

School Support and Readiness Assessment Summary Report

School: Truth or Consequences Middle School	LEA: Truth or Consequences
School Leader: Tony Bastine	LEA Leader: Nichole Burgin
SSRA Team Leader: Connie Copeland	Date: September 29, 2023
School Description	
<p>Truth or Consequences Middle School serves roughly 285 students in grades six through eight. They boast a staff of around twenty educators. Principal Bastine and the leadership team are developing the school's mission and vision statements. A school strategic plan has not yet been developed.</p>	
School Successes and Celebrations	
<p>Over the past summer, Truth or Consequences Middle School's staff capitalized on the opportunity to attend out-of-state training and forge collaborative relationships. They describe themselves as a unified group dedicated to collaborating and empowering the school's students.</p> <p>While changes in the administration and among grade-level teams can be uncomfortable, new perspectives bring growth opportunities. Unheard voices may be given a platform to advocate for themselves and others.</p> <p>There are also systems of recognition in place to address low attendance rates. These involve monthly celebrations of students and staff who have improved or high attendance.</p>	
DOMAIN 1: CULTURE & EQUITY	
<i>To what degree has the school established equitable practices that ensure ALL students and staff have an opportunity to reach their full potential?</i>	
Promising Practices:	
<p>Leadership changes can be uncomfortable, chaotic, and destabilizing. While there have been several leadership changes in the past two years at T or C, teachers have continued to be a cohesive group and supported one another during the instability.</p>	
Opportunities for Growth:	
<p>One crucial element of a school culture is a unified vision with clear expectations throughout</p>	

the building. Students cannot excel if they do not know what is expected of them. The same goes for teachers, leaders, administrators, and beyond. The community at Truth or Consequences is primed for powerful changes through expectation-setting. Policies around vaping, cell phone use on campus, restroom etiquette, and more have the potential to make a massive impact on the culture at the school.

Potential Next Steps:

Learning cannot occur in a space where students do not feel secure or safe; critical moves in this area were discussed this summer in the Safe and Civil Schools training. For example, prioritizing hallway procedures and accountability measures could be a first step. Research demonstrates that when students' emotional and social needs are met, they are better equipped to succeed academically. To further support academic achievement, the school can solidify the implementation of AVID strategies learned at a different summer conference.

DOMAIN 2: LEADERSHIP

To what degree does school leadership establish, communicate, support, and monitor schoolwide priorities?

Promising Practices:

For school leaders to develop teachers, they must develop leadership skills that are immediately relevant to the school's needs. Adding a new assistant principal (AP), discipline concerns are being addressed more productively. The AP also has a background in curriculum, and the gears of positive change are turning. Training focused on Observation and Feedback Coaching Cycles (OFCCs) is taking place, priming the leaders at T or C for a strong year of guidance and mentorship.

Opportunities for Growth:

Over the past summer, school leaders began the work to draft and finalize a vision statement for Truth or Consequences Middle School. Completing this vision is paramount in ensuring the school can continue to empower the staff with a clear direction and serve its students. As the new administrative team gains footing, transparency, clear outcomes, and well-delineated intermediate steps will help teachers regain momentum and purpose.

Potential Next Steps:

Once a vision has been set and communicated, the work can begin. Establishing a core leadership team that includes teacher leaders and staff from various positions is one school system with positive potential. Involving staff in crafting the school vision will help build a positive culture and unite educators around a common goal.

Beyond the vision, the development, implementation and consistent communication of the Annual Plan and the 90-day plan (DASH) will assist educators in knowing what is expected of them.

DOMAIN 3: INSTRUCTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

To what degree is the school's instructional infrastructure in place, understood, and utilized by school leaders and teachers?

Promising Practices:

When teachers engage in professional learning community (PLC) meetings, they can align practices, discuss data, and share strategies. They feel supported by their colleagues and have a dedicated time to collaborate. Truth or Consequences Middle School has recently expanded its PLC time from content-only PLCs to include grade-level collaboration. This protected time will assist them in facilitating big-picture collaboration, such as vertical teaming and alignment.

New grade-level chairs have been self-selected, and with the assistance of a new schedule, common prep time is being utilized for collaboration.

Opportunities for Growth:

Teaching is a reflective career field. Dedicated educators are constantly interrogating and re-assessing their practices. Collaboration can help with this, as well as powerful coaching through OFCCs. The ultimate purpose of this work is rigorous, equitable instruction for all students. In interviews, many educators mentioned the schoolwide focus on AVID strategies, which are research-based and time-tested approaches to increasing student engagement and rigor in the classroom. It could be beneficial for the administrators to monitor and support the implementation of specific AVID strategies during OFCCs.

Potential Next Steps:

A systems approach to data analysis and tracking will enable PLC teams to focus on instructional practices, data-informed assessment, and lesson planning. Creating a data-driven culture where student learning is frequently analyzed, and instruction is designed to fill learning gaps will be critical for school improvement. The strong culture of support and collaboration among the staff at Truth or Consequences can be leveraged to open the door to peer observations. Colleagues observing each other can build collective efficacy as teachers feel supported in their practice and lend new perspectives to other participating teachers.

DOMAIN 4: TALENT MANAGEMENT

To what degree does the school ensure effective teachers are hired, retained, developed, and leveraged to improve student outcomes?

Promising Practices:

Consistent changes in leadership and split responsibilities have contributed to some instability at T or C Middle School. However, with the addition of an AP, there is a more tangible leadership presence at the school site. Visibility is prominent in ensuring students feel accountable and school staff feels supported.

Opportunities for Growth:

An impactful system of talent management is the OFCCs. Creating a schedule and following through on observations, feedback, and positive coaching conversations is crucial in maintaining and building educators at any school site.

There are many aspects to the OFCC. Systems must be in place to review educator lesson plans, monitor instructional practice implementation, and provide regular feedback. These will ensure that educators feel supported by the administrative team and that there are positive student outcomes resulting from the hard work of everyone involved.

Potential Next Steps:

While developing, publishing, and communicating a clear OFCC calendar is tantamount, there are other avenues of positive action for the administrative team at Truth or Consequences Middle School. Content and grade-level teacher leaders can be leveraged for peer observation and mentoring support in addition to coaching from administrators.

DOMAIN 5: SUPPORT & ACCOUNTABILITY

To what degree do school leaders establish and communicate expectations, monitor progress, provide support, and hold staff accountable?

Promising Practices:

An atmosphere of support is growing among the educator teams at Truth or Consequences Middle School. While leadership changes can create an atmosphere of instability and uncertainty, the teacher-leaders at the school site have made a concerted effort to support one another and provide stability. A sense of support is increasing with the recent district presence and the hiring of the new AP.

Opportunities for Growth:

Systems for accountability and support, as outlined above (such as the OFCC and transparent communication systems), can make a substantial impact at the school site. Re-defining a focus on AVID strategies, ensuring AVID posters and materials are visible to students and educators, and sharing the strategic 90-day plan with educators will positively shift the school's work.

Potential Next Steps:

Implementation and monitoring will be essential once instructional priorities have been established using DASH. Consistent utilization of the OFCC will enable the administrative team to push the level of rigor in classrooms as well as maintain that their staff feel supported and empowered in their endeavors.