

HAMILTON TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

Basic Skills Improvement Program

Overview

The Basic Skills Improvement (BSI) Program is an in-class support, team-teaching program designed to provide instruction to students experiencing difficulty in language arts literacy and/or mathematics. Working cooperatively with the New Jersey State Department of Education's minimum level of proficiency mandates and Title I, supplemental instruction materials and teacher resources are available for students. The goal of the Basic Skills Program is to prepare students to meet with success in achieving mastery of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards as measured by the mandatory statewide standardized assessments.

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) fully supports the principle upon which the federal No Child Left Behind Act is predicated, that all elements of the education system should support the achievement of challenging academic standards by all students. The educational priorities needed to achieve the reform of education were formulated into the Strategic Plan for Systemic Improvement of Education in New Jersey.

The Basic Skills Improvement Program has the following goals:

1. To develop the basic skills necessary to function successfully in everyday life according to each student's individual ability level.
2. To develop and implement a Basic Skills Improvement Program which would provide a variety of experiences to meet the needs of students with a deficiency in basic functional language arts literacy and mathematical skills.
3. To assist the students in developing positive attitudes toward themselves, their school, and the community.
4. To insure a continual means of communication between parents, teachers, students, and the community.

The Hamilton Township School District Basic Skills Improvement Program is an inclusive program utilizing the in-class support model implemented district wide, in each of the three schools; Shaner, Hess, and Davies. Each school has a Basic Skills Coordinator that collaborates on a regular basis with the Title I Director in an effort to ensure on-going communication of BSI program mandates and initiatives. Below are summaries detailing the programs in each of the three schools.

SHANER SCHOOL

The Basic Skills Improvement Program (BSI) at the Shaner School is comprised of in-class support services, as well as supplemental instruction delivered in a small group setting. All grade one language arts literacy (LAL) and mathematics classes are heterogeneously grouped. Thus each LAL and/or mathematics class has on an average,

two students identified as needing basic skills services. A basic skills improvement program teacher provides these services through in-class support, as well as small group supplemental instruction based on individual students' needs.

The Language Arts Literacy block of time is two hours and there is a one hour block of time for Mathematics.

HESS SCHOOL

The Basic Skills Improvement Program (BSI) at the George L. Hess Educational Complex is designed to provide additional instruction for those students who are experiencing academic difficulties in the typical heterogeneous classroom setting with one teacher. The BSI classroom allows “at-risk” students to receive the extra support they may need in their regular classroom.

There are three teachers assigned per grade level (two for Language Arts Literacy and one for Mathematics) at the Hess School for grade levels 2-5. The students eligible for basic skills services will be clustered into four classrooms within each grade level.

The basic skills teachers for both Language Arts Literacy and Mathematics will be assigned to work collaboratively using a team-teaching approach with a regular classroom teacher in a push-in, in-class support model for the entire class period (Language Arts Literacy = 120 minutes and Mathematics = 60 minutes).

DAVIES SCHOOL

The Basic Skills Improvement Program (BSI) at the William Davies Middle School is designed to provide additional instruction for those students who are experiencing difficulties in the typical heterogeneous classroom setting.

Students identified as “at-risk” in Mathematics and/or Language Arts Literacy will receive instruction in these two content areas in a basic skills instructional setting. One basic skills teacher per content area of Language Arts Literacy and Mathematics per grade level will be assigned to work collaboratively using a team-teaching approach with a regular classroom teacher in a push-in, in-class support model. The basic skills students will be evenly dispersed among the homerooms in each grade level. They will regroup for Language Arts Literacy and Mathematics within three different sections within a grade level in a heterogeneous setting.

In addition to this, the Basic Skills Coordinator will assist the building principal with organizing and implementing a supplemental support schedule for a.m. homeroom, at all grade levels, in an effort to provide additional student support to the identified in-class support BSI students as needed.

Extension of School Day:

Additional support for remediation of essential skills in both language arts literacy and/or mathematics will be provided as needed for identified basic skills students. A before school and/or after school program entitled “Testing for Success” is available for basic skills students that continue to struggle academically despite participation in the District’s Basic Skills Inclusive In-Class Support Program. The Basic Skills Coordinator within each school building will work collaboratively with the building principal, the guidance counselor, and classroom teachers to best identify students in need of this additional service.

Parental Involvement:

Parental Involvement is a key component of the Basic Skills Improvement Program. There will be planned parent meetings which will take place during the school year in an effort for parents, teachers, and administrators to “brainstorm” ideas that will enhance the program and ultimately improve the formative & summative assessment scores of our students. Suggested topics for parent meetings are as follows:

- #1 = Beginning of school year (Introduce Program)
- #2 = Middle of school year (Activities to be Implemented at Home)
- # 3 = End of school year (Survey of Program)