated with test performance on both criterion and norm-referenced assessments but beginning of year moves were not (Astone & McInahan, 1994).

Most notably in the No Child Left Behind era, having a large amount of highly mobile students was demonstrated as having a negative effect on a school's ability to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) (Thompson, Meyers, & Oshima, 2011; Mao, Whitsett, & Mellor, 1997). Others have highlighted the difficulty of properly evaluating school effects on student performance due to high mobility in many struggling schools (Offenberg, 2004). Additionally, this difficulty in measurement has

also manifested itself in measuring teacher effects as well. For example, student mobility has been pointed to as a hindrance in properly measuring student growth using value-added type measures such as the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (Sanders, Saxton, Schnieder, Dearden, Wright, & Horn, 1994).

Finally, school administrators report that student transiency requires additional costs to support the students (in terms of teachers and guidance counselors, for example). The unpredictability of student enrollment also complicates planning and budgeting processes because schools are often unsure of the exact number of students each school (or class) will have. This is even more complicated when the new students require specialized services such as special education or English-language learner supports. It was also noted that the impact of new students appears to have a larger negative effect on smaller, limited resource districts (Schafft, 2005).

Characteristics of Mobile Students

While it has been established that students who change schools typically experience worse outcomes, it should not be assumed that it is the move itself that is causing these results to occur. In other words, students who move perform may perform worse academically, but many of the differences in performance are eliminated when you control for student background and previous academic performance (Alexander, Entwisle & Dauber, 1996).

Others have found that students that change schools typically do not have the same living arrangements as students in more stable situations. For example, it has

been demonstrated that students in single parent families and stepfamilies are more likely to move during the school year (Alstone & McLanahan, 1994). Furthermore, living arrangements (such as living in a single-family home) and change of residency has been found to be related to an increased risk of dropout (Crowder & Teachman, 2004). Finally, another study finds that the most mobile students tended to have lower school behavior ratings, lower school adjustment ratings and more likely to be from single-parent families (Nelson & Simoni, 1996).

Other research has found links between mobility and increased health risks. It should be noted, however, that researchers believe that this may be due to unmeasured adverse childhood experiences. For example, students who move are more likely to have experienced childhood abuse, neglect, and family dysfunction (Dong, Anda, Felitti, Williamson, Dube, Brown, & Giles, 2005). Again, while mobility is associated with delinquency, substance abuse and other deviant adolescent behaviors, one group of researchers could not identify a causal link between mobility and delinquency. Instead, the longitudinal outcome data they utilized indicated that families that are the most likely to move are also the most disadvantaged. Instead, these researchers believe that it is growing up in these disadvantaged circumstances that leads to the development of delinquency, and not mobility alone (Gasper, DeLuca, & Estacion, 2010).

Finally, it should be noted that some studies have shown that when job transfers and related moves occur, parents often experience psychological and financial benefits. However, it should be noted, these moves still seem to also have a

negatively affect the children in the family. Luckily, these impacts were mostly observed to be around social integration and these impacts also did not appear to have a lasting effect on students (Brett, 1982).

Interventions

One goal of this literature review was to identify promising practices to support our new students. Luckily, some research has been done that illustrates several ways to provide supports to high mobility students. Overall, students who experience single or multiple transfers during the school year have been recommend to receive extra attention by school staff due to the increased likelihood of having discipline and academic performance problems (Engec, 2006)

First, teacher engagement was found to be key in assisting the transition of new students. While teachers generally were found to want to assist new students, teachers reported several barriers to effectively engaging these students. Consistently, teachers shared that their biggest hurdles to assisting new students was the student's negative behavior and academic struggles as well as lack of time to intervene on the part of the teacher (Sanderson, 2003). Another study found that a combination of both peer acceptance and teacher support had a positive influence on the academic performance and classroom participation of new students (Gruman, Harachi, Abbot, Catalano, & Fleming, 2008). Another examined a peer-led orientation program developed with the goal of assisting new students in their transition to their new school. This program was a two-day peer-led orientation. Following this intervention,

students who received this particular type of orientation received better teacher conduct ratings, and reported more knowledge of the school rules and higher perceptions of their peer relationships (Bogat, Jones, & Jason, 1980).

Interviews from principals, counselors and social workers in 18 schools found that schools that experienced high student mobility used a diverse network of programs to assist their students. These individuals reported seeing success by using both curricular and extracurricular activities to assist the new students. These activities included academic support, family support, and activities that attempted to form strong bonds between new students and their new peers as well as activities targeted to build a relationship between the family and the school (Fisher, Matthews, Stafford, Nakagawa, & Durante, 2002). Other studies have highlighted the need to engage parents. One such study showed that parental reports of their child's adjustment are strong predictors the child's self-reported adjustment. In other words, parents seemed to have a good sense of whether or not their child was struggling to adapt to his or her new school (Stroh, 1990)

A few schools have found success with high-risk (as defined by low academic performance, low socioeconomic status, and presence of significant life stressors) mobile students through providing intensive interventions in the form of home-plus-school tutoring (Jason and Danner, 1993). Weine, Kurasaki and Jason (1993) also found that a combination of tutoring at home and at school was effective in producing improvements in both academic and social behavior of high-risk transfer students.

Interestingly, frequent relocation of military families does not appear to impact their children's adjustment (Marchant and Medway, 1987) or academic performance (Mehana & Reynolds, 2004). Because of this, it has been suggested that Department of Defense schools be studied as successful models of how to support new students (Titus, 2007).

Summary

Many students experience changes in schools in the United States and we see similar trends both in Delaware and in Appoquinimink School District. This mobility has been shown to have a negative effect on academic performance, grade retention, and graduation rate. Highly mobile students also been shown to have weaker peer relationships and higher rates of discipline issues in schools (such as suspensions). Having a larger number of mobile students has also been shown to effect a school's overall performance on standardized assessments (both norm and criterion referenced). These results often make it more difficult for these schools to meet accountability requirements such as AYP.

Highly mobile students have also been found to more likely come from disadvantaged backgrounds and to live in single parent homes when compared to their less mobile peers. These students also are more likely to experience adverse childhood experiences such as abuse or neglect. Research indicates that it is likely that these underlying background characteristics of mobile students accounts for the bulk of the negative academic and social effects experienced by these students.

Several effective interventions for mobile students were identified. First, teacher engagement with the new students was found to be effective in transitioning the student to their new school. Success was also seen in offering new students peer-led orientation programs and various attempts to foster strong school-home bonds. Finally, intense home- and school-based tutoring was found to be effective in assisting the most high-risk mobile students.

Suggestions for Appoquinimink School District Staff

Based upon the findings of this literature review, we provide the following three recommendations:

1. **Understand that students move to new schools for many reasons.** A student may be new to Appoquinimink because their parents “choiced” them in, the family built a new home, or the family was forced to find a new place to live due to financial hardship. Strong student and parent engagement on the part of school staff is crucial in identifying the needs and strengths of each new student. Students who enter the school mid-year should be more thoroughly monitored for academic and social difficulties.
2. **Provide interventions for new students.** Overall, peer-led orientation activities should be developed and implemented at all schools to assist new students in their transition to their new school. Efforts should be made to inform teachers of new students and encourage the teachers to purposefully engage these students and their families. Indicators of abuse and neglect

should be monitored closely with new students - especially those who join the school mid-year. Follow-up support by our social workers and school counselors should be provided to these students as appropriate. Finally, intensive tutoring should be considered for these high-risk students, as well.

3. **Student mobility should be a consideration when evaluating overall school performance.** Since having a high number of mobile students has been correlated with decreased school performance, the overall mobility rate of those schools should be utilized when making accountability determinations.

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Appendix D

APPOQUINIMINK RACE TO THE TOP/STRATEGIC PLAN

After the retreat in June of 2010, district staff and the school board agreed that ensuring the success of new students should somehow be included as a new goal in the district's strategic plan. The stakeholders then decided on the following goal following my presentation: "students new to the district will meet with academic success; meeting or exceeding the state and local standards within one year of enrolling in our school district." This next artifact will show the steps that were taken to include this goal in the strategic plan, the targets that were created in order to measure whether or not we met this goal, and early communication of the program to district staff.

Strategic Plan

After the district administrators and the school board determined that the academic success of new students should be included in the strategic plan, the next step was to determine where this specific goal fit into the overall plan. After generating approximately 30 goals that would be included in the strategic plan, the first step I took was to examine these goals and attempt to group them into themes. From this work, we determined that the goals would be separated into three overarching priorities: "High Quality Teaching and Learning", "Increased Student Achievement", and "Safe, Orderly, and Well-Maintained Schools." Based upon these

priorities, I determined that the goal related to new students would be placed within “Priority 2: Increased Student Achievement.”

The format that was utilized in order to organize the strategic plan was based upon the traditional “balanced scorecard” design. Figure D.1 depicts a portion of the strategic plan that includes the goal related to new student success.

PRIORITY 2: INCREASED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT				
GOAL	STRATEGIES	MEASUREMENT	RATIONALE	OWNERSHIP
3. Provide more learning opportunities that engage, challenge and advance the achievement of our more academically talented students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Implement programs currently identified for district-wide accelerated learners. b. Explore additional district-wide programs to support accelerated learners. c. Train teachers in appropriate educational practices designed to meet the diverse population within this group of learners. d. Reflect AP-potential information when implementing course schedules at the high school level. e. Expand dual enrollment (high school/college credit) options. f. Offer enrichment opportunities for students during designated times. g. Develop a continuum or “ladder” of college exposures for students as they move from elementary through high school, studying districts that already have these programs in place to learn best practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Maintain or increase the number of highest-achieving students based on national, state and local assessments. ii. Increased SAT performance. iii. Increased AP pass rates. iv. Earned college credits. 	Our more accelerated learners need to be challenged to achieve at higher levels.	Asst. Supt. Curriculum Dir. Spec. Ed. Supv. Research Coord.
4. Ensure that students new to the district meet with academic success, meeting or exceeding state and local standards within one year of enrolling in our school district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. All schools will continue to follow new student orientation procedures during registration for grades K-12. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Parents/guardians will meet with an administrator within one week of the student's enrollment to discuss strengths, needs and interests. 2) Parents and/or students will complete an interest inventory during the registration process. 3) The classroom teacher will make a telephone call to the home within the first week of registration. 4) Academic assessment of new students will be completed within 2 weeks of enrollment. 5) Orientation sessions will be scheduled on a weekly basis for new students. 6) Personalized plans will be established and monitored for students with parent/guardian input. 7) Program adjustments will be made based on progress monitoring checkpoints. 8) The school counselor will contact the family after 30 days to discuss adjustment to the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. DCAS scores. ii. Teacher-reported grades and credits earned. 	Students transferring to the district score significantly lower than their peers on the state's standardized tests. The quicker we evaluate and provide appropriate support, the more successful these students will be in subsequent years.	Student Svcs. Curric. Dir. Research Coord.

Figure D.1: Selection of ASD’s 2011-2012 Strategic Plan depicting goals related to new student success

As mentioned earlier, we first categorized the goals according to the 3 strategic priorities. Next, specific strategies were developed in order to meet each related goal. Next, generated measure of success was defined for each goal. Finally, for each goal, the rationale, person(s) responsible for goal, and its associated strategies were

described. In general, it was my responsibility to provide measurable targets for each goal as well as provide the rationale for each goal's inclusion in the strategic plan. Although I assisted the development of strategies for each goal, a lot of this work was completed by the Curriculum and Student Services Departments since it was their staff who would either be overseeing or carrying out these strategies.

Based upon the work completed by the new student orientation task force in the summer (outlined later in Appendix E), we determined that the following strategies would be utilized to address the needs of new students within the district:

- Parents/guardians will meet with an administrator within one week of the student's enrollment to discuss student's strengths, needs and interests.
- Parents and/or students will complete an interest inventory during the registration process.
- The classroom teacher will make a telephone call to the home within the first week of registration.
- Academic assessment of new students will be completed within 2 weeks of enrollment.
- Orientation sessions will be scheduled on a weekly basis for new students.
- Personalized plans will be established and monitored for students with parent/guardian input.

- Program adjustments will be made based on progress monitoring checkpoints.
- The school counselor will contact the family after 30 days to discuss adjustment to the school.

The next step was to outline the measures that would be used to track our success towards meeting this goal. At the outset, I advocated for the inclusion of DCAS performance and discipline referrals as measures. While my colleagues were supportive of DCAS, they questioned if discipline referrals should be used because discipline is not typically thought of as “student achievement.” In other words, they brought up the issue that since this particular goal was located within “Priority 2: Increased Student Achievement” in the strategic plan, they felt that the measurements should all be related to academic achievement. After thinking it over, I agreed to not include this particular measure within the strategic plan, but stated that it would be something that we would track internally. In other words, the way we decided to operationalize the definition of student achievement within the strategic plan did not lend itself to the inclusion of discipline referrals as a measure of academic success. While it did not fit conceptually, I still thought it was important for us to track since we did see a disparity in the number of discipline referrals for new students compared to existing students, therefore, I decided to track it internally, but not publish the results publically.

Another change that the group wanted was the inclusion of “teacher-reported grades and credits earned” as additional measures of progress toward meeting goal. I

was hesitant to include these since I unfortunately found from my experience working at Appoquimink, that grades were difficult to use from a measurement standpoint due to various teacher and school-based policies. For example, one teacher may award extra credit, but another does not, even though they are teaching the same subject. I was reluctant to include credits earned as a measure because I had yet to analyze data to see whether there was a significant difference in the number of credits earned between new and established students. Additionally, when generating measures, I tried to avoid measures that were only calculated at specific grade levels. This measure of credits earned, for instance, would only impact students at the high school level. Members of the committee responded that they wished to include multiple measures of student performance and did not want to only measure DCAS as a success metric for new students. I agreed with that using multiple measures of student success is important and therefore, grades and credits earned were included in the strategic plan as measures for this particular goal.

The final aspect of the new student goal that needed to be completed for the strategic plan was determining the ownership for this goal. Recognizing the need to coordinate data, services for students, and instructional supports, it was determined that the owners of the goal would be the supervisor of student services, the director of curriculum, and myself.

Target Setting

This process of determining strategies, setting specific targets indicating success and determining ownership was conducted for all goals within the plan. After the plan was complete, the plan was sent to the publisher and copies were distributed to all staff. The one thing that the plan was lacking at this time, however, was specific, measurable targets for each goal. At the time, we decided not to put these targets on the actual strategic plan because it would be adding too much information to an already text-heavy publication. Instead, in order to address this problem, we created an “Academic Progress Plan” that provided targets for goals directly related to student achievement. To communicate these goals and targets to staff and the community, a pamphlet was published and distributed to each school.

It was my job to create the targets for these goals within the progress plan. For the majority of targets that I created, the targets were chosen to align with the guidance we received from the state in regards to the Race to the Top (RTTT) grant. A condition of a district receiving funds through RTTT was that we had to generate a plan with specific and measurable goals and outcomes. Not wanting to have two separate guiding plans and different performance targets, we worked to combine our own strategic plan and RTTT grant into one coherent set of targets for the progress plan.

The state’s preferred method of target setting at the time was setting a goal of a 50% reduction of the undesired outcome by 2015. So, for example, if a district had a 90% graduation rate in 2010, the target graduation rate in 2015 would be 95%. When

creating the targets for the new student orientation program, I found that such an approach did not quite fit for this particular goal because I believed that it was possible to eliminate the gap entirely by 2015. Instead, I looked at the existing gap between new and established students of roughly ten percentage points in both reading and math DCAS and set a goal of a two-percentage “shrinkage” of this gap every year. Ultimately, using this method, the goal was to have no gap between these two groups of students during the 2015-2016 school year. My rationale for this approach versus the 50% reduction was based on my belief that we could see a greater reduction in this particular gap because we currently were not doing any specific strategies yet (unlike other achievement gaps within the district). The targets that were ultimately published in the Academic Progress Plan related to the performance of new students can be found below, in Figure D.2.

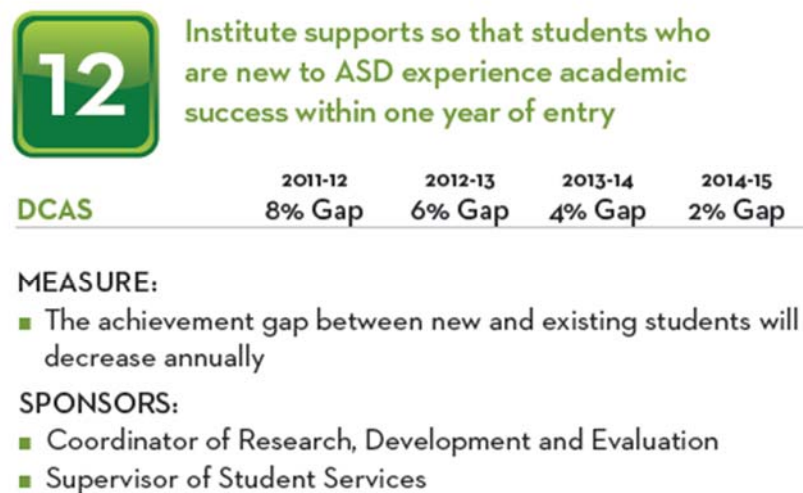


Figure D.2: Selection of ASD’s 2010/2015 Academic Progress Plan

Communication of Goal

With the goal of assisting the needs of new students included in the strategic plan and specific targets created to measure progress, the final step was to communicate this new effort to staff. Since a large number of staff members at all levels of schooling would be expected to support this effort, it was important to find an opportunity to effectively communicate the reason why we were doing these additional activities to support new students. I suggested that we include a few slides at our August “Back to School” event for staff. The superintendent agreed that this was a good idea and asked me to supply the information to include in his keynote presentation that day. Below are several selected slides from that presentation.

First, in order to frame the problem for the staff in attendance, I gave some background on the number of new students Appoquinmink School District saw during the 2010 school year. Knowing that a large number of the staff in attendance were classroom teachers, I made sure to include figures that showed how many new students would be in attendance for a typical class. Figure D.3 depicts this slide.

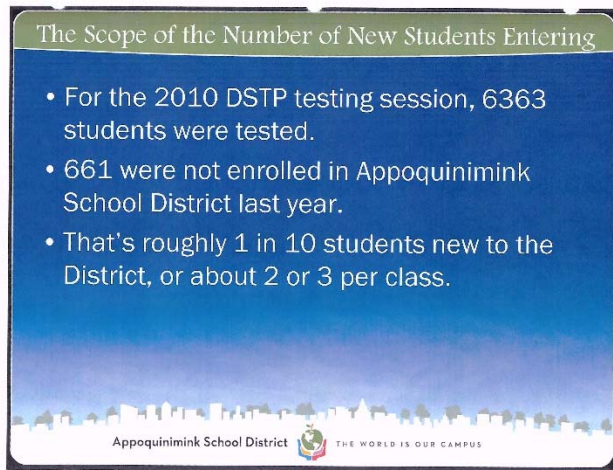


Figure D.3: Selected slide from ASD’s 2010/2011 Opening Day Presentation depicting the number of new students

After the number of students was discussed, I included two slides that attempted to summarize the gap in performance that was observed between new and established students. While normally I would have used a bar graph to depict this difference, we decided to go with a line graph since it simply depicted the difference and was easier to project in the large high school auditorium. The graphs depicted new and established 2009-2010 DCAS performance in terms of percentage of students meeting the standard. The graphs can be found in Figure D.4.

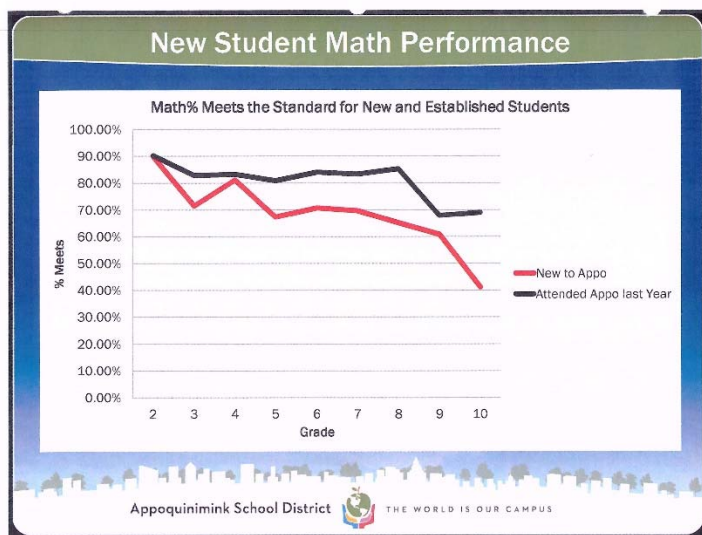
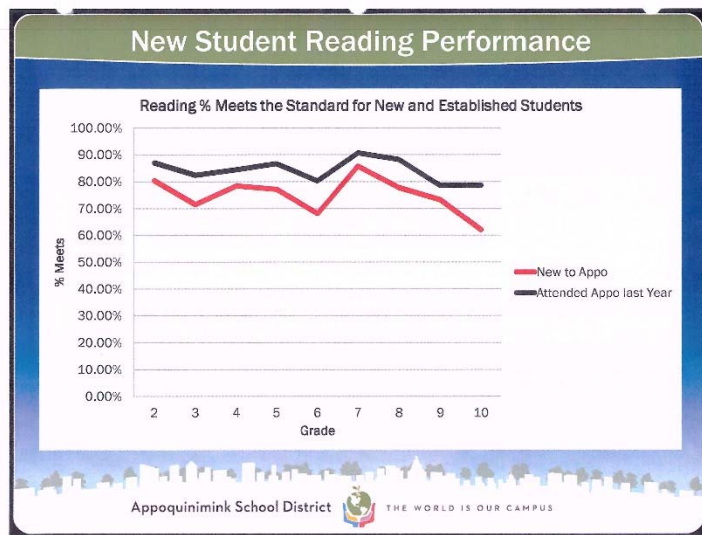


Figure D.4: Selected slides from Appoquinimink School District's 2010-2011 Opening Day Presentation depicting the reading and math DCAS performance for new and established students from the 2009/2010 school year

The final slide I created provided a brief overview of the strategies that we would be using that upcoming year in order to assist the new students in their transition to a new school. This was perhaps the most important information regarding the new student orientation program that was shared with the staff since a large number of them would be directly involved in the process. This information is shown below in Figure D.5.

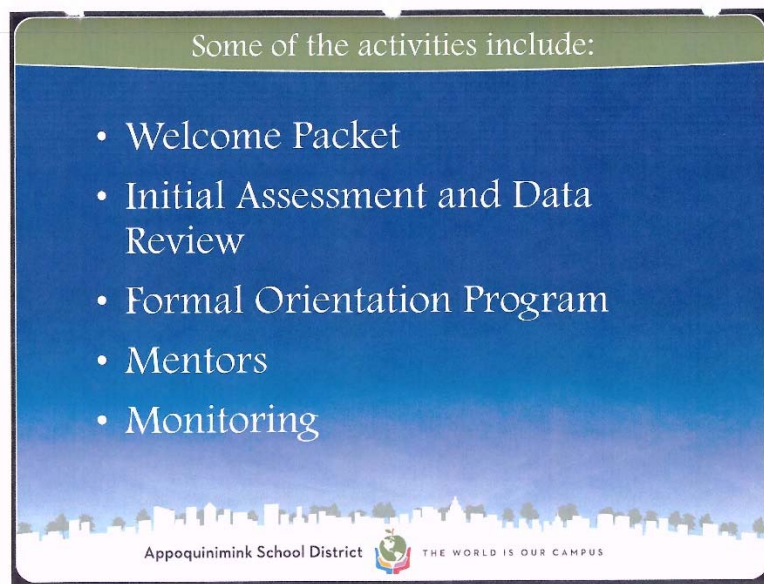


Figure D.5: Selected slide from Appoquinimink School District’s 2010-2011 Opening Day Presentation depicting the strategies that will be utilized in order to assist new students in their transition

Discussion

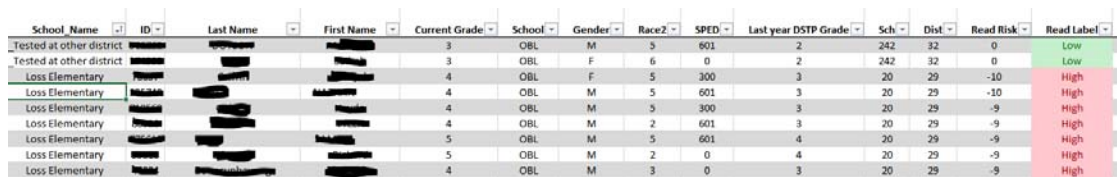
Once it was decided that creating a goal related to new students in Appoquinimink schools was worth pursuing, the next step was to formalize this

process by formally including it within the strategic plan. This process helped to facilitate the creation of strategies related to assisting new students. The strategic planning process also ensured that we created specific, measurable goals in order to track our progress in assisting these students. Finally, we had to engage in communication to our stakeholders the rationale behind this goal as well as the steps we would undertake during the upcoming school year to attempt to assist these students.

Appendix E

BEGINNING OF YEAR DATA SHEET

One of the most important steps in order to support new students was to provide schools with an accurate and up-to-date listing of the new students. In addition to providing a list of exactly who the new students were, we also aimed to provide as much relevant educational data we had on these students to the schools as was possible at that time. In order to assist in this effort, I created a Microsoft Excel database of all relevant academic data for each school and shared this information with the designated school liaison at the beginning of the school year. Below, in Figure E.1, is an image of some of the information that was shared with the schools:



School Name	ID	Last Name	First Name	Current Grade	School	Gender	Race2	SPED	Last year DSTP Grade	Sch	Dist	Read Risk	Read Label
Tested at other district				3	OBL	M	5	601	2	242	32	0	Low
Tested at other district				3	OBL	F	6	0	2	242	32	0	Low
Loss Elementary				4	OBL	F	5	300	3	20	29	-10	High
Loss Elementary				4	OBL	M	5	601	3	20	29	-10	High
Loss Elementary				4	OBL	M	5	300	3	20	29	-9	High
Loss Elementary				4	OBL	M	2	601	3	20	29	-9	High
Loss Elementary				5	OBL	M	5	601	4	20	29	-9	High
Loss Elementary				5	OBL	M	2	0	4	20	29	-9	High
Loss Elementary				4	OBL	M	3	0	3	20	29	-9	High

Figure E.1: Screenshot of beginning of year database

The Excel file contained information in three separate tabs. The first tab included a great deal of information that will be discussed below. The second tab included to narrow down the amount of data shared by only providing fields describing the most relevant data related to the student. For example, this tab only included the student name, general demographic information, whether or not they were a new student, and a risk score (explained later) associated with each student. I often provided data in this manner because some school staff was comfortable and

wanted access to as much data as possible, while others requested what they considered “just the essentials.” Finally, the third tab provided a key so that the user would know what type of information is provided in each field. The key is depicted in Figure E.2.

School Name	School where student took the DSTP last year
ID	
Last Name	
First Name	
Current Grade	Current enrolled grade
School	Current school according to DESLSIS
Gender	
Race2	New Racial Coding via DELSIS
SPED	Special Education code
Last year DSTP Grade	Enrolled grade for last year's DSTP
Sch	DSTP Accountability school
Dist	DSTP Accountability district
Read Risk	Risk Score derived from 2010 Spring DSTP and MAP Assessment (range from -10 to +10)
Read Label	Label from Read Risk Score
Math risk	Risk Score derived from 2010 Spring DSTP and MAP Assessment (range from -10 to +10)
Math Label	Label from Math Risk Score
Total Risk	Combination Read and Math Risk Score derived from 2010 Spring DSTP and MAP Assessment (range from -20 to +20)
Total Label	Label from Total Risk Score
Entry Name	If student is new, what district the student moved in from
Reading PL	2010 Reading DSTP Performance Level
Converted Read PL	Converted Score for Reading Risk Score
Reading Scale Score	
Math PL	2010 Math DSTP Performance Level
Converted Math PL	Converted Score for Math Risk Score
Math Scale Score	
SEX	
RACE	
SPEDcode	
LEP	
Math %tile	Map Percentile Rank
Math Proj.	MAP projected DSTP score from Spring
Converted Math Proj.	Converted Score for Reading Risk Score
Read%tile	Map Percentile Rank
Read Proj.	MAP projected DSTP score from Spring
Converted Read Proj.	Converted Score for Math Risk Score
Low income	0= not low income; 1= low income (based upon 8/30/10 data)

Figure E.2: Key explaining the data elements included in the database

As mentioned earlier, the file provided to the school contained a large amount of data. First, the file contained very basic student data such as student name, grade, and school. In addition to this information, demographic data on each student,

including gender, race, special education status, English language learner status was also provided. The file also included some data related specifically to the new student orientation process. For example, using registration data, I included a field that indicated what Delaware district or charter school the student attended the previous school year. It also indicated if the student was home schooled or educated out of state or out of country the previous school year, as well. Finally, DSTP and/or MAP data from the previous school was provided from their previous school if the student took either of those assessments in the preceding spring. DSTP data was provided for the Math and Reading assessments and both scale scores and performance levels were provided. For MAP, the student's percentile rank for both reading and math was provided along with their projected DSTP performance based upon an alignment study conducted between the two assessments.

Understanding that this is a lot of information for school staff to digest, I sought to simplify the data by creating a metric that attempted to classify the students based upon their prior year assessment results. I named this metric simply "Math Risk", "ELA Risk", and "Total Risk." The following criteria for assigning "risk points" was used for both the Math and ELA assessments:

Assessment	Performance Level	Risk Points
DSTP	1	-8
DSTP	2	-4
DSTP	3	0
DSTP	4	4
DSTP	5	8
MAP	1	-2
MAP	2	-1
MAP	3	0
MAP	4	1
MAP	5	2

Table E.1: Allocation of Risk Factor Points based upon DSTP/MAP data

The scale was created so that for each tested subject, a scale ranging from -10 (denoting the highest academic risk) to +10 (least risk) was created. The actual performance level from the DSTP and the projected DSTP performance level from the MAP was utilized. I chose to weigh the DSTP more heavily than the MAP assessment since the DSTP was aligned with the Delaware Standards, while the MAP assessment was not. When sharing this risk metric with the schools, I took special care to educate them on the relatively rudimentary nature of the metric and its uses and misuses.

This file was sent to each school at the end of August. Once the first round of MAP testing was completed in September, the file was updated with that data. Finally, the September update included the name of the student's math and ELA teacher, as well.

After this step was concluded, the majority of the efforts for the new student orientation process then fell upon the school-based staff. The next step was to monitor the supports provided to the students and to conduct an evaluation of the program.

Appendix F

NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION HANDBOOK

The new student orientation handbook was created to establish a set of procedures for schools to engage in to ensure the success of students new to Appoquinimink. This handbook was created late in the summer of 2010.

To create the handbook, we worked to formalized a process in which new students' academic and social needs were monitored in every school within the district. To accomplish this goal, I shared my ideas with our district's Supervisor of Student Services. I knew that this feat of rolling out a new district-wide process could not be accomplished through my one-person office alone. With the assistance of Student Services, we involved a diverse subset of school staff, including teachers, counselors and principals in the creation of the handbook and the recommended practices that it contained. Recognizing that students were struggling at all grade levels, we made sure that all four school levels (early childhood, elementary, middle, and high school) were represented in our committee.

One of the first steps for our committee was to review the existing data regarding the performance of new students in Appoquinimink. To accomplish this task, I shared a great deal of the data that was discussed earlier in this chapter. Next, I shared relevant research to help the committee better understand not only the academic and social impact of being a new student, but more importantly, to introduce the committee members to the various research-supported interventions for new

students. Based upon this research, we believed that teacher engagement, an orientation program (preferably peer-led), school-home communication, and intensive interventions for students with academic needs would all be necessary components for this program to be effective.

As part of this process, forms were developed to assist in the academic and social monitoring of new students. A full listing of procedures, including the appropriate forms, were developed for the following grade levels: early childhood/elementary, middle, and high school. Based on our review of the data, existing literature, and the committee's input, we developed the New Student Orientation Procedures. Details regarding these procedures can be found below.

When a new student registers in the Appoquinimink School District, we asked that four things be completed within the child's first week of entry. First, at registration, a New Student Inventory should be completed by the child's parent or guardian for grades K-5 or by the student him or herself for grades 6-12. The purpose of the inventory was to gather information about the student's favorite and least favorite subjects in school, their hobbies, and the clubs or groups they belonged to at their previous school. In summary, we were trying to learn about the student's interests and abilities, so that we could better connect them to relevant extracurricular activities at the school and to assist the guidance department in the development of their class schedule.

To assist in building the home-school relationship and set up channels for effective communication between both parties, we asked that the building

administrator meet with each parent/guardian and that the teacher place a phone call to the home within the first week of school. Finally, an orientation to the school, its norms, and its culture was to be held. Sample topics to be covered during this orientation included a review of the Student Code of Conduct, Positive Behavior Support (PBS) expectations, the academic requirements, and a tour of the school. We also noted that this orientation could be done by staff or, ideally, by a group of students. The school orientation was expected to be conducted in person. In addition, each school was asked to create a welcome packet for students and their families that included items such as the Code of Conduct and the school's agenda book, which(his is used to communicate and remind the student of homework and important dates during the school year.

Within the second week of student registration, three additional forms were to be completed. First, a teacher feedback form was developed for the teacher to provide feedback to the school administration on how well the student was adjusting socially and academically to the new school. The purpose of this form was to give the school administration "advance warning" that the student appeared to be struggling behaviorally or academically in order to provide interventions as soon as possible. Based upon this feedback, the school administration or the school counselor would combine all information from the teacher feedback forms in order to complete a more inclusive "Adjustment to School Review." This latter form included information on how the student was doing academically in all the new student's classes, their attendance, as well as how the student was adjusting both socially and behaviorally.

Based upon this review, the student would be assigned to various interventions such as academic support, mentoring, check-ins with school staff, or peer support, if needed. These supports were outlined in another form called “New Student Success Plan.” We also asked each school to organize a team that would be responsible for monitoring the progress of each new student. This team could be an existing team as long as this process fits with the team's mission; for example, many schools had existing academic support teams. This plan asked the team to write the area of emphasis for the student (academic, social, or attendance) as well as the corresponding intervention, who was providing the intervention, and a time frame for when the intervention will be occurring. Progress monitoring for each intervention was asked to be completed during each report card cycle. Finally, if the interventions were successful, we asked that the dismissal date from the intervention be provided as well as a rationale for why the intervention should be stopped. Finally, within 30 days of student registration, we asked that the school counselor provide a telephone call to the home to share the information collected on the student’s progress and adjustment to their new school.

Included in the handbook was also our plans of monitoring the schools. In it, we shared that the new student orientation process would be audited after the first six weeks of school and then several times throughout the school year. Once these materials were developed, the information was then reproduced into a handbook and distributed to all schools within the district. The handbook is provided in its entirety below:

**APPOQUINIMINK SCHOOL DISTRICT
NEW STUDENT SUCCESS PLAN**

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

AREA OF EMPHASIS <i>(Academic, behavioral/social, attendance, etc.)</i>	INTERVENTION PLAN	PROVIDER <i>(Teacher, counselor, administrator, etc.)</i>	TIME FRAME/DATE	
			STARTED	ENDED
			/	
			/	
			/	
			/	
			/	
			/	

Monitoring Progress (To be completed at interim and report card times):

DATE	COMMENTS

DISMISSAL DATE & REASON: _____

Academic Assessment

New Student Orientation Process

<u>Date</u>	<u>Assessment</u>	<u>End of Year Goal</u>	<u>Entrance Score</u>
	Uppercase Letters	26	
	Lowercase Letters	26	
	Sounds	21	
	Words	20	
	Rote Counting	50	
	1:1 Correspondence	25	
	Numeral Recognition	21	

DIBELS

Date Administered _____

Overall Results (circle one): Benchmarked Strategic Intensive

<u>Subtest</u>	<u>Score</u>	<u>Risk (Low, Medium, High)</u>
Initial Sound Fluency		
Letter Naming Fluency		
Phoneme Segmentation		
Nonsense Word Fluency		

Language (WUF)

Date Administered _____

_____ No Language Concerns
at this time

Score _____

Language concerns:



Appoquinimink School District

THE WORLD IS OUR CAMPUS

New Student Interest Inventory - Elementary School

(To be completed by parent/guardian during registration process)

Child's Name _____

Parent(s) Name(s) _____

Date _____

Welcome to the Appoquinimink School District. We look forward to working with you and your child to make this a successful year and we would like to get to know more about **YOUR** child through **YOUR** eyes. Please answer the questions and complete the form below. Remember, this is from **YOUR** point of view.

*List FIVE words that best describe your child's character.

*What motivates your child?

*What upsets your child?

*What are your child's out-of-school interests and activities?

*What activities do you share? What problems/successes do you have working/playing together?

*What skills does your child need to develop?

*What academic subject is your child's best? _____

*What academic subject is your child's worst? _____

*What particular academic areas would you like to see stressed? _____

*What social skills would you like to see developed?

*Are there any personal or physical problems I should know (or conference privately) about?

*Other comments or concerns?

Parent Signature _____

Date_____

Please bring this inventory with you to the school at the time of registration



Appoquinimink School District
THE WORLD IS OUR CAMPUS

KINDERGARTEN PUPIL SURVEY

Child's Name: _____ Nickname: _____ Date: _____

1. Can your child voice clearly his/her name? ☐ YES ☐ NO
2. Can your child identify colors: ☐ YES ☐ NO
3. Can your child speak in sentences? ☐ YES ☐ NO
4. Can your child recognize the number of objects in a group?
(Ex. 5 pencils, 3 marbles) ☐ YES ☐ NO
5. Can your child count to ten accurately? ☐ YES ☐ NO
6. Does your child play well with other children? ☐ YES ☐ NO
7. Does your child accept criticism well? ☐ YES ☐ NO

8. What kinds of materials has your child played with? (Check all that apply)
☐ Crayons ☐ Clay ☐ Paints ☐ Scissors ☐ Puzzles ☐ Other: _____

9. How often do you read to your child? _____

10. What frustrates your child most easily? _____

11. Does your child do the following?
- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Button clothes, snap snaps, zipper clothes? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| Put on boots? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| Tie shoelaces? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |

12. What kindergarten experiences do you feel your child would benefit from the most?

13. Your child is: ☐ Left handed ☐ Right handed

14. Please indicate if your child has fears which we should know about (ex. Fear of dogs):

15. Please indicate if your child has any serious health limitations (heart condition, epilepsy, allergies...):

16. Has your child attended: ☐ Nursery School ☐ Sunday School ☐ Preschool

17. Please provide the name of the school(s) above: _____

Answer below ONLY if your child has attended Kindergarten:

18. Has your child attended Kindergarten? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Full Day KN ☐ ½ Day KN

19. Name of Kindergarten: _____

20. Reason for Move: _____

Checklist for ECC Students New to the Appoquinimink School District

Student: _____ Start Date: ____/____/____

To be complete within First 1 - 2 Weeks of School

- _____ New Student Inventory completed (at registration) - Date: _____
- _____ Administrator meeting with parent/guardian (within week of registration) - Date: _____
- _____ Teacher telephone call to the home (within week of registration) - Date: _____
- _____ Orientation to the school culture (within week of registration) - Date: _____
- _____ Teacher feedback form completed (within 2 weeks of registration) - Date: _____
- _____ Academic assessment completed (within 2 weeks of registration) – *attach copies of results*
- _____ DIBELS (K – 3) – Date Completed: _____
- _____ Classroom Assessment – Date Completed: _____
- _____ Success Plan developed – Date Completed: _____

_____ Counselor telephone call to the home (within 30 days of registration) - Date: _____

Progress Monitoring (To be done at interim/report card time)

- I. Date Completed: _____
- Academics – Comments: _____
- Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____
- Attendance – Comments: _____
- Other – Comments: _____
- II. Date Completed: _____
- Academics – Comments: _____
- Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____
- Attendance – Comments: _____
- Other – Comments: _____
- III. Date Completed: _____
- Academics – Comments: _____
- Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____
- Attendance – Comments: _____
- Other – Comments: _____
- IV. Date Completed: _____
- Academics – Comments: _____
- Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____
- Attendance – Comments: _____
- Other – Comments: _____
- _____ Student Dismissed – Date & Reason: _____

Checklist for Elementary Students New to the Appoquinimink School District

Student: _____ Start Date: ____/____/____

To be completed within First 1 - 2 Weeks of School

- _____ New Student Inventory completed (at registration) - Date: _____
- _____ Administrator meeting with parent/guardian (within week of registration) - Date: _____
- _____ Teacher telephone call to the home (within week of registration) - Date: _____
- _____ Orientation to the school culture (within week of registration) - Date: _____
- _____ Teacher feedback form completed (within 2 weeks of registration) - Date: _____
- _____ Academic assessment completed (within 2 weeks of registration) – *attach copies of results*
 - Informal reading inventory – Date Completed: _____
 - DIBELS (K – 3) – Date Completed: _____
 - End of year benchmark
 - Math – Date Completed: _____
 - ELA – Date Completed: _____
 - Pre-test – Date Completed: _____
 - Teacher feedback form (after the first week) – Date Completed: _____
 - DCAS – Date Completed: _____
 - Standardized test scores – Date Reviewed: _____
- _____ Success Plan developed – Date Completed: _____

_____ Counselor telephone call to the home (within 30 days of registration) - Date: _____

Progress Monitoring (To be done at interim/report card time)

- I. Date Completed: _____
 - Academics – Comments: _____
 - Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____
 - Attendance – Comments: _____
 - Other – Comments: _____
- II. Date Completed: _____
 - Academics – Comments: _____
 - Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____
 - Attendance – Comments: _____
 - Other – Comments: _____
- III. Date Completed: _____
 - Academics – Comments: _____
 - Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____
 - Attendance – Comments: _____
 - Other – Comments: _____
- _____ Student Dismissed – Date & Reason: _____

IV. Date Completed: _____

Academics – Comments: _____

Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____

Attendance – Comments: _____

Other – Comments: _____

V. Date Completed: _____

Academics – Comments: _____

Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____

Attendance – Comments: _____

Other – Comments: _____

VI. Date Completed: _____

Academics – Comments: _____

Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____

Attendance – Comments: _____

Other – Comments: _____

VII. Date Completed: _____

Academics – Comments: _____

Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____

Attendance – Comments: _____

Other – Comments: _____

VIII. Date Completed: _____

Academics – Comments: _____

Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____

Attendance – Comments: _____

Other – Comments: _____

IX. Date Completed: _____

Academics – Comments: _____

Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____

Attendance – Comments: _____

Other – Comments: _____

_____ Student Dismissed – Date & Reason:

Checklist for High School Students New to the Appoquinimink School District

Student: _____ Start Date: ____/____/____

To be completed within First 1 - 2 Weeks of School

- _____ New Student Inventory completed (at registration) - Date: _____
- _____ Administrator meeting with parent/guardian (within week of registration) - Date: _____
- _____ Teacher telephone call to the home (within week of registration) - Date: _____
- _____ Orientation to the school culture (within week of registration) - Date: _____
- _____ Teacher feedback form completed (within 2 weeks of registration) - Date: _____
- _____ Academic assessment completed (within 2 weeks of registration) – *attach copies of results*
 - Review of transcripts – Date Completed: _____
 - Recent report cards review – Date Completed: _____
 - Cumulative folder review – Date Completed: _____
 - Teacher feedback form (after the first week) – Date Completed: _____
 - DCAS – Date Completed: _____
 - Standardized test scores – Date Reviewed: _____
- _____ Success Plan developed – Date Completed: _____

_____ Counselor telephone call to the home (within 30 days of registration) - Date: _____

Progress Monitoring (To be done at interim/report card time)

- I. Date Completed: _____
- Academics – Comments: _____
- Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____
- Attendance – Comments: _____
- Other – Comments: _____
- II. Date Completed: _____
- Academics – Comments: _____
- Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____
- Attendance – Comments: _____
- Other – Comments: _____
- III. Date Completed: _____
- Academics – Comments: _____
- Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____
- Attendance – Comments: _____
- Other – Comments: _____

_____ Student Dismissed – Date & Reason: _____

IV. Date Completed: _____

Academics – Comments: _____

Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____

Attendance – Comments: _____

Other – Comments: _____

V. Date Completed: _____

Academics – Comments: _____

Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____

Attendance – Comments: _____

Other – Comments: _____

VI. Date Completed: _____

Academics – Comments: _____

Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____

Attendance – Comments: _____

Other – Comments: _____

VII. Date Completed: _____

Academics – Comments: _____

Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____

Attendance – Comments: _____

Other – Comments: _____

VIII. Date Completed: _____

Academics – Comments: _____

Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____

Attendance – Comments: _____

Other – Comments: _____

IX. Date Completed: _____

Academics – Comments: _____

Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____

Attendance – Comments: _____

Other – Comments: _____

_____ Student Dismissed – Date & Reason:

Checklist for Middle School Students New to the Appoquinimink School District

Student: _____ Start Date: ____/____/____

To be complete within First 1 - 2 Weeks of School

- _____ New Student Inventory completed (at registration) - Date: _____
- _____ Administrator meeting with parent/guardian (within week of registration) - Date: _____
- _____ Teacher telephone call to the home (within week of registration) - Date: _____
- _____ Orientation to the school culture (within week of registration) - Date: _____
- _____ Teacher feedback form completed (within 2 weeks of registration) - Date: _____
- _____ Academic assessment completed (within 2 weeks of registration) – *attach copies of results*
- Recent report cards review – Date Completed: _____
- Cumulative folder review – Date Completed: _____
- Teacher feedback form (after the first week) – Date Completed: _____
- DCAS – Date Completed: _____
- Standardized test scores – Date Reviewed: _____
- _____ Success Plan developed – Date Completed: _____

_____ Counselor telephone call to the home (within 30 days of registration) - Date: _____

Progress Monitoring (To be done at interim/report card time)

- I. Date Completed: _____
- Academics – Comments: _____
- Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____
- Attendance – Comments: _____
- Other – Comments: _____
- II. Date Completed: _____
- Academics – Comments: _____
- Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____
- Attendance – Comments: _____
- Other – Comments: _____
- III. Date Completed: _____
- Academics – Comments: _____
- Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____
- Attendance – Comments: _____
- Other – Comments: _____

_____ Student Dismissed – Date & Reason: _____

IV. Date Completed: _____

Academics – Comments: _____

Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____

Attendance – Comments: _____

Other – Comments: _____

V. Date Completed: _____

Academics – Comments: _____

Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____

Attendance – Comments: _____

Other – Comments: _____

VI. Date Completed: _____

Academics – Comments: _____

Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____

Attendance – Comments: _____

Other – Comments: _____

VII. Date Completed: _____

Academics – Comments: _____

Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____

Attendance – Comments: _____

Other – Comments: _____

VIII. Date Completed: _____

Academics – Comments: _____

Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____

Attendance – Comments: _____

Other – Comments: _____

IX. Date Completed: _____

Academics – Comments: _____

Social/Behavioral – Comments: _____

Attendance – Comments: _____

Other – Comments: _____

_____ Student Dismissed – Date & Reason:



Appoquinimink School District

THE WORLD IS OUR CAMPUS

New Student Orientation: **Adjustment to School Review**

(To be completed by School Counselor and returned within 30 days from Registration)

Counselor Due Date: _____ _____/_____/_____ to _____/_____/_____ Due to Office by: _____/_____/_____
--

Today's Date: _____
 Student Name: _____ Start Date: _____
 Teacher/Team: _____
 Reviewed by: _____
 (School Counselor)

<u>Attendance:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Irregular <input type="checkbox"/> Tardy to class <input type="checkbox"/> Class Cut	_____ _____ _____ _____
<u>Academics:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Prepared <input type="checkbox"/> On Task Work Completion: <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Occasional Current Grade Levels:	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ELA: <input type="checkbox"/> Below Grade <input type="checkbox"/> On Grade <input type="checkbox"/> Above Grade Math: <input type="checkbox"/> Below Grade <input type="checkbox"/> On Grade <input type="checkbox"/> Above Grade Science: <input type="checkbox"/> Below Grade <input type="checkbox"/> On Grade <input type="checkbox"/> Above Grade Social Studies: <input type="checkbox"/> Below Grade <input type="checkbox"/> On Grade <input type="checkbox"/> Above Grade Related Arts I: <input type="checkbox"/> Below Grade <input type="checkbox"/> On Grade <input type="checkbox"/> Above Grade Related Arts II: <input type="checkbox"/> Below Grade <input type="checkbox"/> On Grade <input type="checkbox"/> Above Grade
<u>Social:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Outgoing: Making Friends <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn: Time Alone <input type="checkbox"/> Involvement: Clubs/Activities	_____ _____ _____ _____
<u>Behavior:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Respectful <input type="checkbox"/> Responsible <input type="checkbox"/> Safety <input type="checkbox"/> Positive	_____ _____ _____ _____
<u>Recommendations:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Interventions <input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring <input type="checkbox"/> Check-In <input type="checkbox"/> Buddy Support	_____ _____ _____ _____

Comments:

Sample Welcome Packet

- Welcome letter from principal
- Forms to be completed for registration
- Parent Handbook
- Student Code of Conduct
- Building calendar
- District calendar
- Supply list
- Letter regarding attendance
- Alert Now information
- Letter from School Nurse
- School Counselor brochure
- PTA form
- Current school newsletter
- Facts and figures about your school
- Pay Pal information
- Current lunch menu
- Information regarding sports and clubs

High School

- Information on Senior Project and Senior Audit meeting
- One School, One Book
- PSAT and SAT
- Wellness center brochure



Appoquinimink School District

THE WORLD IS OUR CAMPUS

New Student Interest Inventory - Secondary Schools

(To be completed by parent/guardian and student during registration process)

Student's Name: _____ Parent(s) Name(s): _____

Date: _____

1. What are your favorite hobbies? What do you do in your free time?

2. What are your favorite subjects in school and why?

3. What are your least favorite subjects in school and why?

4. What clubs or groups were you a member of last year? What are you planning to join this year?

5. What sports do you like to play? What sports do you like to watch?

6. Where have you traveled? Where would you like to visit?

7. What career most interests you and why?

8. What are your strengths/weaknesses? What do you like the best/least about yourself?

9. Parent Question: What are your child's strengths and weaknesses?

Please bring this inventory with you to the school at the time of registration



Appoquinimink School District

THE WORLD IS OUR CAMPUS

New Student Interest Inventory - Secondary Schools

(To be completed by parent/guardian and student during registration process)

Student's Name: _____ Parent(s) Name(s): _____

Date: _____

1. What are your favorite hobbies? What do you do in your free time?

2. What are your favorite subjects in school and why?

3. What are your least favorite subjects in school and why?

4. What clubs or groups were you a member of last year? What are you planning to join this year?

5. What sports do you like to play? What sports do you like to watch?

6. Where have you traveled? Where would you like to visit?

7. What career most interests you and why?

8. What are your strengths/weaknesses? What do you like the best/least about yourself?

9. Parent Question: What are your child's strengths and weaknesses?

Please bring this inventory with you to the school at the time of registration

APPOQUINIMINK SCHOOL DISTRICT
NEW STUDENT SUCCESS PLAN

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

AREA OF EMPHASIS <i>(Academic, behavioral/social, attendance, etc.)</i>	INTERVENTION PLAN	PROVIDER <i>(Teacher, counselor, administrator, etc.)</i>	TIME FRAME/DATE STARTED

Monitoring Progress (To be completed at interim and report card times):

DATE	COMMENTS

DISMISSAL DATE & REASON: _____

APPOQUINIMINK SCHOOL DISTRICT
NEW STUDENT SUCCESS PLAN

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

AREA OF EMPHASIS <i>(Academic, behavioral/social, attendance, etc.)</i>	INTERVENTION PLAN	PROVIDER <i>(Teacher, counselor, administrator, etc.)</i>	TIME FRAME/DATE	
			STARTED	/ ENDED
				/
				/
				/
				/
				/
				/

Monitoring Progress (To be completed at interim and report card times):

DATE	COMMENTS

DISMISSAL DATE & REASON: _____

Teacher Feedback Form
(Due within 2 weeks of registration)

Teacher Call Due Date: ____/____/____

Form Due to Office by: ____/____/____

Name of Student: _____

Name of Teacher Completing the Form: _____

Social Behavior/Social Interactions (Circle One):

Works well with others Struggles socially Behavior interferes with learning

Attendance (Circle One): Good Late to class Multiple Absences

Academic Performance (Circle One):

On target Struggles but can be supported in the classroom Needs intervention/RtI

Evidence and/or Teacher Comments: (Please include comments for any concerns/problems noted above)

Return to: _____

Teacher Feedback Form
(Due within 2 weeks of registration)

Teacher Call Due Date: ____/____/____

Form Due to Office by: ____/____/____

Name of Student: _____

Name of Teacher Completing the Form: _____

Social Behavior/Social Interactions (Circle One):

Works well with others Struggles socially Behavior interferes with learning

Attendance (Circle One): Good Late to class Multiple Absences

Academic Performance (Circle One):

On target Struggles but can be supported in the classroom Needs intervention/RtI

Evidence and/or Teacher Comments: (Please include comments for any concerns/problems noted above)

Return to: _____

Teacher Feedback Form
(Due within 2 weeks of registration)

Teacher Call Due Date: ____/____/____

Form Due to Office by: ____/____/____

Name of Student: _____

Name of Teacher Completing the Form: _____

Social Behavior/Social Interactions (Circle One):

Works well with others Struggles socially Behavior interferes with learning

Attendance (Circle One): Good Late to class Multiple Absences

Academic Performance (Circle One):

On target Struggles but can be supported in the classroom Needs intervention/RtI

Evidence and/or Teacher Comments: (Please include comments for any concerns/problems noted above)

Return to: _____

Teacher Feedback Form
(Due within 2 weeks of registration)

Teacher Call Due Date: ____/____/____

Form Due to Office by: ____/____/____

Name of Student: _____

Name of Teacher Completing the Form: _____

Social Behavior/Social Interactions (Circle One):

Works well with others Struggles socially Behavior interferes with learning

Attendance (Circle One): Good Late to class Multiple Absences

Academic Performance (Circle One):

On target Struggles but can be supported in the classroom Needs intervention/RtI

Evidence and/or Teacher Comments: (Please include comments for any concerns/problems noted above)

Return to: _____



Appoquinimink School District
THE WORLD IS OUR CAMPUS

Teacher Call Due Date: ____/____/____

Form Due to Office by: ____/____/____

New Student Check-In Telephone Call

(To be completed by classroom teacher within 1 week of Registration)

Child's Name: _____ **Grade:** _____

Parent(s) Name(s): _____

Phone number: _____

Student Start Date: _____

Conference Call Date: _____

Time: _____

Teacher's Name: _____

Please introduce yourself and as you talk, make notes on information shared towards the student's:

***Academic performance/Interventions being provided:**

***Social Behavior/Social Interactions:**

***Additional information:**

***Ask if there are any other questions regarding our school that have not been answered.**



Appoquinimink School District
THE WORLD IS OUR CAMPUS

Teacher Call Due Date: ____/____/____

Form Due to Office by: ____/____/____

New Student Check-In Telephone Call

(To be completed by classroom teacher within 1 week of Registration)

Child's Name: _____ **Grade:** _____

Parent(s) Name(s): _____

Phone number: _____

Student Start Date: _____

Conference Call Date: _____

Time: _____

Teacher's Name: _____

Please introduce yourself and as you talk, make notes on information shared towards the student's:

***Academic performance/Interventions being provided:**

***Social Behavior/Social Interactions:**

***Additional information:**

***Ask if there are any other questions regarding our school that have not been answered.**

Appendix G

EARLY STATUS CHECK OF PROGRAM

Executive Summary

The purpose of this evaluation was to gain insight into the effectiveness of the new student orientation program implemented by Appoquinimink School District (ASD). Two questions were developed to guide the evaluation: one related to the process of the program, the other related to the student-level outcomes of the program.

The process-related question asked if ASD instructional staff is aware of whom the new students are in their classrooms due to the information provided to them this year. The outcome-related question asked if there has been a reduction in the number of discipline referrals for new students compared to last year's data. Instruction staff was surveyed to gauge how effective they believe they are in the identification of new students in their classes and whether or not they thought that they were getting more information and data to assist in this identification when compared to previous years. Student discipline data from September, October and November of last year and this year was collected to assess whether or not there was a decrease in the number of discipline referrals of new students.

Analysis of the data revealed that the majority of instructional staff believes that they can identify the new students in their classes. Additionally, the majority indicate that they are receiving more information and data aiding in the identification of these students than in the past. Analysis of the discipline data revealed that the

discrepancy in discipline referrals that existed last year between new and established students had disappeared.

The evaluator concludes that the program has been effective in increasing instructional staff awareness of who the new students are in their classes as well as in reducing the discrepancy of discipline referrals between new and established students. It is recommended that the program continue with additional emphasis placed on aiding middle and high school instructional staff correctly identify their students. Furthermore, an evaluation should be conducted in the near future to assess the academic impact the program has on new students to ASD.

Introduction

Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to gain insight into the effectiveness of the new student orientation program implemented by Appoquinimink School District. Due to time constraints, this evaluation examines just a few portions of the program. Because of this, two key areas of the program are examined. First, the process in which instructional staff receives information and identifies new students is evaluated. Second, student discipline reports are examined to see if the program had an effect on reducing negative student behavior.

Description of the Program

Appoquinimink School District (ASD) is a rapidly growing district. Since 2000, ASD has seen its student population grow from 5,474 to 9,355 today (roughly a 70% increase). Because of this growth, ASD sees a large number of students who were not enrolled in the district the previous year. For example, 6,363 students took the DSTP assessment last spring. Out of those students, 661 of them were not enrolled in ASD the previous year. While many of the students are moving to the Middletown-Odessa-Townsend area from within the state of Delaware, a sizable number also are transplants from New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and New York. Recent internal studies have found that students new to the district appear to have significantly lower score academic achievement compared to students who attended ASD the year before. Additionally, students new to the district have also been found to have more discipline

referrals when compared to students who have been in the district longer than one year. Due to this information, ASD has developed and implemented a district-wide orientation program for new students. This program was administered for the first time this school year.

The program involves several components as outlined in the first figure located in the Appendix of this evaluation. The first step in ensuring a successful transition for new students is to accurately record who they are. At the beginning of the year, the Coordinator of Research compiles a list of all the new students and attempts to gather all existing academic data on the students to pass on to school principals. This information is shared with school staff so that academic placement decisions can be made both more quickly and more accurately.

Another way that information on new students is gathered is through periodic phone calls home and through a face-to-face meeting with a school administrator and the parent and child. Through these conversations, student interests and abilities will be gathered and this information will be used to help guide the students to appropriate coursework and extracurricular activities. From this initial meeting, further meeting or phone calls are made based upon the evaluations of the student's academic or socioemotional needs.

The final component is progress monitoring specifically tailored for students new to Appoquinimink. All schools have special cards that are placed in teacher's mailboxes that ask for them to record information regarding the social and academic integration of new students into their classes. While "low tech", this approach has

been found to be useful because it helps remind teachers of what students are new to the district and it does not get lost in the shuffle of electronic communication. The feedback gained from these quick progress monitoring cards helps the school staff further evaluate the student's needs. From this process, there are two areas that this evaluation examines.

Evaluation Questions

Two questions were developed through analysis of the program's structure and goals.

Process Question: Are ASD teachers aware of whom the new students are in their classrooms due to the information provided to them this year?

Outcome Question: Has there been a reduction in the number of discipline referrals for new students compared to last year's data?

The process question is posed to examine if teachers are receiving the very basic information on which students in their class are new to ASD. Without this knowledge, teachers will not know that these students may be in need of additional monitoring academically and socially. This question was developed through my discussions with teachers last year. During these discussions, I was surprised to find that teachers were not informed of what students in their class were new to ASD.

After this encounter and through examination of academic and behavioral records, it became apparent that schools were in need of information on the needs of these students. For this reason, listings of new students (with assessment results data, if available) are sent to schools at the beginning of the school year and updated on a weekly basis. The purpose of this process question is to determine if this information is making its way to teachers so that they are able to identify the new students in their classes.

The outcome question will be answered by examining discipline referral data from the beginning of last school year to the end of November of last year to data from the beginning of this school year to the end of this November. The purpose of this is to see if the number of discipline referrals for new students have been reduced since the implementation of the new orientation program. The average number of discipline referrals for new students will be compared to last year's number. Additionally, the gap between the average number of referrals for new versus established students last year will be compared to this year's data in order to determine if the number of discipline referrals between both groups is narrowing due to the orientation program and its interventions.

Both the process and outcome questions are interrelated. According to our theory regarding the development of the orientation program, new students will have less discipline referrals if their teachers know who they are. Through their knowledge of who are new students and who are not, teachers will be able to provide additional academic and social support, thus resulting in fewer disciplinary incidents.

Design and Methodology

Sample

An online survey was sent via email to the all staff at ASD. In the body of the email, it was stressed that only instructional staff should partake in the survey. Discipline data was also analyzed for the 8,195 students 1st through 12th grade students who attended ASD last year as well as for the 8,420 currently enrolled. From this data, 553 students were classified as new in 2010 and 620 for the current 2011 school year. ASD's current K-12 enrollment is 48% female and 52% male. Sixty-six percent of the student population is white, 25% is black, 3% is Asian and 3% is Hispanic. The remaining percentage is of mixed race or is Native American.

Instruments

To assess the process question, a survey was developed via SurveyMonkey and distributed by email to all staff at ASD (with only instruction staff requested to complete the survey). The following questions were asked and a copy of the actual survey can be found in the Appendix:

1. Please select the school or schools that you currently work in: (forced choice with all schools as choices)
2. I can identify the students in my classes that did not attend Appoquinimink School District last year. (4 Point Likert Ranging from Strongly Agree, Agree; Disagree; and Strongly Disagree).

3. Compared to previous years, I have received _____
information/data that indicates who the new students are in my classes. (5
Point Likert ; Much More; More; Same as Before; Less; Much Less)
4. Please feel free to share any suggestions on how we can ensure a quality
academic and social transition for students new to Appoquinimink. (open
response question).

Student discipline data was acquired through a web-based portal known as Referral Action Profile (RAP) provided and maintained by a third party vendor, Data Service Center (DSC). Teachers and other school staff input discipline incidents into the system and the DSC compiles all of the discipline data into a database.

Data Collection Procedures

For the process question, after the survey was distributed, the results were collected and analyzed a week later. The data collection and compilation of scores was conducted automatically using the SurveyMonkey web-based, survey program. For the outcome question, a request was placed with DSC to provide a spreadsheet to the evaluator with the number of discipline referrals for each 1st through 12th grade student enrolled in ASD schools from the time periods requested (the beginning of the previous school year to the end of Nov. 2009 and the beginning of the current school year to the end of Nov. 2010). Student ID's from this report were matched to those students who were listed as new according to data obtained during the entry process to

ASD using an Microsoft Excel Add-on program known as the “Merge Tables Wizard” by Ablebits software . This particular data (regarding new student entry) is housed in the database known as eSchool Plus. This report was generated to correctly identify which students are new to the district and which were here during the previous school year.

Data Analysis Procedures

All data analysis was conducted in Microsoft Excel with the aid of the statistical add-on software package know as Analyse-It. Responses rates from the surveys were disaggregated by individual school and compared to the number of instructional staff employed at each school. Further, responses from the two questions regarding the ability to identify new students in the classroom and whether or not they believed they were getting more or less information on who the new students are were disaggregated by school level (elementary, middle, and high school). The number of responses to each answer option was tabulated as well as the percentage of respondents who selected each option.

For the discipline data, the average number of discipline referrals for the months of September, October, and November for new and established students was calculated for the 2009-2010 and the 2010-2011 school years. Furthermore, standard deviations and the number of students in each classification were calculated.

Results

Survey Results

First, the response rates were analyzed in order to make sure that not any particular school or school level was over- or under-represented. The response count, number of instructional staff in each building, and the estimated percentage of instruction staff that responded to the survey is listed in the table below.

Table G.1: Summary of Responses

School	N	# of Staff	% Responded
Brick Mill Elementary	21	53	39.6%
Bunker Hill Elementary	18	41	43.9%
Cedar Lane Elementary	23	40	57.5%
Olive B. Loss Elementary	13	40	32.5%
Silver Lake Elementary	20	40	50.0%
Townsend Elementary	20	34	58.8%
Meredith Middle	24	45	53.3%
Redding Middle	17	51	33.3%
Waters Middle	23	52	44.2%
Appoquinimink High	39	90	43.3%
Middletown High	38	82	46.3%
<i>All Schools</i>	248	568	43.6%

Looking at the response rates, there was an overall return rate of 43.6% for all schools. While this number is acceptable, it probably could have been improved by sending out a reminder to those who did not complete the survey to participate. Upon examining the disaggregated results, there was some variation in the response rates, ranging from a high of 58.8% at Townsend Elementary to a low of 32.5% at Olive B. Loss Elementary. After reviewing these results, even though a better participation rate would have liked to be seen at a few of ASD's schools, there appeared to be an acceptable distribution of responses from the survey.

According to the survey results, which were constructed to gain insight into whether or not instructional staff are aware of whom the new students are in their classes, it appeared that instructional staff at ASD display confidence that they can identify the new students in their classes. As displayed in the table below, 81.6% of respondents agreed with the statement "I can identify the students in my classes that did not attend Appoquinimink School District last year."

Table G.2: Responses to if Staff can Identify New Students

I can identify the students in my classes that did not attend ASD last year.					
Respondents by Level	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N
All Staff	88 (35.9%)	112 (45.7%)	39 (15.9%)	6 (2.4%)	245
Elementary	54 (51.4%)	40 (38.1%)	11 (10.5%)	0 (0%)	105
Middle	16 (25.0%)	33 (51.6%)	12 (18.8%)	3 (4.7%)	64
High	18 (23.7%)	39 (51.3%)	16 (21.1%)	3 (3.9%)	76

Upon examining the results, it appears that elementary level instructional staff have the most confidence that they can identify the new students in their classes. Middle and high school level instruction staff had similar distributions of responses, with less instructional staff responding that they could identify the new students when compared to elementary staff. These results are not entirely surprising, in that middle and high school instructional staff typically have a larger number of students in their various classes, thus making it more difficult to identify the new students.

To gain further insight into whether or not instructional staff can identify new students in their classrooms, the next survey question assessed if the instructional staff believed they were getting more, less, or the same amount of information that could be used to properly identify new students compared to previous years. This information was disaggregated in the same manner as the previous question and is presented in the table below.

Table G.3: Responses to Amount of Information Received

Compared to previous years, I have received _____ information/data that indicates who the new students are in my classes.						
Respondents by Level	Much More	More	The Same Amount	Less	Much Less	N
All staff	39 (16.2%)	84(34.9%)	108 (44.8%)	8 (3.3%)	2 (0.8%)	241
Elementary	17 (16.5%)	30 (29.1%)	54 (52.4%)	2 (1.9%)	0 (0.0%)	103
Middle	8 (12.5%)	25 (39.1%)	28 (43.8%)	3 (4.7%)	0 (0.0%)	64
High	14 (18.9%)	29 (39.2%)	26 (35.1%)	3 (4.1%)	2 (2.7%)	74

Overall, a slight majority (51.1%) of the survey participants indicated that they have received more information this year than in previous years. 44.8% of the participants indicated that they received about the same amount of information, while 4.1% indicated that they actually received less information this year when compared to previous years. Looking at the disaggregated results, it appears that the high schools have seen the biggest increase in information and data (with 58.1% indicating that they received more or much more information), followed by middle schools at 51.6% and elementary schools at 45.6%.

Discipline Analysis Results

The number of discipline referrals from the months of September, October and November for the 2009-2010 and the current school year were analyzed to see if there was a change in the number of discipline incidents for new students compared to students who attended ASD last year. The number of students in each category, the mean discipline referrals, and the standard deviation of discipline referrals are presented in the table below.

Table G.4: Discipline Referrals by Student Type

Student Type	Year	N	Mean Referrals	Standard Deviation
Attended last year	2010	7642	0.203	0.81
New	2010	553	0.353	1.22
Attended last year	2011	7800	0.177	0.86
New	2011	620	0.166	0.68

For the 2009-2010 school year, students who attended ASD the previous year had fewer discipline referrals ($M=0.203$, $SD=0.81$), compared to students who were new to ASD ($M=.0353$, $SD=1.22$). An independent samples t-test was performed to see if there was a significant difference between the referrals of each group. The analysis revealed that new students did have significantly more discipline referrals than students who attended ASD the year before, $t(8193)=-4.01$, $p<0.0001$.

For the current (2010-2011) school year, the discipline referrals for the students who attended ASD the previous year were again compared to those students who were new to ASD for the months of September, October, and November. The new students ($M=0.166$, $SD=0.68$) appeared to average the same amount of discipline referrals when compared to students who attended last year ($M=0.177$, $SD=0.86$). An independent t-test confirmed that there were no significant difference between the two groups of students for the 2010-2011 school year, $t(8418)= 0.30$, $p<0.7652$.

Conclusions

The purpose of this evaluation was to answer two key questions related to the effectiveness of a newly implemented district-wide new student orientation program at Appoquinimink School District. The first question addressed whether or not instructional staff was getting the information that they needed in order to correctly identify who the new students were in their classes. After reviewing the survey data, it has been concluded that the majority of instructional staff does believe that they can identify the new students in their classes. Confidence in their ability to correctly identify new students was particularly strong in the elementary school instructional staff, but less so for middle and high school staff. Other results from the survey indicated that a slight majority of instructional staff indicated that they believed that they received more information and data that aided in the identification of who the new students are. It should also be noted, however, that a sizable number of instructional staff also indicated that they were receiving about the same amount of

information when compared to previous years. A very small number of teachers indicated that they were actually receiving less information and data this year.

The second question focused on the behavioral outcomes of both the new students. By comparing discipline data from last September, October, and November to data from the same time period of this year, it has been concluded that the gap between the number of discipline referrals between new and established students has been reduced compared to the previous year. During this period last year, new students were found to be significantly more likely to be written up for disciplinary reasons than students who attended ASD the previous year. This year, no difference was found between these two groups of students. This suggests that the program appears to be effective in reducing the number of discipline-related incidents committed by new students.

Recommendations

Based upon the information and data reviewed in this evaluation, it appears that ASD's new student orientation is off to a promising start and should be continued in the future. Of particular note is the reduction in new student discipline referrals compared to students who were enrolled at ASD last year. Additionally, it appears that a rather large number of teachers feel that they can appropriately identify the new students in their classes in order to give them additional support. Furthermore, many

of them report that they are getting more information and data to aid them in this identification than in previous years.

While there are many promising areas within this program, there are some areas that could receive additional focus or further evaluation. First, it is recommended that additional measures be taken to ensure that middle and high school staff can properly identify new students in their courses. Based upon the data, it was clear that elementary-level staff were much more confident in their ability to identify new students than middle or high school staff. While it is more difficult to properly identify students at this level compared to the elementary due to the typical increase of students a teacher has throughout the day, perhaps this can be addressed by adding a module on eSchool or Data Service Center that explicitly indicates who is a new student and who is not. Furthermore, even though the current evaluation focused on the behavioral outcomes for students, their academic performance was left unanalyzed. Additional work is needed in order to see if ASD's new student orientation program is resulting in student academic success before it can be concluded that ASD's new student orientation is meeting its stated goals of academic and social integration of all students.

Appendix

1.

1. Please select the school or schools that you work in:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brick Mill Elementary | <input type="checkbox"/> Meredith Middle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bunker Hill Elementary | <input type="checkbox"/> Redding Middle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cedar Lane Elementary | <input type="checkbox"/> Waters Middle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Olive B. Loss Elementary | <input type="checkbox"/> Appoquinimink High |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Silver Lake Elementary | <input type="checkbox"/> Middletown High |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Townsend Elementary | |

2. Please rate the following statement:

I can identify the students in my classes that did not attend Appoquinimink School District last year.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

3. Please complete the following statement:

Compared to previous years, I have received

Much More More The Same Amount Less Much Less

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

_____ information/data that indicates who the new students are in my classes.

4. Please feel free to share any suggestions on how we can ensure a quality academic and social transition for students new to Appoquinimink.

Appendix H

EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM

Abstract

In order to collect data on the effectiveness of the new student orientation program, four sources of data were utilized. Two surveys were used: a new student survey conducted at AHS and a parent survey distributed districtwide. While the survey was distributed widely for parents, only one school was targeted for the student survey in order to minimize the disruption for the schools. In order to measure academic performance, DCAS ELA and Math results were analyzed. Finally, an audit form and protocol was developed in order to make sure that the new student orientation was being conducted in all schools within the district.

The results of the student survey revealed that 50% of new students reported that they were attended AHS as the result of their entire family relocating to Appoquinimink School District's feeder. A third of students reported that this change of schools was made for the explicit purpose of making sure that the student was attending a better school. Some of the new students might be considered transient or highly mobile: Eleven percent of parents reported that their child had made 4 or more changes in schools and 27% of the students at AHS reported the same.

The student survey data yielded interesting findings about the families who moved to Appoquinimink School District. We found that roughly 60% of new students began their experience at Appoquinimink School District at the beginning of

the school year in the Fall; an additional 40% joined the district while the school year was in progress. Around half of the new students came from Delaware, a quarter came from the surrounding states of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Maryland, and a quarter came from other places in the United States and from international locations.

The data from parents and students about the fidelity of implementation of the orientation program and their satisfaction with the program revealed mixed results. Although both parents and students reported that the school staff was friendly and willing to help, the evidence from both the surveys and the new student orientation audit revealed that many schools seemed to be inconsistently implementing key elements of the orientation program. Overall, the orientation program was found to be conducted with more fidelity at the elementary level than at the middle or high schools.

Survey data on academic and social integration, academic performance, and student behavior did not appear to show any specific area of heightened concern. In other words, neither the parents nor students reported experiencing problems in one area much more than the others. However, it should be noted that students did report slightly more problems with academic performance compared to the other scales.

When asked to compare their experiences at their new school to their previous school, the majority of parents (80% and up) reported that their child was doing the same or better academically, socially and emotionally.

Academic achievement data were also utilized to measure both within-year growth and proficiency both at the beginning and end of the school year. While both new and established students saw the same amount of within-year scale score growth

on the DCAS, new students started the school year significantly underperforming established students (in both ELA and Math) and also ended the year underperforming, too. To account for this difference in initial academic ability, we conducted an Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) on both the ELA and Math DCAS scores. For math, the analysis found that the amount of growth could be explained by the differences between the Fall Math DCAS Performance level at the beginning of the year. Being a new student did not appear to play a significant role in the difference in math growth, after controlling for the students' DCAS performance at the beginning of the year. Unlike the analysis for math growth, the analysis for ELA found that students' Fall ELA DCAS performance level and status of being a new student predicted the amount of growth.

Based upon these findings, three recommendations were made. First, it is important for district and school staff to understand that new students come from a variety of locations for many reasons. Because of this, implementing a “one-size-fits-all” approach to the needs of new students would not be effective. Second, it is very important to identify academic struggles early and then provide additional support as soon as possible. This is important for all students, but especially new students, since we have found that they start the school year performing worse academically than established students. Finally, based upon our findings, it is strongly suggested that the district focus its efforts on fostering parent communication and providing a student orientation to the school. Survey responses indicated that students wanted the school

to provide some type of orientation to the school itself (layout of building/location of classes) and parents wished for better communication regarding their child's performance in school.

Introduction

Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to determine the effectiveness of the New Student Orientation Program implemented by Appoquinimink School District. The evaluation seeks answers to three key questions. First, has the program been implemented with fidelity? Second, did the New Student Orientation benefit the students academically and socially? Third, how did students and parents view the new student orientation program and were they satisfied with their experience?

Description of the Program

Appoquinimink School District (ASD) is a rapidly growing district. Between 2000-2012, ASD has seen its student population grow from 5,474 to 9,618, which is almost a 70% increase. Because of this growth, ASD saw a large number of students who were not enrolled in the district the previous year.

Past internal studies have found that students new to the district appeared to have significantly lower academic achievement compared to students who attended ASD the year before. Additionally, students new to the district were found to have

more discipline referrals than compared to students who have been in the district longer than one year. Due to this information, ASD developed and implemented a districtwide orientation program for new students. This program was administered for the first time during the 2010-2011 school year.

The New Student Orientation Program was developed to provide supports to new students to ensure their successful academic and social integration. The New Student Orientation Program was centered on three areas: the collection and dissemination of new student data, development of meaningful contact with the new student and his or her family, and progress monitoring of the student's academic and social integration.

A key step in ensuring a successful transition for new students was to accurately record who they are and share this information with the appropriate school staff. As part of ASD's plan, at the beginning of the year, the Coordinator of Research compiles a list of all the new students and attempts to gather all existing academic data on the students to distribute to school principals. This information was also shared with school staff so that academic placement decisions could be made both quickly and accurately.

Another way that additional information on new students was gathered was through periodic phone calls home and through a face-to-face meeting between a school administrator and the parent and child. Through these conversations, student interests and abilities were gathered and this information was used to help guide the student to appropriate coursework and extracurricular activities. From this initial

meeting, further meeting or phone calls were made based upon the evaluations of the student's academic or socioemotional needs.

The final component was to monitor progress, specifically tailored for students new to Appoquinimink. All schools had special cards that were placed in teachers' mailboxes that asked them to record information regarding the academic and social integration of new students into their classes. Although this approach is "low tech," this approach has been found to be useful because it helped remind teachers of which students were new to the district and these cards did not get lost in the shuffle of electronic communication. The feedback gained from these quick progress monitoring cards helped the teachers, counselors, and administrators further evaluate the students' needs.

Design and Methodology

Instruments

Two surveys were also used to evaluate the fidelity of the program and to gather information on how well the program facilitated the academic and social integration of new students. The first survey was administered to 86 new students at Appoquinimink High School at the end of the 2011-2012 school year. The students completed the survey at the school's computer lab. The new student survey (Appendix B) was constructed to gather information on student demographics, their previous school, reasons for the change in school and how well the student was

integrating academically and socially. The survey also provided the new students with an opportunity to share what areas of the orientation process were effective and what areas needed modification.

The parent survey was also distributed electronically, with the survey link being emailed to the parents of new students. The survey was sent in October of the 2012-2013 school year, but the survey targeted parents of new students who first attended Appoquinimink schools during the 2011-2012 school year. Four hundred sixty-eight parents of new students who had an email address on record were sent the survey but only 72 participated. The survey was similar in format to the new student survey. It included items that assessed their child's academic and social integration, but more detailed questions were asked in regards to what specific activities were done in order to ease their child's transition to a new school. As with the student survey, summary results from the parents of new student survey is located in the Appendix C of this document.

Sample

When the students (via the student survey at Appoquinimink High School) were asked to select all races or ethnicities they identify with, the majority of students identified as White (63%). The remaining students reported that 35% were Black, 11% Hispanic, 12% "Other" and 6% Asian. In terms of grade level, 39% of the surveyed high school students were freshman, 27% sophomores, 24% juniors, and 7%

were seniors. Four percent of new students surveyed reported being in their 5th year of high school or more. These results are shown in Table H.1.

Table H.1: Student Survey Demographics

Student Survey Demographics	Response	Percent
Race	White	63
Race	Black	35
Race	Hispanic	11
Race	Asian	6
Race	Other	12
Education Level	Freshman	39
Education Level	Sophomore	27
Education Level	Junior	24
Education Level	Senior	7
Education Level	Fifth year or above	4

Note: participants were allowed to select more than one race/ethnicity

The survey also asked the students to share other information specifically about the circumstances regarding their attendance. Results of these questions are found in Table H.2. Based upon these results, 61% of the students reported they began attending their new school on the first day of school. The remaining 39% of students reported that they began school sometime after the school year began.

The students reported that they previously attended school in a variety of places, but the majority of new students reported that they previously attended a school within the state of Delaware (65%). Other students reported attending schools in Maryland (7%) Pennsylvania (5%) and New Jersey (3%). The remaining 20% attended a school located in some other state or country.

Students also shared the number of times they have changed schools, excluding those that were the result of grade-level promotion. The majority of students (44%) reported that they had changed schools twice in their life. Twenty percent reported changing schools three times, 12% reported changing schools four times, and 25% of students indicated that changed schools five or more times.

Finally, students were asked to provide a reason why they were attending Appoquinimink High. Fifty percent reported that they were at AHS because their family chose to relocate and 33% reported they were going to school at AHS because their family wanted him or her to attend a better school. Twenty-five percent of students reported that they were at AHS as result of a family change, such as divorce or death in the family, while 21% reported that the move to AHS came as a result of problems at their previous school.

Table H.2: New Student Characteristics from Student Survey

New Student Characteristics from Student Survey	Response	Percent
When did student start?	1 st day of school	61
When did student start?	Mid-year	39
Where did you live before move?	Delaware	65
Where did you live before move?	Maryland	7
Where did you live before move?	Pennsylvania	5
Where did you live before move?	New Jersey	3
Where did you live before move?	Other	20
Number of School Moves	2	44
Number of School Moves	3	20
Number of School Moves	4	12
Number of School Moves	5 or more	25
Reason for move	Family chose to relocate	50
Reason for move	Attend a better school	33
Reason for move	Family change (ex. Divorce)	25
Reason for move	Problems at previous school	21

A summary of the parents' demographics can be found below in Table H.3. When asked to provide their race and/or ethnicity, the results indicated that 76% identified as White, 22% Black, 7% Hispanic, and 7% Asian. Two percent of respondents replied "other" to this question. Twenty percent of the parents reported earning a graduate degree, 28% had a Bachelor's degree, and 12% reported having an Associate's degree. Thirty-four percent reported having completing some college-level coursework while 6% responded that they had earned their high school diploma.

Table H.3: Parent Survey Demographics

Parent Survey Demographics	Response	Percent
Race	White	76
Race	Black	22
Race	Hispanic	7
Race	Asian	7
Race	Other	2
Education Level	High School	6
Education Level	Some College	34
Education Level	Associate	12
Education Level	Bachelor	28
Education Level	Graduate	20

Note: participants were allowed to select more than one race/ethnicity

The parent survey also asked the respondents to share information about their child. Results of these questions are found in Table H.4. Five percent of the new students were reported as attending an early childhood center (Kindergarten). The remaining students were roughly equally distributed among the elementary (29%), middle (33%) and high schools (33%). Sixty-six percent of the parents reported that their child began attending the new school on the first day of school. The remaining 34% of parents reported that their child began school sometime after the school year began.

The parents reported moving from variety of locations; however, most of the parents of new students reported that they moved within the state of Delaware (46%). Other parents reported moving from neighboring Pennsylvania (11%) and New Jersey (7%). The remaining 36% moved from a variety of states and nations.

Finally, on the parents were asked the number of times their child had to move to a new school, excluding those that the result of grade-level promotion. The majority of parents (80%) reported that their child had moved twice. Nine percent reported changing school three times, 7% reported changing school four times, and 4% of parents indicated that their child had changed school five or more times.

Table H.4: New Student Characteristics from Parent Survey

New Student Characteristics from Parent Survey	Response	Percent
School Level	Early Childhood	5
School Level	Elementary	29
School Level	Middle	33
School Level	High	33
When did student start?	1 st day of school	66
When did student start?	Mid-year	34
Where did you live before move?	Delaware	46
Where did you live before move?	Pennsylvania	11
Where did you live before move?	New Jersey	7
Where did you live before move?	Other	36
Number of School Moves	2	80
Number of School Moves	3	9
Number of School Moves	4	7
Number of School Moves	5 or more	4

Findings

Evaluation Question #1: Was the New Student Orientation Program implemented with fidelity?

In order to assess the implementation fidelity of the New Student Orientation, an audit was conducted on each school using the rubric provided in the Appendix D. The

rubric was created during the development of the New Student Orientation program by the committee that created the program. The rubric evaluated the following components of the school's New Student Orientation process: (a) the school's welcome packet for new students; (b) the number of inventories and needs assessments completed for new students; (c) the degree that administrators, teachers, and counselors conducted meetings and phone calls in a timely fashion; (d) the school's process for orienting new students to their school; and (e) an evaluation of the development of student success plans for those who had academic or social needs.

To conduct the audit, five new students were randomly selected at each school by the Coordinator of Research. A listing of these students was then given to various district office directors and supervisors in order to aid in the audit process. Each school submitted their materials (typically in a binder, but some electronically) related to their monitoring of the new student orientation process at their school. The assigned auditors then utilized the rubric to evaluate how well the school conducted the required processes for the five randomly selected new students.

The results of the audit indicated that only four of the thirteen audited schools performed all of the required tasks as outlined in the new student orientation handbook. See Table for the results of the audit. None of the secondary schools (middle or high schools) fulfilled all of the expected procedures. The audit revealed that the majority of the schools provided welcome packets, completed the new student inventories, and provided the incoming students with at least some type of orientation

to the school. The orientations typically consisted of some combination of a tour of the school as well as a review of the rules and expectations for students.

Table H.5: Findings from the New Student Orientation Audit

School	Grade Level	Welcome Packet	New Student Inventory	Admin Meeting 1st Week	Teacher Phone Call	Orientation to School	Teacher Feedback Form	Academic Assessment	Success Plan	Counselor Phone Call
AECC	K	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	☒	☒	☒	✓
CLECC	K	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
BME	1 to 5	☒	⊖	⊖	☒	☒	⊖	☒	⊖	⊖
BHE	1 to 5	✓	✓	✓	✓	☒	✓	✓	✓	✓
CLE	1 to 5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
OBL	1 to 5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SLE	1 to 5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
TES	1 to 5	✓	✓	⊖	☒	⊖	⊖	⊖	☒	⊖
AGW	6 to 8	☒	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	⊖	⊖	☒
MMS	6 to 8	✓	✓	⊖	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RMS	6 to 8	☒	⊖	✓	⊖	✓	⊖	✓	☒	⊖
AHS	9 to 12	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	☒	✓
MHS	9 to 12	✓	☒	☒	☒	⊖	☒	⊖	☒	⊖

Note: ✓ = met all criteria; ⊖ = met some criteria; ☒ = did not meet criteria

Evaluation Question #2: Did the New Student Orientation benefit the students academically and socially?

To evaluate the effectiveness of the program in bringing about positive academic outcomes for new students, the results from the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) were utilized. The DCAS is a high-stakes, computer-adaptive statewide assessment used to measure whether or not students in grades three through ten have mastered the grade-level standards in both Reading and Math. Since the assessment is computer-adaptive, each student was given a scale score that is equitable across grade levels. Furthermore, the assessment was administered three

times: at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. This testing schedule allowed for the measurement of growth within a given school year.

DCAS performance is categorized into four levels based upon the scale score for each tested grade, with “1” indicating well below standard, “2” indicating below standard, “3” indicating met standard, and “4” indicating advanced level. The mean performance level for new and established students for both math and ELA during the fall and spring administration is provided in Table H.6.

Table H.6: Average Fall and Spring DCAS Performance Level

DCAS Fall Average Performance Level	Type of Student	Fall N	Fall Mean	Fall SD	Sprin g N	Sprin g Mean	Sprin g SD
English Language Arts	Established	5314	2.6	1.2	5938	3.3	0.9
	New	490	2.3	1.3	648	3.1	1.0
Math	Established	5312	2.3	0.8	5942	3.2	0.8
	New	494	2.1	0.8	652	3.0	0.9

During the fall, the results of the English Language Arts (ELA) test revealed that, established students had a performance level average of 2.6 and new students had a performance level average of 2.3. These differences were highly significant $t(5802) = 5.26, p < .0001$. The fall math data revealed that new students also performed worse than established students, with new students averaging a performance level of 2.1 and established students averaging a 2.3. These differences were also highly significant $t(5804) = 5.31, p < .0001$.

The spring English Language Arts (ELA) data revealed that established students ended the school year with a performance level average of 3.3 and new students had a performance level average of 3.1. Much like what was observed in the Fall, these differences were highly significant $t(6584) = 5.31, p < .0001$. The spring math data showed that new students underperformed established students, averaging a performance level of 3.0 and established students averaging a 3.2. Again, these differences were highly significant $t(6592) = 5.98, p < .0001$.

Knowing that new students began the year and ended the year performing worse than their established peers in terms of mean performance levels, average scale score growth from the fall to the spring was also examined in order to determine the academic progress of new students compared to established students. To accomplish this task, two models were created using regression analysis that attempted to predict the amount of scale score growth seen in DCAS scores from the beginning to the end of the year. The results for the model utilizing Math DCAS data are depicted below in Table H.7.

Table H.7: Math DCAS Growth Regression Models

Variable	Model 1 β	Model 2 β
Constant	190.8*	191.6*
Fall Math DCAS Scale Score	-0.1696*	-0.1703*
New Student Status		-3.451
R^2	0.11	0.11
F	708.16*	355.65*
ΔR^2		0
ΔF		352.51

N=5755; * $p < .01$

The first of the two models utilized only DCAS performance at the beginning of the year as a predictor of math growth. The second model kept the beginning of year math performance as a predictor, but also added whether or not the student was new to the district to the model. These two analyses showed that Math DCAS performance observed at the beginning of the school year predicted the amount of math growth during the course of the school year. This particular model explained around 11% of the variance in the amount of growth observed in math. Being new to the school did not appear to play a significant role in the amount of math growth after beginning-of-year DCAS performance was accounted for. Furthermore, inclusion of the new student variable into the model did not increase its overall predictive power.

A similar regression analysis was also conducted to assess ELA growth. These results are presented below in Table H.8.

Table H.8: ELA DCAS Growth Regression Models

Variable	Model 1 β	Model 2 β
Constant	285.2**	286.4**
Fall ELA DCAS Scale Score	-0.3100**	-0.3110**
New Student Status		-4.779*
R^2	.309	.310
F	2571.94**	1290.47**
ΔR^2		.001
ΔF		1281.47

N=5751; *p<.05; **p<.01

Similar to the analysis of the math data, the first of the two models only included the ELA DCAS performance at the beginning of the year as a predictor of ELA growth and the second model included initial ELA DCAS performance and whether or not the student was new to the district as predictors. Unlike the analysis for math growth, the analysis for ELA found that the amount of growth was explained by the both the Fall ELA DCAS performance and also whether or not the student was new. In other words, the ELA score at the beginning of year and student's status as new significantly predicted ELA growth. It should be noted, however, that whether or not the student was new appeared to provided little if any additional predictive power to the model after accounting for beginning of year ELA DCAS performance. That is to say, the initial model accounted for 30.9% of the variance in ELA growth. Whereas, the second model, with the inclusion of new student status, accounted for 31% of the variance in ELA growth scores, which is only a 1% increase. Clearly, the

models for both ELA and math indicated that beginning-of-year academic ability seemed to be the strongest predictor of within-year growth, not new student status.

In addition to DCAS performance, the results from both the parent and student surveys were used to determine if the new student orientation program benefitted students academically and socially. Based on the student survey data, measures of (a) social integration, (b) academic integration, (c) academic performance, and (d) student behavior were created. The measures were created from the survey questions asked respondents to rate their experiences during the past school year. The measure of social integration included 7 items that assessed how well the students were doing in terms of making friends and getting along with their classmates. Academic integration was based on summing/averaging of 6 items to measure how well the student felt welcomed by school staff and was adjusting academically. Academic performance was the sum/average of 6 items that tapped how well the student was doing in school. The measure of student behavior included 5 items that focused on positive academic behaviors, such as attending class and avoiding discipline incidents. See Appendix A for a list of the items associated with each measure.

The results of these questions were then combined to give an overall rating for each of these scales. On the student survey, scales for Social and Academic Integration, Academic Performance, and Student Behavior were created. For each scale, the number of items that comprise each scale is provided. Additionally, the scale average (with “Strongly Agree”=4, “Agree”=3, “Disagree”=2, “Strongly

Disagree”=1) is displayed in the final column. The results of the student survey on these scales is found below, in Table H.9.

Table H.9: Student Survey Scaled Responses

Student Survey Item Summaries	# of items	Scale Average
Social Integration	7	3.2
Academic Integration	6	3.2
Academic Performance	6	3.1
Student Behavior	5	3.4

Overall, the students reported the highest average scores for student behavior, with the majority of students reporting that they were avoiding any discipline-related problems in school. The lowest average score was found in academic performance. In summary, the resulting responses to all the scales were somewhat similar, with all the items receiving positive scores by the new students.

Similar results were seen on the same scales derived from the parent survey responses (Table H.10). Again, student behavior recorded the highest average responses. Parents reported similar results for academic integration, with an average scale score of 3.3.

Table H.10: Parent Survey Scaled Responses

Parent Survey Item Summaries	# of items	Scale Average
Social Integration	10	3.1
Academic Integration	10	3.3
Student Behavior	5	3.8

The survey also asked parents to compare their child’s current experiences with that of their previous school (Table H.11). Overall, the results indicate the majority of parents believe their child was doing the same or better academically (83%), socially (83%), and emotionally (85%) when compared to their previous school.

Table H.11: Parent Survey Comparisons

Compared to your child’s previous school experiences, did your child do better or worse:	Much Better	Better	The Same	Worse	Much Worse
Academically (how well he/she did with his or her classwork)	20%	10%	53%	14%	4%
Socially (how well he/she got along with others)	18%	12%	53%	12%	6%
Emotionally (how he/she felt, such as feeling happy or sad)	20%	16%	49%	12%	4%

Evaluation Question #3: How did students and parents view the new student orientation program and were they satisfied with the experience?

To answer this evaluation question, we leaned heavily on the responses from the AHS new student survey as well as the parents of new student survey that was distributed districtwide.

School Satisfaction

Satisfaction with the school was based on data from the student and parent surveys. To create the school satisfaction scale, we included questions asking whether or not the student or the parent was satisfied with the staff, courses, and the overall academics at their school. Please see Appendix A for the list of items that were included in the measures. The school satisfaction scale scores have been tabulated and reported in the same manner as the results previously seen in Tables 10 and 11. The results of these particular scales are presented below in Table H.12.

Table H.12: Student Survey Scaled Responses

Survey Item Summaries	# of items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Scale Average
Student: School Satisfaction	6	49%	38%	7%	6%	3.3
Parent: School Satisfaction	6	55%	25%	16%	4%	3.3

Both the parents and the students reported they were satisfied with the various aspects of the school; 87% of the student responses and 80% of the parent responses were positive. While both had the same scale average of 3.3, more parents, compared to students, appeared to be less satisfied with the new school: Thirteen percent of students disagreed or strongly disagreed that they were satisfied but 20% of parents disagreed or strongly disagreed that they were satisfied.

New Student Perceptions on the New Student Orientation

Students were asked to respond to an open-ended question about what AHS did well to meet the needs of new students. The responses were coded according to themes and then tabulated. These themes, along with the number of comments and the percentage of comments related to that theme are displayed in Table H.13.

Table H.13: Strengths of the New Student Orientation Program

What does Appoquinimink High do well to meet the needs of new students?	Number of Comments	Percent
Friendly and Helpful Staff	36	50
Orientation Activities	18	25
Nothing	8	11
Other	7	10
Not sure/I Don't Know	3	4

N=72

Half of the students responded that the friendly and helpful staff at AHS was a key support to new students. One new student stated that “the staff is very welcoming and friendly to the students who attend this school.” Others commented:

AHS has a friendly, approachable staff that a new student can come to for information or assistance.

Appoquinimink helps you feel like there is nothing you can't do. They let you know that it doesn't matter where you come from it just matters what you learn.

Overall, one participant summed it up that as a new student “they welcome us with open arms.”

A quarter of students pointed to various orientation activities as being very helpful. One of these students stated that the “new student meeting before school starts” was helpful and another shared that the staff helped “guide them in what classes to take.” Another shared that the staff also “make sure that they are comfortable in their new classes and might even show them around.” Finally, another student shared that the school attempted to provide guidance to by having “a meeting with me and my mom before I started.”

The remaining responses included 11% of students who stated that the school did nothing to support new students, 10% providing a variety of responses including the course offerings and curricular materials, and 4% responding that they did not know or were not sure of what AHS did well for new students.

The survey also provided new students the opportunity to share what AHS could do better to meet the needs of new students. These responses are summarized in Table H.14 below.

Table H.14: Areas to improve the New Student Orientation Program

What can Appoquinimink High do better to meet the needs of new students?	Number of Comments	Percent
Nothing	15	24
Actively Assist New Students	12	19
Introduction to School Layout and Expectations	11	17
Not sure/I Don't Know	10	16
Other	15	24

N=63

Overall, the responses were somewhat evenly distributed among five themes. Twenty-four percent of students responded that they felt the school did not need to do anything better in order to meet the needs of new students. Another 24% shared a variety of suggestions including providing additional academic support, student ambassadors, more social events, and better quality school food.

Nineteen percent of students requested that school staff more actively assist new students. In particular, the new students suggested more attention and involvement from staff:

Actually do something for them....just a suggestion...

Have better attention to student needs.

Pay more attention individually to new students.

Be more involved.

Other students asked that a better introduction to the school be available to new students (17%). Specifically, students asked for “help with getting to classrooms” or to “explain how the day works and where the different classrooms are.” According to district policy, a tour or orientation is supposed to be provided to new students, but according to student feedback, this does not seem to be occurring for all new students when one looks at their suggestions:

Have some type of orientation for new students to help them get situated with the school as a whole.

On the first day, let the kids find their class and have their teacher explain it to them.

Have an orientation and tours.

Give them a tour of the school so they don't get lost.

One student summed up their experience by stating that, “I felt like I was just thrown in with the mix and had to adjust myself to a schedule that was completely different than my old school.”

Overall, the results of the new student survey seemed to indicate that the staff of Appoquinimink High was overall very welcoming to new students and open to assisting them when they needed help. The students were also relatively positive in their opinion of their first year experience and also seemed to be satisfied with their new school. It needs to be noted, however, that the survey seemed to indicate that there is not a well-defined orientation program at AHS and not many specific activities or supports solely for new students were identified.

Parents of New Students Perceptions on the New Student Orientation

Similar to the student survey, parents were also asked to share their thoughts on what the school did well for their child. Again, these responses were coded according to theme and tabulated in Table H.15.

Table H.15: What the school does well for new students

What did the school do well?	Number of Comments	Percent
Supportive Staff	12	44
Orientation Program	6	22
Other	4	15
I don't know	3	11
Nothing	2	7

N=27

Similar to the student responses at AHS, many parents of new students in Appoquinimink School District viewed supportive staff (44%) as being one of things that the district does well in assisting new students. For example, one parent stated “the students and teachers were welcoming and did not make my child feel out of

place.” The school counselor at each school was often singled out as being especially helpful:

Teachers were patient with my new student. Counselors gave pertinent feedback to guide student to most feasible path to graduation.

*The school worked the transfer of grades and enrollment in a timely fashion.
The school counselor was extremely helpful.*

I think the overall environment was fairly pleasant and the counselor did help with course selection.

In addition to supportive staff, some parents (22%) also stated that they found the school’s orientation activities helpful:

*She was given a tour of the school. I received constant communication from her teachers throughout the year regarding assignments and upcoming events.
I was called by her teachers at the beginning of the year to introduce themselves.*

The orientation process was conducive for his adjustment.

Registration was great, Meet the teacher night was good, Her teacher was very nice and easy to communicate with and available.

I think the tour helped us feel good about where we were thinking of sending my child.

Fifteen percent of parents shared that they found some classroom-specific activity helpful (for example, one parent commented on the teacher’s use of group work), while the remaining responses included “I don’t know” (11%) and “nothing” (7%).

Parents were also asked to share their thoughts on what could be done to make the experience of new students better. These results are provided in Table H.16.

Table H.16: What the school could do better for new students

What can the school do better?	Number of Comments	Percent
Communication	8	22
Nothing	7	19
Issue with a specific staff member	7	19
Orientation Activities	6	17
Stronger Academics	4	11
Other	4	11

N=36

Again, similar to the student responses, no clear, consistent theme seemed to emerge. The most common response from parents (22%) was that the school needed to do a better job communicating with parents of new students:

I think involving the parent on progress of the new student as far as academics and social behaviors would help a parent understand where their child stands in new schools.

Make sure communication is always open

Reach out through e-mail or telephone to discuss schedules, extracurricular activities, sports and the school in general.

Nineteen percent of parents were unable to provide any specific things that they believe the school could do better and another 19% shared some sort of anecdote about a specific staff member who they believed could do a better job. Similar to the student responses to this question, some respondents stated that they would like to see various elements of the district-supported orientation take place. For example:

I think their experience could have been improved and perhaps accelerated had they benefitted from an orientation program (perhaps together with other new students) and from a "pulse check" for the first two or three months by the counselors to ensure all was on track.

Make better use of the mentor program that I was told about but was not part of.

Create a transition plan.

One parent shared their child missed valuable instruction time and that the school promised some supports but did not follow up on them:

Quicker turnaround time from enrollment to start of school. My daughter sat home for over a week unnecessarily. There was no formal orientation which would have probably been helpful. My daughter struggled socially and emotionally with the change but did very well academically. She was told she would be "hooked up" with other girls her age from near our home but this never happened. To my knowledge the counselor did not follow up with her or assist her with the transition in any way.

Overall, much like the students, the school staff appeared to be very welcoming to new students, but when asked about specific activities related to supporting new students, parents often seemed unaware of any steps that were taken. For example, approximately a third of the parents were unaware that the school has a new student orientation program. Almost half (45.1% and 47.1%, respectively) of the parents reported that they did not have a face to face meeting with the building administration upon registration or received a teacher phone call welcoming them to the school.

A key part of the orientation process was a counselor phone call home to inform the parents on how well the child has adjusted both socially and academically to the school. This was supposed to occur one month after registration so that the school has time to monitor the student's integration and give the parents the

opportunity to bring up any questions or concerns that they have. When asked about whether or not this had occurred, over half (56.9%) responded that they never received a counselor phone call and almost 20% stated that they did not remember whether they received a call or not.

Summary of Findings

The findings are based on the results from the new student survey conducted at AHS, the parent of new student survey distributed districtwide, the new school orientation audit, and the DCAS ELA and Math results for new and established students. Overall, the survey data indicated that roughly 60% of new students began their experience at Appoquinimink School District at the beginning of the school year in the Fall and 40% joined the district sometime while the school year was in progress. Approximately half of the new students came from Delaware, and a quarter came from the surrounding states of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Maryland. The remaining students came from across the United States and from international locations, too.

The results of the student survey revealed that 50% of new students reported that they were attending AHS as the result of their entire family relocating to Appoquinimink School District's feeder. A third of students reported that this change in schools was made for the explicit purpose of making sure that the student was attending a better school. Conversely, a quarter of students reported that the change in schools was a result of a change in family living arrangements, such as divorce, and

another 21% reported that they were attending AHS because of the student experiencing problems at their previous school. Typically, most students had not experienced many school moves, but some were transient. Eleven percent of parents reported that their child had made 4 or more changes in schools while 27% of the students at AHS reported the same.

The evidence regarding the fidelity of implementation of the orientation program and satisfaction regarding the program was mixed. Although both parents and students reported that school staff was friendly and willing to help, evidence from both the surveys and the new student orientation audit revealed that many schools seemed to be inconsistently implementing key elements of the orientation program. Overall, the orientation program was found to be run with more fidelity at the elementary level than at the middle or high schools.

Survey data on academic and social integration, academic performance, and student behavior did not appear to show any specific area of heightened concern. It should be noted that students did report problems with academic performance at a higher level compared to the other aspects of academic and social adjustment. When asked to compare their experiences at their new school compared to their previous school, the majority of parents (80% and up) reported that their child was doing the same or better academically, socially and emotionally.

Academic achievement data were utilized to measure both within-year growth and proficiency both at the beginning and end of the school year. While both new and established students experienced the same amount of within-year scale score growth

on the DCAS, new students started the school year significantly underperforming established students (in both ELA and Math) and also ended the year underperforming, too. This suggests that the gaps that were present between these two groups of students at the outset seem to persist throughout the school year because the new students were experiencing the same amount of growth as the established students. In other words, in order to close this gap, new students will need to experience significantly higher within-year growth than established students in order to close this gap in academic performance.

Finally, the results of the student and parent surveys seem to indicate that school staff were typically very welcoming to new students and open to assisting them when they needed help. Both students and parents reported relatively positive experiences as well as reported being satisfied with their new school. It is noted, however, that the survey results indicated that there was not a well-defined orientation program at some schools and few activities or supports were provided for new students.

Recommendations

Based upon these findings, I recommend the following three actions:

1. **Develop individualized and personalized approaches to supporting new students.** New students are coming from very different circumstances. The results of the surveys indicated that new students came from a variety of

locations for a variety of reasons. For some students this was their first move to a new school but others experienced 2 or more school changes. Some students entered with strong academic abilities and others did not. It is important not to develop a “one-size-fits-all” approach to meeting their diverse needs. Doing so will result in time and resources being devoted to unwarranted circumstances and will decrease the effectiveness of efforts to assist new students.

2. Identify academic struggles early and provide additional support.

Our evidence indicated that new students entered the school district performing worse than their established peers and finished the school year behind these peers, too. The positive news is new students were making the same amount of growth as established students, which suggests that they were not falling further behind after entry in our schools. However, students who were in need of additional academic supports were not receiving these interventions in a timely manner in order to close the gap.

3. Focus efforts on student orientation to school and parent communication.

Several parents reported that many orientation activities were promised to them at the time of registration, but there was a lack of implementation of these activities. When questioned about additional beneficial steps to assist new students, some parents and students suggested orientation activities that should have been conducted if schools were following the new student orientation protocol. Notably, students requested that the school provide some type of

orientation to the school itself (layout of building/location of classes) and parents asked for better communication regarding their child's performance in school. At the very least, these two things should be provided to our students new to the district.

Appendix A: Parent and Student Survey Items and Associated Scales

Survey Type	Scale	Item Text
Parent	Social Integration	My child fit in well at his or her new school
Parent	Social Integration	My child was not very involved with the school's extracurricular activities (reverse code)
Parent	Social Integration	I believe my child adapted well socially to his or her new school
Parent	Social Integration	My child had several close friends at his or her new school
Parent	Social Integration	My child seemed happy at his her school
Parent	Social Integration	My child had trouble meeting people and making friends (reverse code)
Parent	Social Integration	My child fit in with the other students at his or her new school
Parent	Social Integration	My child did not miss where we used to live
Parent	Social Integration	My child would rather be at the school he or she used to go to (reverse code)

Parent	Social Integration	The students at my child's new school teased, made fun of, or picked on my child.(reverse code)
Parent	Academic Integration	I had discussions with my child's teachers about his or her academic performance
Parent	Academic Integration	My child's teachers had discussions with my child about his or her academic performance
Parent	Academic Integration	Teachers helped my child adjust since he or she was new by providing extra academic supports
Parent	Academic Integration	School staff (teachers, administrators, counselors) was friendly to me and my child.
Parent	Academic Integration	To the best of my knowledge, my child actively participated in classroom activities
Parent	Academic Integration	The staff at his or her school did not make my child feel welcome in his or her new classes (reverse code)
Parent	Academic Integration	The teachers at my child's school cared about my child as a person.
Parent	Academic Integration	My child struggled with the assignments at his or her school (reverse code)
Parent	Academic Integration	I believe my child adjusted well academically to his or her new school

Parent	Academic Integration	I am satisfied with my child's academic performance
Parent	Student Behavior	My child did not get into trouble in school
Parent	Student Behavior	My child was often absent from school (reverse coded)
Parent	Student Behavior	My child arrived on time for school
Parent	Student Behavior	My child often skipped classes (reverse coded)
Parent	Student Behavior	My child was often disciplined for his or her behavior in school (reverse coded)
Parent	School Satisfaction	I was satisfied with the variety of classes available at his or her school
Parent	School Satisfaction	I was satisfied with the quality of the classes at his or her school
Parent	School Satisfaction	I think my child's school had good teachers
Parent	School Satisfaction	Overall, I was satisfied with his or her school's academics

Parent	School Satisfaction	I am happy that my oldest child attended an Appoquinimink School District school last year
Parent	School Satisfaction	I was not satisfied with the extracurricular activities at his or her school (reverse coded)
Student	Social Integration	I fit in well at my new school
Student	Social Integration	I am not very involved with my school's social activities (reverse code)
Student	Social Integration	Socially, I believe I am adjusting well to my new school
Student	Social Integration	I have several close friends
Student	Social Integration	I am happy with how much I participate in social activities
Student	Social Integration	Socially, I am happy at Appoquinimink
Student	Social Integration	I am having trouble meeting people and making friends (reverse code)
Student	Academic Integration	I have discussions with my teachers about my academic performance

Student	Academic Integration	My teachers helped me adjust since I am new
Student	Academic Integration	Appoquinimink High School staff (teachers, administrators, counselors) is friendly to me
Student	Academic Integration	I actively participate in classroom activities
Student	Academic Integration	I do not feel welcome in my new classes (reverse coded)
Student	Academic Integration	The teachers at AHS care about me as a person.
Student	Academic Performance	I am struggling with the assignments at Appoquinimink (reverse code)
Student	Academic Performance	I don't understand what classes i am supposed to take (reverse code)
Student	Academic Performance	Academically I believe I am adjusting well to my new school
Student	Academic Performance	I am happy with my academic performance
Student	Academic Performance	In my classes, I do not feel smart enough (reverse code)

Student	Academic Performance	I enjoy doing the required work for my classes
Student	Student Behavior	I never get into trouble in school
Student	Student Behavior	I am often absent from school (reverse code)
Student	Student Behavior	I always arrive on time for school
Student	Student Behavior	I often skip classes (reverse code)
Student	Student Behavior	I am often disciplined for my behavior in school (reverse code)
Student	School Satisfaction	I am satisfied with the types of classes available at Appoquinimink
Student	School Satisfaction	I am happy with the quality of the classes at Appoquinimink
Student	School Satisfaction	I think Appoquinimink has good teachers
Student	School Satisfaction	Overall, I am happy about Appoquinimink's academics

Student	School Satisfaction	I am happy that I am now attending Appoquinimink
Student	School Satisfaction	I am satisfied with the extracurricular activities at Appoquinimink

Appendix B: New Student Survey

Welcome!

According to our records, sometime during this school year you became part of the Appoquinimink family for the first time. We at Appoquinimink are working hard to make sure that new students, such as yourself, have a successful transition to their new school.

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary and no consequences will occur if you choose not to participate.

Your anonymous responses on this survey will help give us valuable information that will improve the orientation process for future new students. For the questions on the survey, please reflect back on your experiences this year at Appoquinimink only and answer the questions to the best of your ability.

Thank you for your time and if you have any questions, feel free to contact me-

Jeff Klein
Coordinator of Research, Development and Evaluation
Appoquinimink School District
(302)449-3825
jeff.klein@appo.k12.de.us

The following questions are about how and when you enrolled in Appoquinimink and also questions about your previous school.

1. When did you start classes at Appoquinimink?

- ☐ First day of this school year
- ☐ At the beginning of the school year, but not on the first day
- ☐ At the middle of the school year
- ☐ Near the end of the school year

2. What school did you attend before Appoquinimink?

3. What school district did you attend before Appoquinimink?

4. What state (or country) was the school district in?

5. To the best of your knowledge, since Kindergarten, how many different school districts have you been enrolled in?

- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6 or more

The following questions are about how and when you enrolled in Appoquinimink and also questions about your previous school.

6. Please briefly describe what led you to enroll in Appoquinimink High School.

7. What statement best summarizes your response in the answer above?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am now living with new family members | <input type="checkbox"/> My family was experiencing financial problems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My family experienced a change, such as divorce or death of a family member. | <input type="checkbox"/> My family chose to relocate here |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My family wanted me to attend a better school | <input type="checkbox"/> My family were forced to move from where we lived before |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I was having problems at my old school. | |

These questions are about your relationships with your Appoquinimink High School classmates.

8. As a new student at Appoquinimink High, what has been done to make sure are comfortable with your classmates?

9. In regards to your experience at Appoquinimink High only, please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I fit in well at my new school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am not very involved with my school's social activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Socially, I believe I am adjusting well to my new school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have several close friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am happy with how much I participate in social activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Socially, I am happy at Appoquinimink	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am having trouble meeting people and making friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

These questions are about your relationships with your Appoquinimink High School classmates.

10. In regards to your experience at Appoquinimink High only, please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The students here make me uneasy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being a new student, I feel very different from the other students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have good friends that I can share my problems with	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel lonely a lot	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I do not miss where I used to live	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would rather be at the school I used to go to	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My classmates tease, make fun of, or pick on me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

This next set of questions is about your interactions with Appoquinimink High School teachers.

11. As a new student at Appoquinimink High, what has been done to make sure you are academically successful?

12. In regards to your experience at Appoquinimink High only, please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I have discussions with my teachers about my academic performance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My teachers helped me adjust since I am new	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Appoquinimink High School staff (teachers, administrators, counselors) is friendly to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I actively participate in classroom activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I do not feel welcome in my new classes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The teachers at AHS care about me as a person.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

These questions are about how you are doing academically at Appoquinimink High School.

13. In regards to your experience at Appoquinimink High only, please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am struggling with the assignments at Appoquinimink	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I don't understand what classes i am supposed to take	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Academically I believe I am adjusting well to my new school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am happy with my academic performance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In my classes, I do not feel smart enough	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I enjoy doing the required work for my classes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

These questions are all in reference to your behavior at Appoquinimink High School.

14. At Appoquinimink, I have received Out of School Suspension(OSS) or In School Suspension (ISS):

- ☐ 0 times
☐ 1 time
☐ 2 times
☐ 3 times
☐ 4 or more times

15. In regards to your experience at Appoquinimink High only, please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I never get into trouble in school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am often absent from school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I always arrive on time for school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I often skip classes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am often disciplined for my behavior in school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

These questions are asking you to give an overall summary of your feelings about Appoquinimink High.

16. In regards to your experience at Appoquinimink High only, please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am satisfied with the types of classes available at Appoquinimink	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am happy with the quality of the classes at Appoquinimink	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think Appoquinimink has good teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overall, I am happy about Appoquinimink's academics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am happy that I am now attending Appoquinimink	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am satisfied with the extracurricular activities at Appoquinimink	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

As a new student, we would like to ask you some information on what AHS is doing right and what we can work on.

17. What does Appoquinimink High do well to meet the needs of new students?

18. What can Appoquinimink High do better to meet the needs of new students?

Finally, these last set of questions ask for a little more information about yourself.

19. What is your gender?

- ☐ Female
☐ Male

20. Please describe your race/ethnicity (you may choose more than one).

- ☐ Hispanic/Latino
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
☐ Black or African American
☐ White or Caucasian
☐ Asian American
☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

21. What is the highest level of school your mother completed or the highest degree she received?

- ☐ Less than high school degree
☐ High school degree or equivalent (e.g., GED)
☐ Some college but no degree
☐ Associate degree
☐ Bachelor degree
☐ Graduate degree

22. What is the highest level of school your father completed or the highest degree he received?

- ☐ Less than high school degree
☐ High school degree or equivalent (e.g., GED)
☐ Some college but no degree
☐ Associate degree
☐ Bachelor degree
☐ Graduate degree

Finally, these last set of questions ask for a little more information about yourself.

23. What grade are you in?

- ☐ Freshman
- ☐ Sophomore
- ☐ Junior
- ☐ Senior
- ☐ Fifth year / Other

24. What is your GPA?

- ☐ 4.1 or above
- ☐ 3.6 - 4.0
- ☐ 3.1 - 3.5
- ☐ 2.6 - 3.0
- ☐ 2.1 - 2.5
- ☐ 2.0 or below

Appendix C: Parent of New Student Survey

Welcome!

As mentioned earlier in the email, this survey will provide valuable information to help new students and their parents or guardians have a successful transition to Appoquinimink School District.

Again, since many families have more than one student who attended an Appoquinimink school for the first time last year, please answer the survey questions by thinking of the experiences of your oldest child only.

Thank you for your time and if you have any questions, feel free to contact me-

Jeff Klein
Coordinator of Research, Development and Evaluation
Appoquinimink School District
(302)449-3825
jeff.klein@appo.k12.de.us

The following questions are about how and when your oldest child enrolled in Appoquinimink.

1. Did your child attend Appoquinimink for the first time during the last school year?

- ☐ Yes.
- ☐ No, my child is not a new Appoquinimink student.
- ☐ No, my child has attended Appoquinimink at some point in the past.

2. Last year, what Appoquinimink school did your child attend?

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Appoquinimink Early Childhood Center | <input type="radio"/> Cedar Lane Elementary | <input type="radio"/> Redding Middle |
| <input type="radio"/> Cedar Lane Early Childhood Center | <input type="radio"/> Olive B. Loss Elementary | <input type="radio"/> Meredith Middle |
| <input type="radio"/> Townsend Early Childhood Center | <input type="radio"/> Silver Lake Elementary | <input type="radio"/> Appoquinimink High |
| <input type="radio"/> Bunker Hill Elementary | <input type="radio"/> Townsend Elementary | <input type="radio"/> Middletown High |
| <input type="radio"/> Brick Mill Elementary | <input type="radio"/> Alfred G. Waters Middle | |

3. Last year, what grade was your child in?

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> K | <input type="radio"/> 5th | <input type="radio"/> 10th |
| <input type="radio"/> 1st | <input type="radio"/> 6th | <input type="radio"/> 11th |
| <input type="radio"/> 2nd | <input type="radio"/> 7th | <input type="radio"/> 12th |
| <input type="radio"/> 3rd | <input type="radio"/> 8th | |
| <input type="radio"/> 4th | <input type="radio"/> 9th | |

Other (please specify)

4. When did your child start classes at Appoquinimink School District?

- ☐ First day of this school year
- ☐ At the beginning of the school year, but not on the first day
- ☐ At the middle of the school year
- ☐ Near the end of the school year

Previous School(s)

The following questions are about your oldest child's previous school or schools.

5. What school did your child attend before Appoquinimink?

6. What school district (if applicable) did your child attend before Appoquinimink?

7. What state (or country) was the school district in?

8. To the best of your knowledge, since Kindergarten, how many different school districts has your child been enrolled in?

☐ 2

☐ 3

☐ 4

☐ 5

☐ 6 or more

The following questions are about how and when you enrolled in Appoquinimink and also questions about your previous school.

9. Please rate the following statements in regards to how well it summarizes your reason for changing schools:

	Very true for my family	Somewhat True	This is not a reason for why we changed schools
We experienced a change, such as divorce or death of a family member	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We wanted my child to attend a better school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My child was having problems at my old school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We were experiencing financial problems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We wanted to live in a better neighborhood/area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We were forced to move from where we lived before	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

These questions are about your child's relationships with their Appoquinimink classmates.

10. How much did the school do to help your child feel comfortable with his or her classmates?

- ☐ They did a lot.
- ☐ They did a little.
- ☐ They did nothing at all.

If "yes", what did the staff at your child's school do to make sure your child was comfortable with their classmates?

11. In regards to your child's experience at Appoquinimink only, please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My child fit in well at his or her new school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My child was not very involved with the school's extracurricular activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe my child adapted well socially to his or her new school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My child has several close friends at his or her new school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My child seems happy at Appoquinimink	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My child had trouble meeting people and making friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My child fits in with the other students at his or her new school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My child does not miss where we used to live	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My child would rather be at the school he or she used to go to	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The students at my child's new school teased, made fun of, or picked on my child.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

This next set of questions is about your oldest child's interactions with Appoquinimink School District teachers.

12. In regards to you and your child's experience at Appoquinimink School District only, please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I, personally, had discussions with my child's teachers about his or her academic performance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My child's teachers have had discussions with my child about his or her academic performance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers helped my child adjust since he or she was new by providing extra academic supports	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Appoquinimink School District staff (teachers, administrators, counselors) was friendly to me and my child.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To the best of my knowledge, my child actively participated in classroom activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The staff at his or her school did not make my child feel welcome in his or her new classes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The teachers at Appoquinimink care about my child as a person.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My child struggled with the assignments at Appoquinimink	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe my child adjusted well academically to his or her new school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am satisfied with my child's academic performance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

These questions are all in reference to your oldest child's behavior at Appoquinimink last year.

13. Last year, at Appoquinimink School District, how many Out of School Suspension (OSS) or In School Suspension (ISS) did your child receive?

- ☐ 0 times
- ☐ 1 time
- ☐ 2 times
- ☐ 3 times
- ☐ 4 or more times

14. In regards to you and your child's experience at Appoquinimink School District only, please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My child never get into trouble in school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My child was often absent from school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My child always arrived on time for school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My child often skipped classes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My child was often disciplined for his or her behavior in school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

These questions are asking you to give an overall summary of your feelings about Appoquinimink School District.

15. In regards to you and your oldest child's experience at Appoquinimink School District only, please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am satisfied with the variety of classes available at Appoquinimink	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am satisfied with the quality of the classes at Appoquinimink	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think Appoquinimink School District has good teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overall, I am satisfied with Appoquinimink's academics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am happy that I am now attending Appoquinimink	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am not satisfied with the extracurricular activities at Appoquinimink	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

16. Compared to your child's previous school experiences, is your child doing better or worse at Appoquinimink:

	Much Better	Better	The Same	Worse	Much Worse
Academically	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Socially	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emotionally	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The following questions are about your experience with the New Student Orientation Process at Appoquinimink School District.

17. Please answer the following questions regarding your experience with Appoquinimink's New Student Orientation Program.

	Yes	No	I do not know/remember
I am aware that Appoquinimink School District has a process for introducing new students and their family to their school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Upon registration, did you (if you are the parent/guardian of young child) or your child (if they are older) complete an inventory detailing their interests, personality, skills, and concerns?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you have a face to face meeting with a school administrator upon registration?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
After registration, did you receive a teacher phone call, welcoming you to the school?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

18. Did your child receive any orientation to the school (for example, a presentation or guided tour)?

- ☐ Yes, my child viewed a presentation
- ☐ Yes, my child received a tour
- ☐ Yes, my child received a packet of materials for new students
- ☐ Yes, my child was assigned an adult mentor
- ☐ Yes, my child was assigned a peer mentor
- ☐ No, they received no orientation
- ☐ I do not know/remember

If your child received some other type of orientation please list it below:

19. Did the school counselor contact you to report on your child's adjustment to his or her school?

- ☐ Yes, within a couple of weeks after registration
- ☐ Yes, about a month after registration
- ☐ Yes, several months after registration
- ☐ No, I never received a phone call from the school counselor
- ☐ I do not know/remember

As a parent or guardian of new student, we would like to ask you some information on what Appoquinimink is doing right and what we can work on.

20. What does Appoquinimink do well to meet the needs of new students and the needs of their family?

21. What can Appoquinimink do better to meet the needs of new students and the needs of their family?

Finally, these last set of questions ask for a little more information about yourself.

22. What is your gender?

- ☐ Female
☐ Male

23. Please describe your race/ethnicity (you may choose more than one).

- ☐ Hispanic/Latino
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
☐ Black or African American
☐ White or Caucasian
☐ Asian American
☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

24. What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?

- ☐ Less than high school degree
☐ High school degree or equivalent (e.g., GED)
☐ Some college but no degree
☐ Associate degree
☐ Bachelor degree
☐ Graduate degree

25. Approximately, what grade did your child typically receive in the following subjects:

	A's	B's	C's	D's	F's	I do not know/remember
Mathematics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
English Language Arts (Reading/Writing)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social Studies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Science	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Appendix D: New Student Orientation Audit Form

Audit – New Student Orientation *Appoquinimink School District*

School: _____ Number of New Students: _____

Reviewer name: _____ Date: _____

I. Documents Review

Welcome Packet (at registration)				
No welcome packet	Welcome packet lacks materials	Welcome packet includes all materials needed for a new student and family		
Comments:				
New Student Inventories completed (at registration)				
No inventories completed	Less than 50% of the inventories are completed	51% - 75% of the inventories are completed	76% - 99% of the inventories are completed	All of the Inventories are completed
Comments:				
Administrator meeting with parent/guardian (within week of registration)				
Few or none of the parents/guardians of new students had a meeting within the first week of registration	Less than 50% of the meetings were held and/or were not always conducted within the first week of registration	51% - 75% of the meetings were held within the first week of registration	76% - 99% of meetings were held within the first week of registration	All of the meetings were held within the first week of registration
Comments:				
Teacher telephone call to the home (within week of registration)				
No telephone calls were placed within the first week of registration	Less than 50% of the telephone calls were placed within the first week of	51% - 75% of the telephone calls were placed within the first week of registration	76% - 99% of the telephone calls were placed within the first week of registration	All of the telephone calls were placed within the first week of registration

	registration			
Comments:				
Orientation to the school culture (within week of registration)				
There is no process for the Orientation and/or no documentation of it taking place on a weekly basis	The Orientation to the school culture occurs some of the time and/or is not done within the first week of registration		Orientation to the school culture takes place within the first week of registration and student participation is documented	
Comments:				
Teacher feedback form completed (within 2 weeks of registration)				
None of the teacher feedback forms were completed	Less than 50% of the teacher feedback forms completed	51% - 75% of the teacher feedback forms completed	76% - 99% of the teacher feedback forms completed	All of the teacher feedback forms completed
Comments:				
Academic assessment completed (within 2 weeks of registration)				
None of the academic assessment were done	Some of the academic assessments were done		Most to all of the academic assessments were done	
Comments:				
Success Plan developed and monitored				
No success plans for new students were developed	Less than 50% of the new students had success plans developed	51% - 75% of the new students had success plans developed	76% - 99% of the new students had success plans developed	All of the new students had success plans developed
Comments:				
Counselor telephone call to the home (within 30 days of registration)				
No evidence of the counselor calling home	Counselor made contact with some parents/guardians and most were done within the		Counselor made contact with all parents/guardians within the 30 day timeframe	

Appendix I

BOARD PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

A presentation was created to share the results of our review of the orientation program to the Appoquinimink School District Board of Education. There were several reasons why this presentation was developed. The first was to remind the local educational community (parents, administrators, teachers, and the school board) why this program was started in the first place. To accomplish this, I first showed a graph that depicted the amount of student enrollment growth that has occurred within the past 20 years. Next, I highlighted our construction history to show the investment we have made in building new schools to address this influx of students. Then, I showed the gaps we observed in both academic performance and student discipline between new and established students to illustrate that we were missing some opportunities to assist new students.

I gave a brief overview of the general purpose of the program or what we expected the new student orientation to accomplish. First, I shared the overall goal of the program as stated within our strategic plan:

Students new to the district will meet with academic success. Students entering the Appoquinimink School District will meet or exceed state and local standards within one year of enrolling in our school district.

I then outlined the key steps and supports that each school was expected to provide for new students. Additionally, the timelines and their associated steps described within the New Student Orientation Handbook were then summarized. For example, I listed

the actions that should be taken within one week of entry, two weeks of entry, and one month prior to entry.

To provide the audience with some context regarding the status of the orientation program, I then shared some key data that were obtained through the two steps that were described earlier in this chapter. First, I gave an overview of the characteristics of new students, including when they start school, where they lived previously, and why they were attending Appoquinimink. Then, I gave the results of our audit of the program, noting the issues the secondary schools seem to be having in implementing the program fully. Next, I covered student academic outcomes using the DCAS scores as well as some highlights from the survey regarding the adjustment of new students.

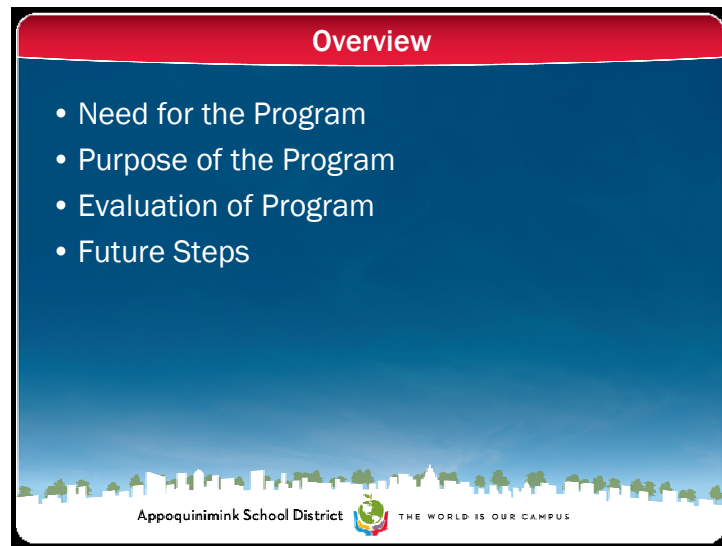
The final purpose of the presentation was to provide some recommendations that were based on my data analyses. This was first accomplished by reiterating that implementing a “one-size-fits-all” model to support new students would not work. Instead, we should personalize our interventions for new students. Next, I suggested we need to work to identify academic struggles of new students as early as possible and then immediately provide effective interventions. This recommendation was based on evidence that indicated that new students entering the school district performed worse than their established peers upon entry as well as the end of the school year. In other words, new students who were in need of additional academic supports should receive these interventions in a timely manner in order to close that gap. My final recommendation was that we should focus our efforts on providing a

meaningful orientation to school as well as maintaining effective communication with the parents of new students. Based upon our survey, too many students requested that the school provide an orientation, which was a service that was expected to be provided to all new students. Our survey results also suggested that parents wanted more communication about their child's adjustment to their new school.

Slide 1



Slide 2

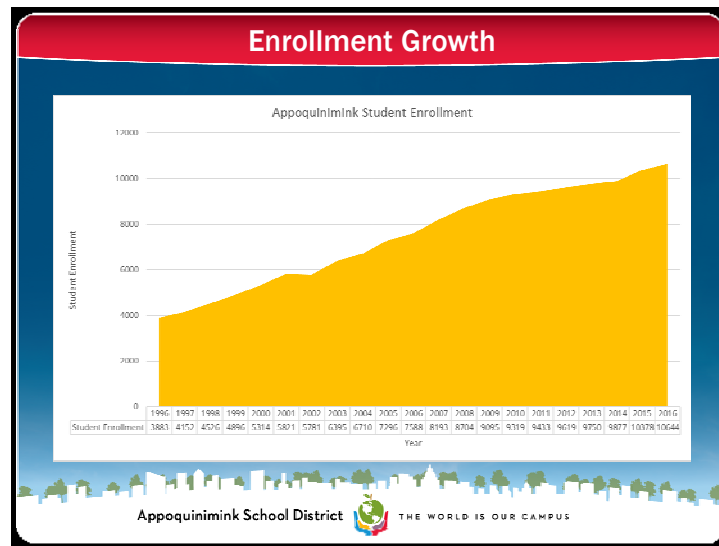


Brief overview of the purpose of this presentation

Slide 3



Slide 4



Appoquinimink school district has seen steady growth over the past 20 years.

Slide 5

A presentation slide titled "Construction History" with a red header. The main content is a bulleted list of school construction projects from 1997 to 2012. The background is a blue gradient with a white city skyline at the bottom. The Appoquinimink School District logo and the slogan "THE WORLD IS OUR CAMPUS" are at the bottom.

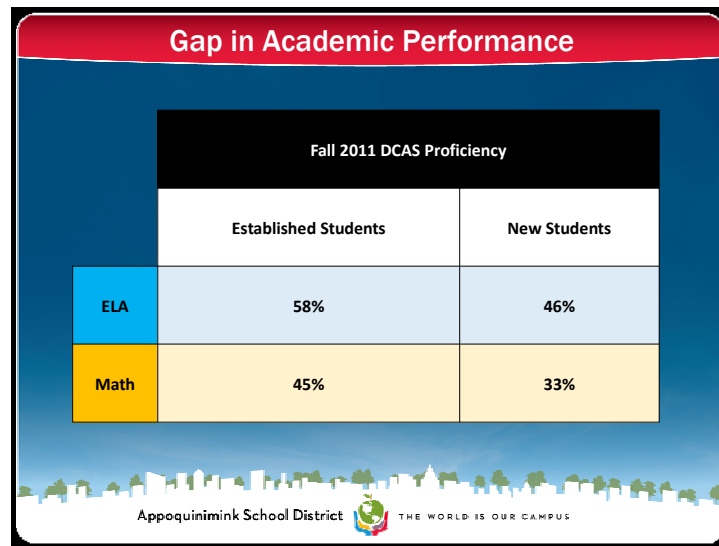
Construction History

- 2012 Old State Elementary School
- 2012 Spring Meadow Early Childhood Center
- 2009 Bunker Hill Elementary
- 2008 Appoquinimink High School
- 2008 Townsend Early Childhood Center
- 2007 Alfred G. Waters Middle School
- 2005 Cedar Lane Early Childhood Center
- 2003 Brick Mill Elementary School
- 2001 Olive B Loss Elementary
- 2000 Appoquinimink Early Childhood Center
- 1997 Middletown High School

Appoquinimink School District THE WORLD IS OUR CAMPUS

Due to this growth, we have invested in new schools to accommodate our new students. We have hired new teachers to instruct this growing student body. While we have properly accounted for this growth in some ways, it appears that we have not done everything we can in meeting the needs of these students new to Appoquinimink.

Slide 6



This issue first came to my attention from school staff, who mentioned to me that they thought that the students new to the district were struggling more academically than their peers. Looking into this, I first decided to compare DCAS results between the two groups of students. It was clear that we had an achievement gap between these two groups of students.

Slide 7

Increased Discipline Referrals		
	2010/11 School Year Number of Discipline Referrals per Student	
	Established Students	New Students
Discipline Referrals per Student	.2	.35

Appoquinimink School District THE WORLD IS OUR CAMPUS

Investigating further, I also was able determine that there seemed to be a difference discipline-wise between the two groups of students. New students appeared to generate more discipline referrals than established students.

Slide 8



Slide 9



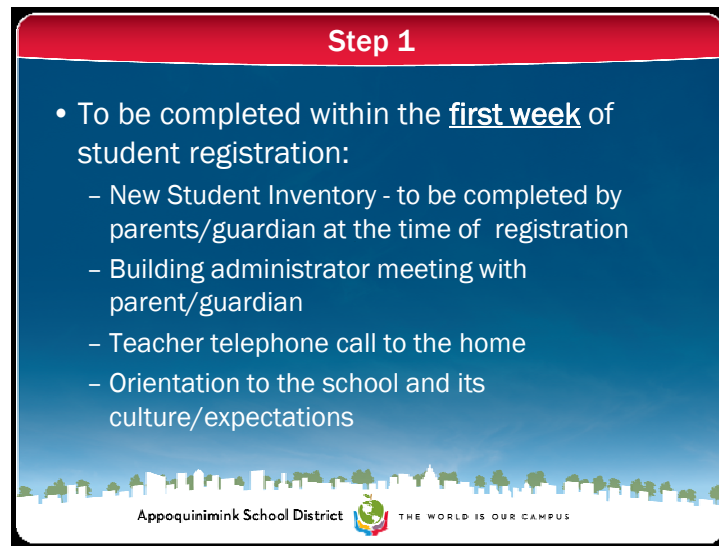
Goal of the Orientation Program

- Students new to the district will meet with academic success. Students entering the Appoquinimink School District will meet or exceed state and local standards within one year of enrolling in our school district.

Appoquinimink School District  THE WORLD IS OUR CAMPUS


The slide features a red header with the title "Goal of the Orientation Program". The main content is a blue box with a white bullet point. The background of the slide is a blue gradient with a white city skyline at the bottom. The Appoquinimink School District logo and the tagline "THE WORLD IS OUR CAMPUS" are at the bottom.

Recognizing this issue, we set forth and created a New Student Orientation program based upon the feedback from school and district office staff. This is our goal.

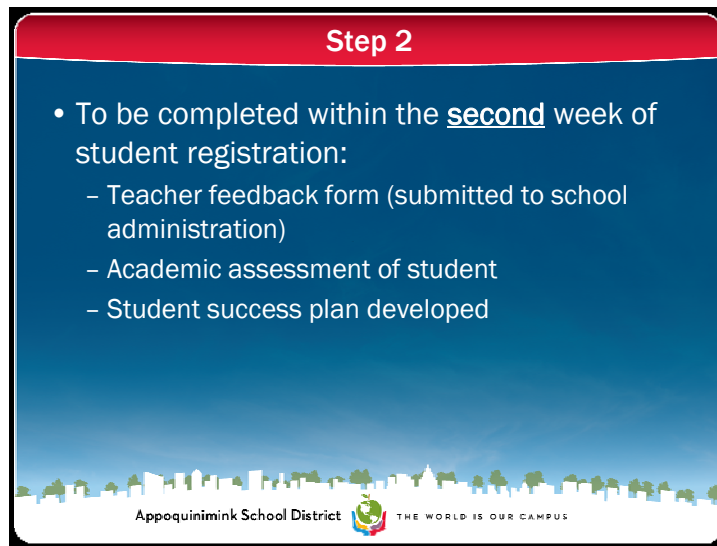


Step 1

- To be completed within the first week of student registration:
 - New Student Inventory - to be completed by parents/guardian at the time of registration
 - Building administrator meeting with parent/guardian
 - Teacher telephone call to the home
 - Orientation to the school and its culture/expectations


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We recognized that for the NSO to be successful, we needed to break it into parts and make sure it was truly a process put forth to assist our students. During the student's first week, we felt it was important for the school staff to learn more about the strengths and areas of concern for each student as well as for the student (and their family) to learn about the expectations and norms of each school.

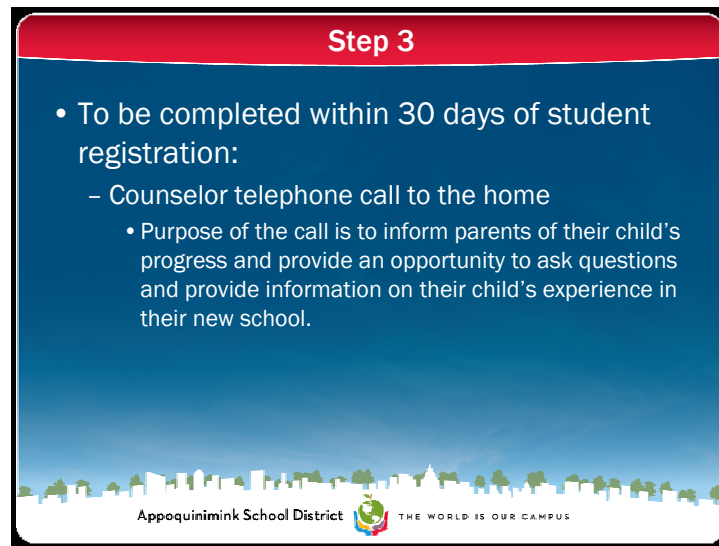


Step 2

- To be completed within the second week of student registration:
 - Teacher feedback form (submitted to school administration)
 - Academic assessment of student
 - Student success plan developed

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Within the second week of school, we really wanted to make sure that some sort of formal academic assessment of the child was done so we could start providing needed interventions as soon as possible. Too often new students would be caught in between assessment cycles and it would be weeks before the school could get a true accounting of the student's abilities.



Step 3


- To be completed within 30 days of student registration:
 - Counselor telephone call to the home
 - Purpose of the call is to inform parents of their child's progress and provide an opportunity to ask questions and provide information on their child's experience in their new school.

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After a month, we believed that it was important for the school to reach out to the family to communicate to them how their child was adjusting to their new school. We also believe that this is an very good way to allow the family to talk to school staff about their concerns regarding their child.

Continuous Monitoring


- Each school will organize a team that will be responsible for monitoring the progress of each new student. The progress monitoring will be completed at each interim and report card time.
- Students can be dismissed from the process as they achieve success academically

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If after a month has gone by and the student is progressing nicely, the child would be removed from the orientation program.

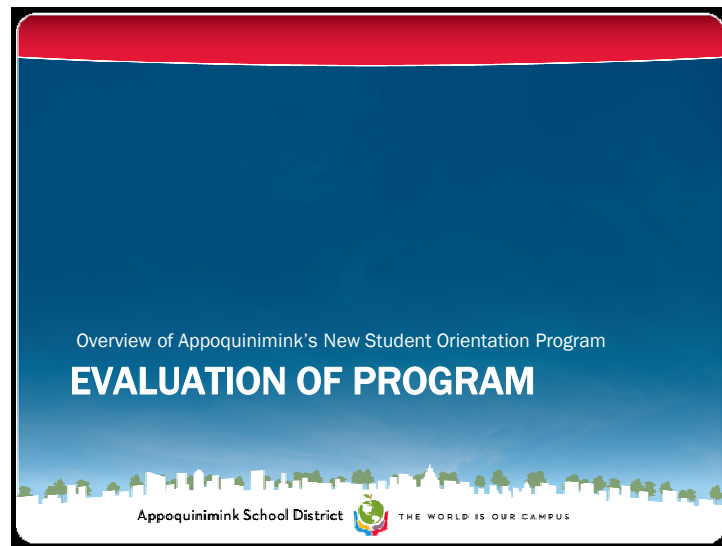
Measuring Success of the Program

- The new student orientation process will be audited for fidelity after the first six weeks of school and throughout the school year.
- Review of student data – academics, attendance and discipline

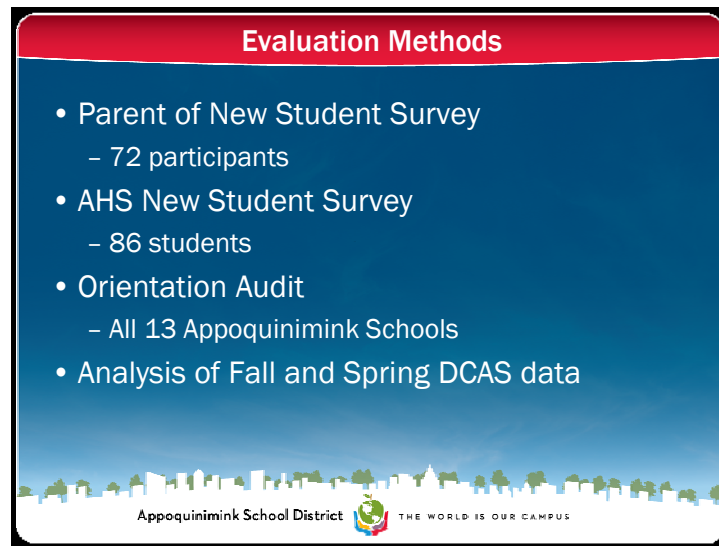
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The slide features a red header with the title 'Measuring Success of the Program'. The main content area has a blue background with two white bullet points. At the bottom, there is a white banner with a stylized city skyline, the school district name, a logo, and the motto 'THE WORLD IS OUR CAMPUS'.

Slide 15



Slide 16

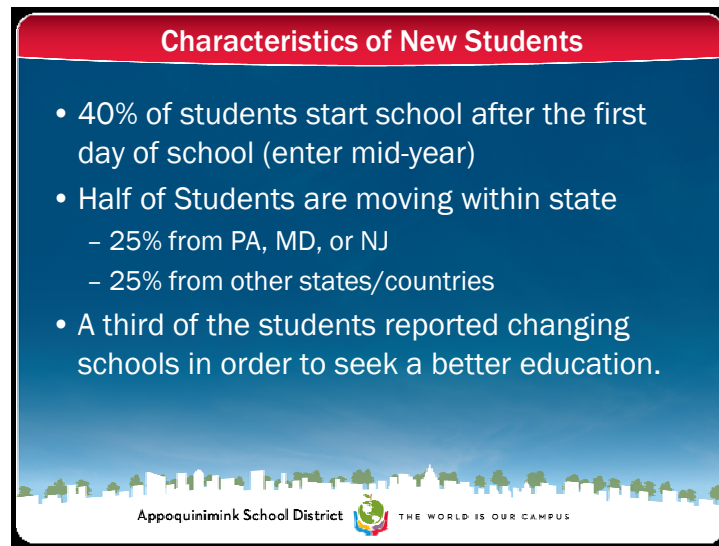
A presentation slide titled "Evaluation Methods" with a red header. The slide has a blue background with a white border. It lists four evaluation methods: Parent of New Student Survey (72 participants), AHS New Student Survey (86 students), Orientation Audit (All 13 Appoquinimink Schools), and Analysis of Fall and Spring DCAS data. At the bottom, there is a graphic of a school district skyline with the text "Appoquinimink School District" and "THE WORLD IS OUR CAMPUS" next to a logo.

Evaluation Methods

- Parent of New Student Survey
 - 72 participants
- AHS New Student Survey
 - 86 students
- Orientation Audit
 - All 13 Appoquinimink Schools
- Analysis of Fall and Spring DCAS data

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In order to evaluate the NSO, we used the following data sources

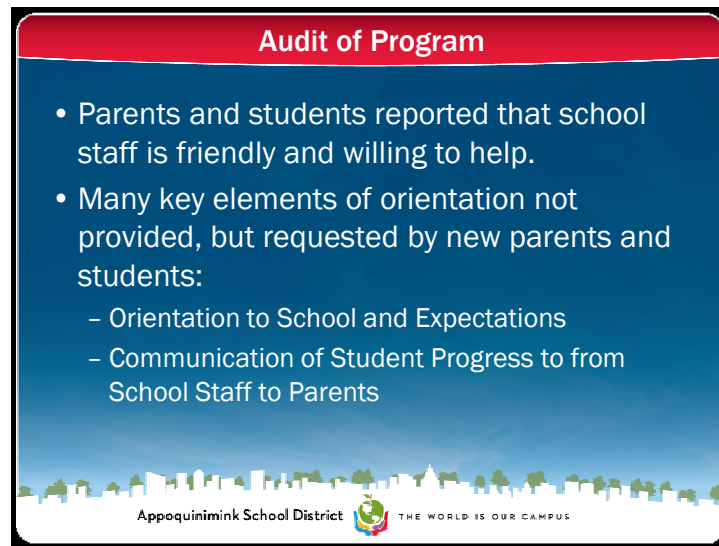


Characteristics of New Students

- 40% of students start school after the first day of school (enter mid-year)
- Half of Students are moving within state
 - 25% from PA, MD, or NJ
 - 25% from other states/countries
- A third of the students reported changing schools in order to seek a better education.

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Based upon survey data, we found out the following-

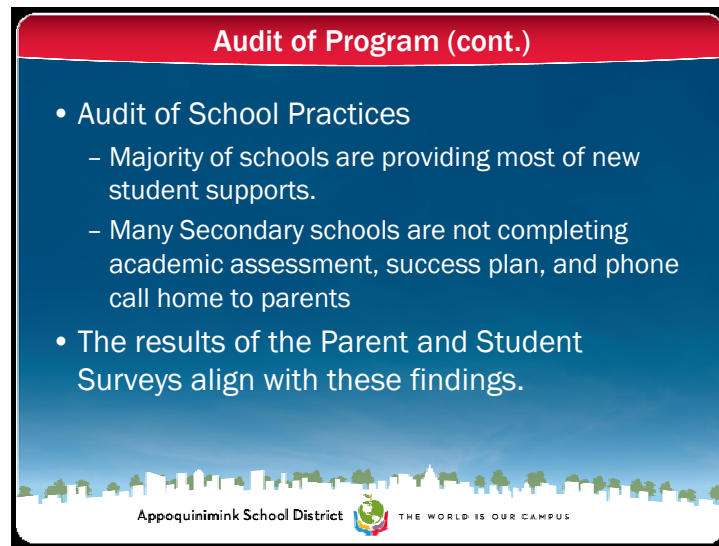
A presentation slide titled "Audit of Program" with a red header. The main content area has a blue background with white text. It lists two bullet points: "Parents and students reported that school staff is friendly and willing to help." and "Many key elements of orientation not provided, but requested by new parents and students:". The second bullet point has two sub-points: "Orientation to School and Expectations" and "Communication of Student Progress to from School Staff to Parents". The slide features a decorative border at the bottom with a city skyline and the text "Appoquinimink School District" and "THE WORLD IS OUR CAMPUS".

Audit of Program

- Parents and students reported that school staff is friendly and willing to help.
- Many key elements of orientation not provided, but requested by new parents and students:
 - Orientation to School and Expectations
 - Communication of Student Progress to from School Staff to Parents

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An audit was conducted for each school to make sure that they were following the key steps of the NSO. Based upon this audit, we found the following-

A presentation slide with a red header bar containing the title "Audit of Program (cont.)". The main content area has a blue background with white text. It lists two bullet points: "Audit of School Practices" and "The results of the Parent and Student Surveys align with these findings." The first bullet point has two sub-points. The slide features a decorative border at the bottom with a city skyline and the text "Appoquinimink School District" and "THE WORLD IS OUR CAMPUS".

Audit of Program (cont.)


- Audit of School Practices
 - Majority of schools are providing most of new student supports.
 - Many Secondary schools are not completing academic assessment, success plan, and phone call home to parents
- The results of the Parent and Student Surveys align with these findings.

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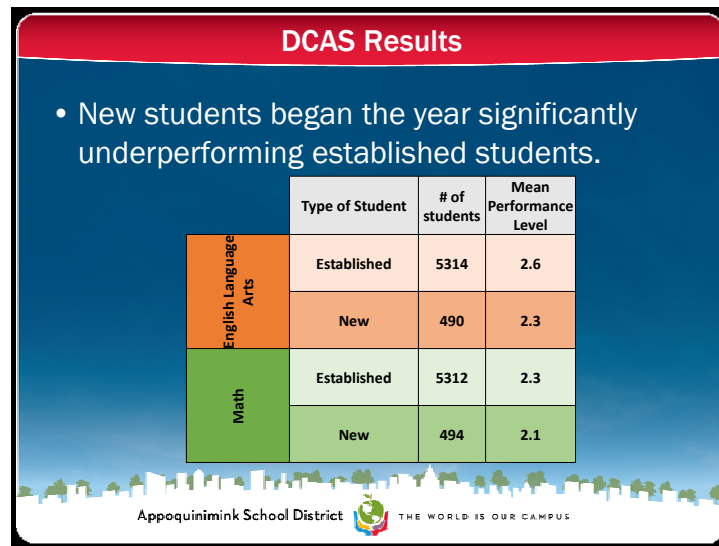
An audit was conducted for each school to make sure that they were following the key steps of the NSO. Based upon this audit, we found the following-

Slide 20

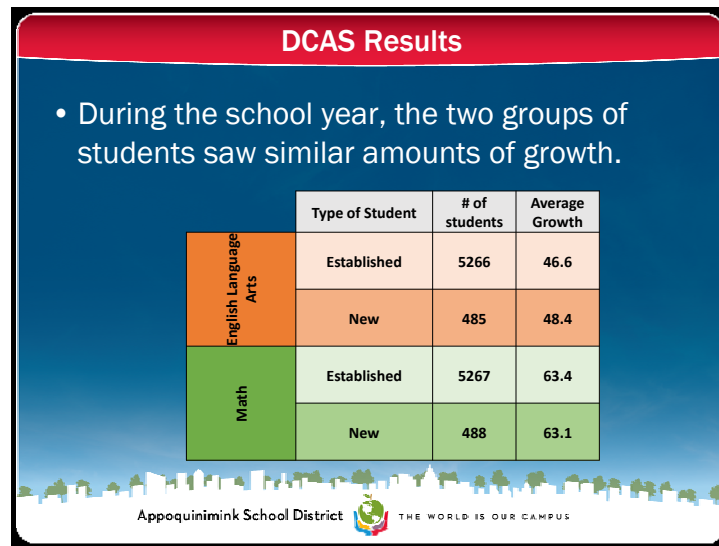
Parent Comparison to Previous School					
	Much Better	Better	The Same	Worse	Much Worse
Academically (how well he or she did with his or her classwork)	20%	10%	53%	14%	4%
Socially (how well he or she got along with others)	18%	12%	53%	12%	6%
Emotionally (how he or she felt, such as feeling happy or sad)	20%	16%	49%	12%	4%

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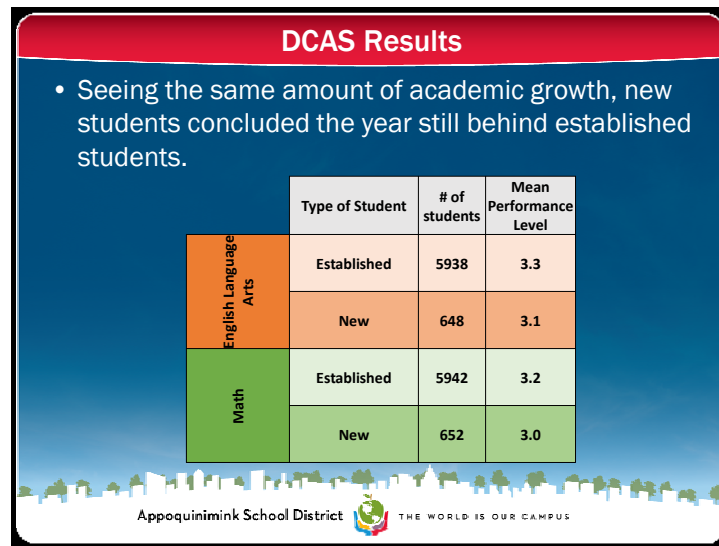
In the parent survey, parents and guardians were asked to compare how well their child is current doing academically, socially, and emotionally now, compared to their previous school.



Based upon beginning of year DCAS results, we found that new students underperformed established students upon school entry both in Math and ELA.



Even though the two groups of students started the year performing at different proficiency levels, both groups made similar growth during the academic year.



Unfortunately, since new students started the year performing below established students, making the same amount of academic growth resulted in them still underperforming their peers at the end of the school year.

Characteristics of New Students (cont.)

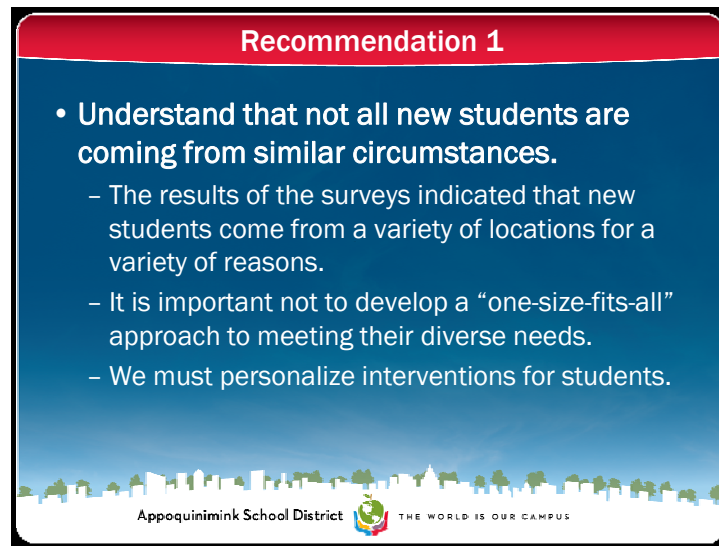
- 25% of students experienced a change in family living arrangements (ex. Divorce)
- 21% changed schools because of problems at their old school.
- Percentage of students experiencing 4 or more school moves in their lifetime?
 - Parent Survey: 11%
 - Student Survey: 27%

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Based upon our surveys, we were able to find out some information about new families in our district that I think are very useful to help understand their needs.


Slide 25



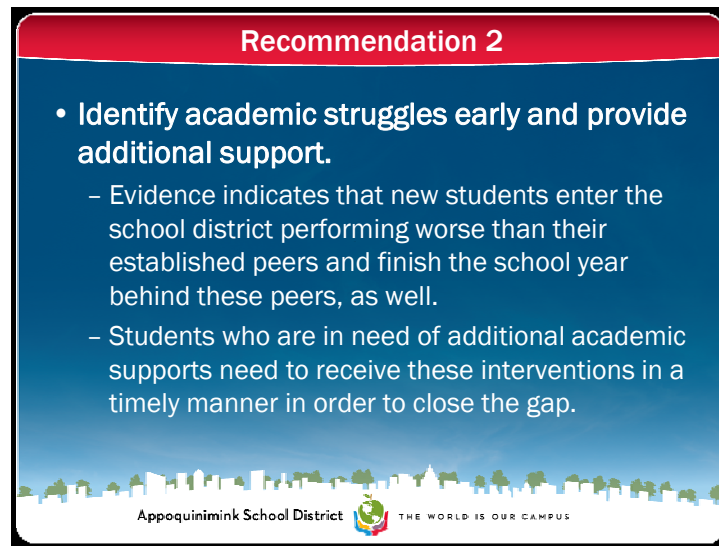
A presentation slide with a red header bar containing the text "Recommendation 1". The main body of the slide is blue and contains a bulleted list. At the bottom, there is a white horizontal band featuring a stylized city skyline with green trees and buildings. In the center of this band is the Appoquinimink School District logo, which consists of a circular emblem with a globe and a book. To the left of the logo is the text "Appoquinimink School District" and to the right is the text "THE WORLD IS OUR CAMPUS".

Recommendation 1

- **Understand that not all new students are coming from similar circumstances.**
 - The results of the surveys indicated that new students come from a variety of locations for a variety of reasons.
 - It is important not to develop a “one-size-fits-all” approach to meeting their diverse needs.
 - We must personalize interventions for students.

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Based upon, my analysis, I provide the following recommendations...

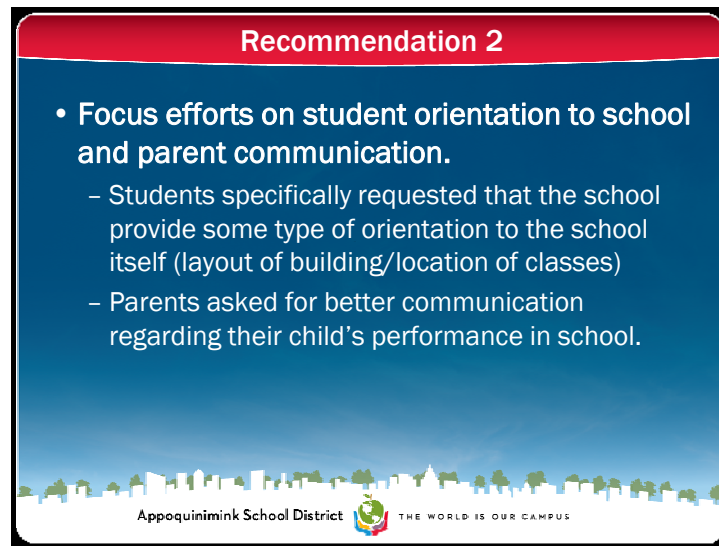
A presentation slide with a red header bar containing the text "Recommendation 2". The main body of the slide is blue and contains a bulleted list. At the bottom, there is a white banner with a stylized city skyline, the text "Appoquinimink School District", a circular logo, and the phrase "THE WORLD IS OUR CAMPUS".

Recommendation 2

- **Identify academic struggles early and provide additional support.**
 - Evidence indicates that new students enter the school district performing worse than their established peers and finish the school year behind these peers, as well.
 - Students who are in need of additional academic supports need to receive these interventions in a timely manner in order to close the gap.

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Based upon, my analysis, I provide the following recommendations...

A presentation slide with a red header bar containing the text "Recommendation 2". The main body of the slide is blue and contains a bulleted list. At the bottom, there is a white banner with a stylized city skyline, the text "Appoquinimink School District", a circular logo, and the phrase "THE WORLD IS OUR CAMPUS".

Recommendation 2

- **Focus efforts on student orientation to school and parent communication.**
 - Students specifically requested that the school provide some type of orientation to the school itself (layout of building/location of classes)
 - Parents asked for better communication regarding their child's performance in school.

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Based upon, my analysis, I provide the following recommendations...

Slide 29

