

Audubon School
A Commitment to Learning
Local School Council Principal's Report
September 15th, 2008

<p style="text-align:center">Standard 1: School Leadership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Though funds for the program will not be processed by the Board until October, the Audubon new teacher mentoring program is under way. Mentors and mentees have met twice with me already to discuss common issues at the beginning of the school year. Each mentee has received a resource book to guide their own professional development, and mentors will receive a copy to guide their coaching.➤ The new partnership with Erikson Institute to support literacy improvements in grades K-2 has begun. Sarah Hallerburg will work with teachers two days each week. We have designed pre-assessments for teachers and students that will help us to assess the strength of the program at year's end and teachers' on-going needs for professional development and support.➤ I have set a deadline of September 28th for all beginning of the year assessments to be completed by classroom teachers. The results of these assessments will be shared with parents in lieu of a first quarter progress report.➤ All school improvement teams, or Management Teams, have met and set calendars for the school year. The School Based Problem Solving Team, the team charged with supporting students experiencing academic difficulties, has been the most active thus far. I have set the goal of identifying every student with academic difficulty and establishing supports for each student by the end of the first quarter,➤ During the first quarter I will endeavor to observe each teacher one time. During the same period, Mr. Fay will informally observe and support each grade level in their implementation of the new science curriculum. During the second quarter, Mr. Fay will observe each teacher, Ms. Danaher will begin formal observations, and I will observe each non-tenured teacher for a second time.➤ I have initiated an Administrative Team at the school that meets weekly. Mr. Fay, Ms. Danaher, Ms. Rebecca and I make up the team. All staff members, however, are welcome to attend. The
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	<p>primary task of the team is to improve coordination and communication across the school. Key school initiatives are also discussed, and the team provides constructive feedback and ideas for improvement.</p>
<p>Standard 2: Instructional Leadership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ISAT scores, received by the school on Wednesday, September 10th are in the process of being analyzed. Scores were immediately used to identify students in need of additional support in reading and math and have been assigned to after school classes. A full report will be made as soon as possible. ➤ During the first two weeks of school I have visited each classroom in the school repeatedly to observe beginning of the year procedures, and to support teachers in their efforts to create positive learning environments. I have met with several teachers to share observations and make suggestions for improvements. This practice will continue throughout the school year. ➤ Ms. Rebecca has begun meeting weekly with a class we are calling Academic Development. This class will provide students with organizational and thinking skills to improve success at school. For some students the class is mandatory; others have chosen it as an elective. ➤ Teachers are submitting lesson plans to Mr. Fay and me on a weekly basis. Lesson plans are reviewed and comments and suggestions are returned to the teachers. ➤ Using extensive teacher input, over the summer I revamped the school's literacy assessment program. After a year long pilot across the school, I have instituted clear and consistent assessment protocols for each grade level. These new assessments will provide teachers and parents with more reliable and accurate information to use to meet the needs of our students. Results of the first assessment will be shared with parents when progress reports go home on October 9th. ➤ Teachers have received Excel spreadsheets detailing assessment information from last school year. This allows teachers to familiarize themselves with each individual student's level and progress last school year. These data summaries will follow classes throughout their time at Audubon.
<p>Standard 3: Student-Centered Learning Climate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ During the opening professional development week, all staff members participated in a day long workshop on preventing violence and aggression. The staff considered strategies to reduce aggression at school, including teasing, bullying, gossiping, and fighting. In the coming weeks, the staff will work towards a common definition of aggression and will develop a rubric for

	<p>consequences to deal with aggressive acts. All staff members have been charged with intervening when even the mildest form of aggression is observed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mr. Fay and I have met with each 6-8 grade class to discuss important school rules and set high expectations for student behavior. Similar meetings with fourth and fifth grade classrooms will be scheduled in the coming week. ➤ A parent meeting for all interested parents of 8th grade students has been scheduled for Tuesday the 16th, immediately following the Open House. Parents will have the opportunity to begin the process of planning graduation celebrations for the Class of 2009. ➤ Mr. Fay is coordinating a new push for improved student attendance. As a part of this initiative, Mr. Fay will monitor student attendance weekly, and will work with office staff to make personal phone calls and home visits, if necessary, to students with low attendance. We have begun a classroom contest for perfect attendance that will encourage perfect attendance for all students. ➤ Staff participated in the first Audubon Olympics during the staff training week. Staff worked together in teams to create skits, to show their knowledge of school procedures and policies, and competed in kick-ball, archery, tug-of-war, and a legendary obstacle course. ➤ The Audubon School Climate Committee is planning a Random Acts of Kindness week to promote and celebrate outstanding student citizenship. ➤ Mailed birthday cards to over 100 students with summer birthdays.
<p>Standard 4: Professional Development and Human Resources Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The opening week of professional development included workshops on technology applications, thematic unit planning, assessments protocols, the new science curriculum, school wide violence prevention, and the new teacher evaluation pilot program. ➤ Weekly team meetings have begun. Each Wednesday teachers will meet with a member of the administration for professional development. Each grade level has chosen an initial area of focus. Kindergarten and first grade have chosen to focus on comprehension instruction; second and third grade on scheduling and time management; fourth and fifth grade on word study and vocabulary development; middle school teachers will focus on the executive functioning program and planning integrated thematic units across classes. ➤ Ms. Danaher led daily after school meetings for all special education teacher assistants during the

	<p>first week of school to provide support and share strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sarah Hallerburg of Erikson Institute has visited each teacher in grades K-2 and has scheduled meetings to follow-up with teachers and will begin working with each on literacy practice within their classrooms. ➤ Summer professional development workshops were held on the topics of writing instruction, grading policies, and support for students on the autism spectrum. Dozens of teachers participated in the professional development workshops. ➤ Ten Audubon teachers participated in Rochelle Lee professional development workshops over the summer. Teachers participated in hours of professional development on topics related to literacy. Each will participate in a year-long book study group. ➤ Audubon teachers were involved in teams over the summer to interview and select each teacher candidate hired and all but one of the teachers' assistants hired. Teacher input into hiring is an important part of our hiring procedures. ➤ Audubon is fully staffed with no vacancies despite a last minute resignation. This teacher assistant position was filled within one week.
<p>Standard 5: Parent Involvement and Community Partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The former LRE Committee has taken on a new name, the Inclusion Committee. The committee will be passing out wristbands at the Audubon Family Fun Fair that emphasize Audubon's commitment to being an inclusive school community. The committee will also plan events for Inclusion week in December. ➤ <i>Friends of Audubon</i> is planning two events in the coming month. The AFFF will be on the 21st of September and the annual Hawk Walk will be the 3rd of October. Both will raise funds to support the SIPAAA. ➤ Julie Loose and Roxanne Bowens met with me last week to plan updates to the school website. ➤ Stephanie Taiber is planning an art project to decorate the brown fire escape wall on the Hoyne side of the building. This project is in the initial planning phases. ➤ Funds from the weekly basketball game hosted at Audubon have paid for the installation of new basketball hoops purchased by Audubon dads in the group. The next goal is an electronic score board.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Gala Planning Committee held its first meeting last week. Led by Sara Sladoje and Rachael Gilboy, the group is ahead of schedule for planning the event for late March of 2009. ➤ The Fall Book Fair is under way, completely coordinated by parent Trinda Cutler. ➤ Joe Taiber has volunteered to manage the new Audubon Endowment Fund. An idea created last year with the anonymous corporate gift of \$50,000, the Audubon Fund will aim to provide funds to support a teaching position at Audubon or other critical school need. A small group of parents will meet with me to plan the guidelines for the Fund before its official launch. ➤ Kathy Argentar has arranged for automatic deductions from bank accounts for Kindergarten parents helping to pay for full day kindergarten at the school. Our local Edward Jones broker has agreed to work with the school without fees. ➤ Redmoon Theater will begin working in classrooms in the coming weeks. This is the fifth year of the school's partnership with Redmoon. This year artists will work with teachers and students in grades 1, 3 and 6-8.
<p>Standard 6: School Management and Daily Operations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The school has adopted and been trained on a new web-based grade book program. Teachers will begin using the program immediately, and in the coming months, parents' ability to monitor student grades via the program will be rolled out. Audubon will be one of the first schools with this capability. ➤ Collection of student supply fees has gone extraordinarily well (\$10,000 to date). Teachers have been able to purchase the exact supplies that they need to begin the school year. And, parents have been able to realize significant savings in school supply costs. Parents have been exceptionally cooperative and grateful for this new program. ➤ A portion of internal account funds, from the YMCA after school program and from the supply fee, will be moved into short term CDs to maximize interest until the funds are needed. US Bank offers short term CDs at higher rates of interest that we can utilize with very little administrative time. ➤ Starting today, no cash will be accepted for school lunches, only the tickets that are for sale in the office. The entire purpose of the program is to save teachers time in their morning routines. Again, parents have been extremely cooperative and understanding of this program. ➤ I am monitoring the school budget and bucket expenditures on a daily basis during the first four

weeks of the school year.

- All buckets for after school hours for teachers and teachers' assistants have been opened and are functioning.
- Because of the AMPs budget pilot that I have been participating in for two years, we have received additional funding from the Board. This additional funding is the result of new hires coming in under budget projections for position costs. One part of the budget pilot is that these funds, when available, are given to the principal to spend in support of the SIPAAA.
- All teaching staff received complete checks for the first payroll run of the school year. Madeleine Williamson worked long and hard to realize this goal. Only the most recently hired teachers' assistant was not paid on the first teachers' assistant payroll of the school year.
- \$24,000 dollars of the \$50,000 received from FoA for technology has been spent on new projectors for each classroom and a new server. Remaining funds will be spent on a laptop for each teacher and 35 new desktop computers as soon as CPS finalizes a contract with Dell computers. This delay has been extremely frustrating, and a new contract is not expected until the end of the month. Funds have also been set aside for two new interactive white boards.