



# Springfield High School Recognized in Northeast Ohio for Successfully Implementing *HSTW*

APRIL 2013

A *HSTW* NE Ohio Region Case Study sponsored by *HSTW* Ohio Network



**Springfield High School (SHS)**, located in Summit County, is a comprehensive high school serving approximately 800 students in grades 9 through 12. SHS joined the Ohio and national *High Schools That Work (HSTW)* networks in 2007. For over six years, SHS has engaged administrators, teachers, students and community leaders in deeply implementing the *HSTW* school improvement framework.

**SHS's sustained commitment to whole school improvement has resulted in the school meeting Adequate Yearly Progress on the 2011-2012 Ohio Local Report Card and recognized as an Ohio 2012 School of Promise.** Tenth and 11th grade student performance on the Ohio Graduation Test (OGT) meets or exceeds the state requirements in reading, mathematics and writing. From 2010 to 2012, SHS's performance increased on 10 of the 11 *HSTW* Student Survey indices: high expectations, literacy, integrating academic/career technical, quality career technical studies, guidance, importance of high school and extra help. The 2012 *HSTW* Assessment/Survey was administered to 60 randomly selected SHS seniors, and nationally to 38,943 seniors from 718 sites in 31 states.

Diana Rogers, Regional Coordinator, *HSTW* NE Ohio Region, stated, "This school is to be commended for their efforts to successfully implement *HSTW* best practice strategies that raise expectations for all students. The percentage of SHS students meeting the *HSTW* readiness goals increased in mathematics and science resulting in more students who are college and career ready for the workplace and further education."

## HSTW BEST PRACTICES, MAKING A DIFFERENCE

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Literacy Design Collaborative (LDC)

***SHS* is recognized in northeast Ohio as a best practice site for *Administrators & Teachers Working Together*.**

Springfield Local Schools and SHS are sustaining school improvement and the changes needed through strong principal and teacher leaders working together.

Cynthia Frola, Principal, stated, "SHS has grown from maintaining past practices to identifying instructional strategies that best meet the needs of the students. The new status quo has grown from one of maintaining past practices to one of identifying practices that could change or be altered in order to best meet the needs of the building."

The SHS staff is open to new ideas, and comfortable with ongoing change. The administration is very supportive by providing time for staff collaboration and learning, a priority in fostering collaboration during the change process.

***SHS* is recognized in northeast Ohio as a best practice site for *Use of Technology*.**

Use of technology is a priority of the Springfield Local School District. To ensure all students are college and career ready, SHS has instituted the belief that all teachers are to embed engaging instruction through the use of *Continued on page 3*.



**Congratulations!!! SHS recognized as a 2012 School of Promise**, for the first time, by the Ohio Department of Education. This recognition is based upon the 2011-2012 report card and SHS strategies in closing the gap for all students in mathematics and reading.

***SHS* is recognized in northeast Ohio as a best practice site for providing *Extra Help for All Students*.**

SHS staff determined that providing extra help was not just a need, but a necessity to fulfill the school's mission of success for all students. Not all students learn at the same pace and without substantial extra help, too many students face a high risk of failure. In order to mitigate students' poor prior performances and set all students on a path of success, SHS developed two, 38-minute, extra help sessions known as *Wednesdays Spartan Periods*.

This extra help targets the entire academic range of students, from those who are at high risk of failing to those enrolled in advanced placement courses. During *Spartan Periods*, students not only relearn, but are also given the support needed to accelerate learning. *Continued on page 4*.

# HSTW Best Practices Guidance & Transitions

## Getting All Students Ready for High School Success

Based on data and teacher and student feedback, SHS administrators and teachers targeted ninth grade transition as a major focus of the school's improvement efforts. Ninth grade students were clearly not ready for the academic rigor and expectations of high school. During 2009-2010, SHS appointed a Transitions Team that successfully implemented student mentor/mentee, High School (HS) 101 and Connection's Day.

**Student Mentor/Mentee** is a best practice guidance and advisement strategy that provides a positive experience for both the mentors and mentees. The mentors are a vital part of all transition activities.

Each spring, future 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students complete a freshman mentor application. The applications are reviewed by the Transitions Team and the mentors are chosen. Mentors meet in the summer to help plan the first day of school activities for ninth graders. During first semester, mentors and mentees are matched in HS 101. Each month during HS 101, they work together on activities such as; goal setting, four year course planning, graduation requirements, personality styles, career matching, report cards and transcript review, and navigation of high school and daily issues.

**High School 101** is an innovative, project-based required course for all SHS freshmen. This course is designed to prepare students to succeed in the classroom, in life, and in the workplace.

During the course, students work to evaluate and improve communication skills, and explore time management and study skill strategies. Students practice critical, real world, financial literacy and technology skills. In addition, sensitive topics such as bullying, culture, and diversity are addressed.

**Freshmen Connection's Day** is an opportunity for ninth graders to experience their first day of high school without having the stress of the entire student body being in the building. The freshmen participate in activities with their mentor to acclimate to high school.

During the morning, each freshman is introduced to their mentor for the first time and assigned a group for the day. First, each group takes part in an introduction icebreaker activity led by the mentors. The freshman then report to their homeroom and receive locker assignments and schedules. After finding their locker and attaching a lock, a brief "run through" of the school day and their schedules provides students with the opportunity to find each of their classrooms and meet their teachers. The mentors plan and perform skits that highlight student expectations in the student handbook. The freshmen enjoy this entertaining introduction of the school rules.

All students receive a picnic lunch, prepared and served by teachers, and then are ready for an afternoon filled with fun activities. After lunch, the mentors reunite with their groups and rotate through a multitude of stations where teachers facilitate team-building activities. Each activity is chosen based in its ability to "teach a lesson" which will prepare the freshman for high school life socially and academically.

These mentors guide their mentees through the rest of the day, and through the rest of their freshman year. The day concludes as the school choir leads the freshmen and mentors in singing the Alma Mater and "class" shirts are available for purchase.

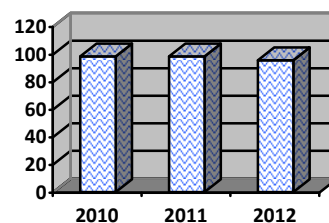
The intent of Freshmen Connection's Day is to improve the transition of incoming ninth graders from the junior high to high school, and ease the stress of freshmen on the first day of school when all students in grades nine through 12 are in the building. The ninth graders arrive at school with the experience of knowing their schedules, location of their lockers, and some familiar faces.



Senior student mentors work collaboratively with SHS Staff during Freshmen Connections Day activities.

### SHS Performance Index 2010 - 2012 (Scale 0-120)

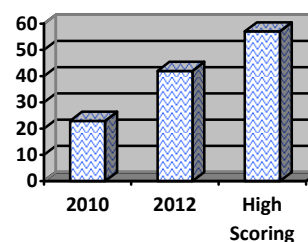
A three-year trend of SHS's performance index (PI) as reported on the annual Ohio Local Report Card. Between 2010 and 2011, SHS's PI improved 8.1. SHS rating increased from Continuous Improvement to Effective. In 2012, the PI dropped 2.7, but the state rating remained at Effective. In 2012, SHS met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in three years.



### 2012 HSTW Student Survey Results (Goal 85%)

The percentage of student responses that suggest SHS has an intensive emphasis on:

**Guidance Improved from 23 percent in 2010 to 42 percent in 2012 (average mean percentage)**



# HSTW Best Practices

## High Expectations & Rigorous Courses

### Getting All Students College and Career Ready

When the state and national data showed that not all SHS students were meeting student performance at proficient or higher, SHS administrators and teachers, working together, began implementing the changes needed to create a culture of high expectations with rigorous courses for all students. Co-teaching, common course syllabi, and technology are three of these successful strategies.

**Co-Teaching** is one of the district/building Ohio Improvement Plan (OIP) goals is to utilize co-teaching, a best practice to improve performance of students with disabilities in an inclusion setting.

At the beginning of the 2011-2012 school year, SHS implemented co-teaching in two ninth grade courses of English/Language Arts and World History by two teachers volunteers. A state support group provided these teachers with professional development and classroom mentoring by nationally known special education experts. In 2012-2013, SHS expanded co-teaching to 10th grade. Teachers interested in co-teaching attended inclusion and co-teaching sessions at the *HSTW* Conference in New Orleans.

Tenth grade students, who as freshmen received their special education services in co-teaching classrooms, were enrolled into 10th grade U.S. Studies and ELA. SHS offered the freshmen inclusion classes piloted in 2011 - 2012. Ninth grade Earth Science and Algebra I, and a 10<sup>th</sup> grade General Biology were added. Students who were exceptional freshmen in the ninth grade science resource rooms were scheduled into 10th grade General Biology. Co-teachers were given common planning periods.

**Common Course Syllabi** process at SHS required the support from administration and participation of all teachers working together. These syllabi are "working documents" used schoolwide to assure and monitor rigorous courses taught to all students.

During 2011 - 2012, SHS teachers participated in a common course syllabi training funded by *HSTW* NE Ohio Region and facilitated by a Southern Regional Education Board (SREB)/*HSTW* consultant. This training served as a foundation for SHS's Common Course Syllabi process. Teachers were provided with a district-created template and rubric, and time to work collaboratively while drafting their syllabi. Approved syllabi were posted online to be revised as needed. The administration was supportive in providing time for teachers to complete this project.

*Continued from page 1.*

**Use of Technology** technology in every classroom. For over three years, technology integration has been supported with a district technology integration team of two staff members and a full time technology coordinator. This team conducts all district staff professional development relating to technology that drives the needs and the use of technology to foster student learning. In addition, the team presents at state and national conferences on the *Use of Technology to Improve Instruction*.

"As technology integration specialists, Springfield Local School feels our primary goal is to empower teachers to utilize the power of technology integration to enhance student learning," stated Superintendent Stauffer.

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and College & Career Readiness (CCR) goals include specific elements that require utilization of technology integrated into all aspects of teaching and learning.

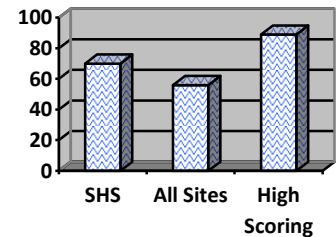
SHS is helping teachers engage students in inquiry projects using resources and tools, which support specific educational goals, as well as providing support in using technology effectively on a daily basis.



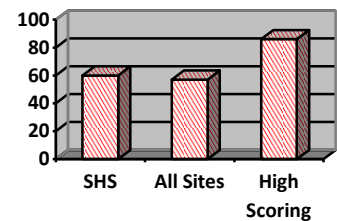
*Students are actively engaged during a Spartan Extra Help Session as they work together to complete the team's task.*

#### Percentage of SHS Students Meeting the 2012 HSTW Readiness Goals

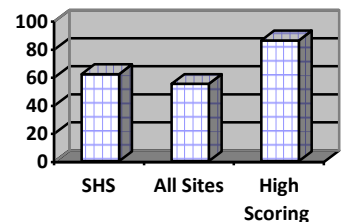
**70% Reading:** Exceeded All Sites Nationally (average mean percentage)



**60% Mathematics:** Exceeded All Sites Nationally (average mean percentage)



**62% Science:** Exceeded All Sites Nationally (average mean percentage)



## Improved Reading and Writing to CCSS Implementing the Literacy Design Collaborative

As the school prepares for the Partnership of Assessment for Readiness of College and Careers (PARCC), the new state assessment in 2014-2015, SHS teachers must prepare students to read and write to more rigorous Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

**Literacy Design Collaborative (LDC)**, a project funded by the Bill & Linda Gates Foundation, is facilitated by *HSTW* at the region, state and national levels by assisting schools in delivering the CCSS in literacy. SHS was one of the first schools in Ohio to pilot LDC.

During the 2011 - 2012 school year, seven SHS teachers participated in four Saturday LDC sessions in Cleveland. These sessions, sponsored by *HSTW* NE Region and facilitated by the SREB/*HSTW* national consultant, provided teachers with LDC tools to design and institute effective practices to improve literacy in all academic and career technical courses.

In 2012 - 2013, these seven teachers organized as an LDC team. During two fall Waiver Days, the LDC team led a professional development session for all 7th through 12th grade teachers. An LDC website, exclusive for Springfield Local Schools, was created to support staff in sharing completed

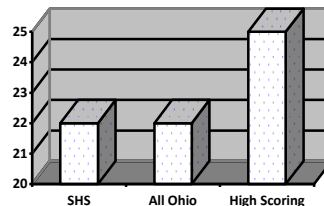
LDC modules and for further research. To continue building capacity for the program, the LDC team offered after school work sessions for professional development hours. Staff received feedback on their LDC task template designs.

*Continued from page 1.*

### Extra Help for All Students

Students indicate that the extra help has improved their classroom performance.

The 2012 *HSTW* Student Survey Results show that the percentage of SHS student responses suggesting an intensive emphasis on **extra help** is the same mean percentage as responses from students at All Ohio sites.



Students participating in the enhanced learning opportunities during *Spartan Periods* appreciate the exposure to other types of learning and community connections.



*Students are working together on completing an LDC writing task that requires them to research, investigate and report-out on information from multiple resources.*



This publication is sponsored by **HSTW Ohio Network**, a nonprofit organization that supports Ohio *HSTW* and *MMGW* school improvement sites.

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