Intervention classes for all students who do not meet OAKS performance targets are essential. We meet with students who do not meet OAKS performance targets to provide scaffolded instruction and help them catch up. All teachers have committed to fully support students in their areas of deficiency, accommodations, and frequent measurement of progress to inform instruction.

We know who the students are that are not keeping up with their peers academically and we know how to help them. Explicit instruction in their areas of deficiency, accommodations, scaffolding, and frequent measurement of progress to inform instruction collectively fill the gaps that may otherwise limit a student’s future. However, it is not enough to fill gaps. Students must also gain more ground. Put quantitatively, struggling students who do not meet OAKS performance targets must advance more than the average student growth in a given school year if they are to catch up with their peers.

Historically, minority students, English language learners, students in poverty, and students with special needs have struggled to achieve grade-level performance in reading and math (Center for Education Policy, 2009); however, many schools have been able to raise achievement in these subgroups by following a few critical practices. These practices include: 1) a focus on standards; 2) a rigorous curriculum; 3) extra help in the form of interventions or tutoring; and 4) effective teachers (Jung and Guskey, 2009; Rowan, Hall, and Haycock, 2010).

Meta-analysts and researchers such as Marzano (2009) and Wenglinsky (2004) investigated further the depth of teacher effectiveness in closing the achievement gap. Marzano (2009) identified nine high-yield instructional practices and an additional 32 strategies that relate to effective teaching and improve student outcomes. Wenglinsky (2004) focused his study exclusively on high poverty schools and determined that purposeful use of instructional strategies such as those identified by Marzano reduces or eliminates racial academic performance gaps within schools.

Studies show that a higher level of education leads to greater satisfaction with life (Salinas-Jimenez, Artes, and Salinas-Jimenez, 2011) and potentially less unemployment (Bishop, 2002; Marzano, 2008; Oregon Department of Education, 2011). For example, a grade 5 student who is receiving instruction at a third-grade level must gain 1.33 years of instruction each year to be as prepared as their classmates for the grade 11 math or reading OAKS.

To calculate the required growth to close an achievement gap for a given student, a simple division formula is used:

\[
\text{Growth} = \frac{\text{Benchmark} - \text{Current Instructional Level}}{\text{number of years}}
\]

A line chart illustrates the difference in academic growth required by a student who is academically on track versus a student who has fallen behind.

Contact Information
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