

Bayless School District

Bayless, Missouri

Student Population

- 4 schools
- 1,700 students (PreK-12)
- 51% free/reduced lunch
- 41% English learners
- 15% special education

Student Diversity

- 58% Caucasian (non-Bosnian)
- 19% Caucasian (Bosnian)
- 11% Asian
- 10% African-American
- 2% Hispanic
- 1% Native American

District Web Site — <http://baylessk12.org>

Per capita, Bayless School District is Missouri's most culturally diverse district. Through a statewide initiative, Bayless Junior High implemented the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model to enhance instruction for English learners — and all students — in content area teaching. Since then, Bayless Junior High has improved the quality of instruction, strengthened the connections between teachers and students, and increased its Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) scores.

The Challenge

Bayless School District in south St. Louis County has become the epicenter for the area's many immigrant families. Forty-one percent of students are English learners (EL) and more than 25 languages are spoken. The district serves a large Bosnian population, along with families from Mexico, Vietnam, Pakistan and other countries. The United States government designated St. Louis one of three refugee resettlement sites due to affordable housing and employment opportunities. Many local Bosnian community members were war refugees from the former Yugoslavia.

The Solution

In 2006, Bayless Junior High was one of four Missouri schools selected to participate in the Missouri SIOP Initiative. The Missouri Migrant Education and English Language Learning (MELL) Program launched the initiative to bring the SIOP Model to schools across the state. The SIOP Model is a scientifically-based program that helps educators teach academic content to English learners while promoting their English language development.

"There are many things I like about the SIOP approach," said Shawn Cockrum, director of the MELL Program. "I particularly like the emphasis on both language objectives and content objectives. We don't see that in most other programs. Under No Child Left Behind, all students are required to take content exams or assessments. In addition to teaching language to our limited English proficient students, we must make sure they keep up with the content. I've been impressed with the observation protocol, the trainers, and the results we've seen here and across the country."

Through the Missouri SIOP Initiative, Bayless Junior High worked with Pearson and a MELL Program coach to implement the SIOP model to address its needs and improve student achievement. In the 2006-07 and 2007-08 school years, Bayless Junior High's principal and nine teachers — along with the MELL coach and the three other schools participating in the initiative — received training in the SIOP model.

"We were looking for new ways to instruct our English learners and students living in poverty," said Steve Brotherton, assistant superintendent of the Bayless School District. "When we saw the SIOP model, we felt it could benefit us."

"In our building, we have only one teacher certified to teach ELL students and many ELL students," said Ronald Tucker, principal of Bayless Junior High. "We felt SIOP would help not only our ELL students, but all students across all subgroups — and it has over the past two years."

Following the quarterly trainings, the MELL Program coach worked with teachers to ensure they implemented the strategies taught by Pearson. “Our Pearson trainers were outstanding and having the support of the coach in the classroom strengthened our program,” said Tucker.

Today, teachers use the SIOP model to prepare lesson plans as well as to review and assess lessons across content areas. When Principal Tucker walks into classrooms, he sees the SIOP Model in action.

“I see teachers assessing the previous day’s content objectives and language objectives, so they can understand what students mastered,” said Tucker. “Teachers then state the current content and language objectives. Students stand up and recite the objectives. The objectives are also written and posted. This way, students are aware of what they will be taught and how. Throughout the lesson, teachers build content knowledge and constantly review and assess to determine how effective their teaching is. If students demonstrate they’re not where they should be, teachers can now quickly tell if they need to make a mid-flight correction and have many ways to do so. At the end of the lesson, teachers restate the content objectives and language objectives, and assess again to see if students understood the lesson.”

“The SIOP Model works great,” he continued. “It’s a much more complete and thorough teaching process.”

Prior to implementing the SIOP Model, one ELL teacher taught three self-contained classes and provided support to other teachers in a “class within a class” setting. During faculty meetings, the ELL teacher also offered suggestions about what to do for ELL students.

“It just wasn’t as effective,” said Tucker. “It wasn’t until our teachers became responsible for writing language objectives — and seeing how to get our students to read, write, speak, learn and truly understand the content — that we really started making progress.”

“Before teachers went through the SIOP training, their lessons weren’t as structured and they didn’t have as many strategies to choose from,” said Brotherton. “The SIOP training was hard work. We had some tears in year one getting through the language objectives, but it was meaningful work. Now everyone is an advocate for SIOP and that hard work has paid off.”

Tucker agrees. “Once teachers got beyond the language objectives, they started seeing success in the classroom. They saw things became easier and their students were learning. All nine teachers are very pro SIOP. They’re excited about it and speak

very highly of it. They say, of all the professional development they’ve had in the district, SIOP has been the most meaningful in terms of helping them professionally,” he said.

Results

Thanks to the work of teachers, students and administrators, Bayless Junior High has achieved many positive changes.

After only one year of SIOP training, students achieved measurable gains on the MAP. “From 2006 to 2007, our teachers went through the first four components of the SIOP Model,” said Tucker. “When our state test scores came back, it confirmed our teachers’ belief this is a really good process that’s making a difference in students’ lives.”


Bayless Junior High Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) Percentage of students who are proficient or advanced

Communication Arts		
	2006	2007
All students	30.6	39.4
Limited English proficient	2.3	10.3
Free/reduced lunch	23.2	33.9
Mathematics		
	2006	2007
All students	41.6	41.2
Limited English proficient	25	33.3
Free/reduced lunch	36	38.5

“When teachers began using the SIOP Model, classroom management improved,” he continued. “Classroom expectations are higher. Students who may not have felt engaged in the past feel engaged now. There are fewer office referrals. Over the last three years, we’ve reduced failures by 42 percent. We’ve met AYP for last four years. Teachers feel much of this has to do with making connections with our students. SIOP has also brought our staff much closer together. Teachers talk about best practices and share successes. It’s really improved the professionalism of our staff.”

Bayless Junior High was one of five schools selected as a 2008 Missouri School of Character, and one of 25 finalists for the National School of Character Awards sponsored by the nonprofit Character Education Partnership in Washington, D.C.

“SIOP made a big difference in helping us become a Missouri School of Character,” said Tucker. “SIOP provides us with the



opportunity to make an authentic connection with our students. Through this process — speaking, reading, writing — we’ve given our students a voice. SIOP is the most effective way I’ve seen to address the issues of diverse student subgroups. In addition, teachers like that SIOP is based on best practices and that it works so well with what we’re already doing. I would highly recommend it to other educators.”

What else has contributed to Bayless Junior High’s success with the SIOP Model?

“Having a strong foundation ensures success academically and in all other areas of student performance,” said Maureen Clancy-May, Ph.D., superintendent of Bayless School District. “Bayless Junior High has made great strides in forming professional learning communities, which has helped them to be even more successful.”

“Bayless is a success for a number of reasons,” said Cockrum. “They’ve done a good job tracking data, so they can show state testing results they can directly relate to the professional development provided through the SIOP initiative. The principal participated in all the training and coaching sessions, which showed us how important it is to have the administrator actively involved. Now, the rest of the district is excited about the SIOP Model because of the results they’ve seen at the junior high.”

Next Steps

In fact, the SIOP Model has been so successful, Bayless School District will soon expand its implementation to all teachers at Bayless Junior High and Bayless High School, through a competitive Federal Math and Science Partnership grant (Title II, Part B). The intent of the grant program is to encourage institutions of higher education, local school districts and schools to participate in professional development activities that increase the subject matter knowledge and teaching skills of math and science teachers.


As part of the grant, Bayless School District will partner with the University of Missouri at St. Louis to provide summer institutes and other training to build the content knowledge of all math and science teachers in grades six through 12.

In addition, Bayless will implement Enhancing Instruction for ELs with The SIOP® Model, a comprehensive professional development program from Pearson, to help teachers and administrators gain practical skills to implement the SIOP model and build capacity in their schools. Two Bayless Junior High teachers will also serve as coaches to assist teachers in implementing the SIOP Model.

“The SIOP training will complement the training provided by the university, so teachers will be better able to provide instruction and improve academic achievement in math and science,” said Brotherton.

The SIOP District Training Program for administrators and coaches will begin in May 2008. Training for teachers will begin in August, following the university summer institutes.

“We’re looking forward to building on success the junior high has had,” said Brotherton.



“We’re really proud of the people at Bayless,” said Cockrum. “It’s not a big district. It’s not in a rich part of town. They’ve been inundated over the last 10 years with many immigrants and they’ve welcomed it. It’s a ‘no excuses’ kind of place. Some districts will tell you why they can’t achieve; that’s not an issue in Bayless. The climate there is a great fit with the SIOP Model. SIOP takes the best initiatives and teaching strategies, and brings it together in a way that benefits not only English learners, but all students.

“As we work with Missouri districts to improve instruction, we always discuss SIOP,” he continued. “Many schools have limited resources and we want to make sure they don’t waste their resources on initiatives that don’t work. That’s why we direct them toward Pearson’s SIOP training. It’s the only training based on the original SIOP Model, and Pearson continues to work with the authors of the model. The SIOP Model works.”

Transforming The Culture of Teaching

Pearson develops and delivers sustainable, district-wide professional development programs that transform the culture of teaching and result in schools organized for success with increased student achievement and teacher retention. Drawing from a collection of research-based programs, evidence-based practices and program implementation processes, our solutions include programs to help educators expand district and school improvement efforts, optimize how districts use data, and enhance content area knowledge and pedagogical skills.

Contact Us
800.463.9618
info@Pearsonpd.com

Learn More
www.PearsonSchool.com/pd



PEARSON