

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF JANESVILLE
Janesville, Wisconsin

Summary Report

Staff Member: Ms. Rita Gipp Principal/Associate Principal: Dr. Steve Salerno
School: Marshall Middle School Date: May 20, 2008
Class/Subject Area: 7th & 8th grade Technology Education

1. Current Information/Professional Growth:

Ms. Gipp is an integral part of the Marshall Middle School family. Now completing her eighth year at Marshall, Ms. Gipp has taught a total of 14 years. She earned her Bachelor's of Science Degree in Education from the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point (in 1993). Later she returned to school to complete her Master's of Science Degree in Middle Level Education from the University of Wisconsin at Platteville (in 2005). Because professional development is an essential part of who Ms. Gipp is, she completed her Technology Education certification in 2007. This required her participation in a number of courses ("Research Methodology", "Creating and Exploring Web Quests", "Fundamentals of Drafting", "Ortho Graphic Projection", "Actuators - Electricity"); moreover, Ms. Gipp completed an electronic portfolio as part of the certifying requirements for the University of Wisconsin at Platteville. Ms. Gipp is certified by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction in Elementary Education (1-8), Mathematics Education (1-9), and Technology Education (1-21).

Ms. Gipp utilizes these impressive credentials in a way that engages students in their learning. Her contributions extend outside of her classroom, as well. At the district level, Ms. Gipp serves on the district's Vocation/Technology Education Committee. There she serves as a conduit to the district by exchanging information with colleagues throughout Janesville. While at school, Ms. Gipp has volunteered to serve as advisor to our school newspaper, *The Marshall Redcoat*. She has taken this experience to a new medium, our school's web site. In addition, as part of her professional development plan, Ms. Gipp considered advising a Tech Club. Lastly, she has served as a cooperating teacher during the 2005-2006 school year and mentor to Mr. Mike Bretl, Technology Education Teacher at Marshall.

2. Implementation of *Beyond 2010* priorities, district policies, building initiatives and procedures and personal action plan objectives.

In an effort to support the School District of Janesville's *Beyond 2010* plan and Marshall Middle School's School Improvement Plan, Ms. Gipp completed the "Self Directed" approach to the supervision cycle. Specifically, she created the following goals:

1. Provide opportunities for students to collaboratively experience enrichment programs so that the climate of Marshall Middle School will continue to be enhanced.
2. Marshall Middle School will further realize a 2% decrease in “Minimal” and “Basic” reading and mathematics WKCE scores.
3. Providing students with opportunities for service learning and work experiences so they may feel a connectedness to the Janesville and Marshall Middle School community.
4. Increase professional development opportunities so that instruction of our students can be further enhanced.

Ms. Gipp is a dedicated professional who believes in the value of professional development to enhance the instruction of all students. An example of her desire and willingness to help students experience success is exemplified by her first goal. Wanting to attract students, specifically female students, into technology, Ms. Gipp developed plans for a new Technology Club. Knowing students enjoy working with computers, Ms. Gipp thought it would be of interest to students to offer skill development in computer assembly and diagnostics. In September, Ms. Gipp petitioned the Parent Teacher Association for seed money to help obtain parts. While the PTA was able to provide some funding, it fell short of the approximate \$600 needed to successfully launch the program. That did not deter Ms. Gipp; in fact, plans were made for her to contact business partners (through Forward Janesville) who might wish to donate parts for this club. Unfortunately, JEA job actions prevented this club from coming to fruition; however Ms. Gipp and the administrative team find value and promoting such an opportunity for kids. If future funding is not possible the administrative team remains committed to seeking additional resources so that our students can have such a positive experience.

For the past few years our school has made a concerted effort to focus on literacy. It would be too easy for our Encore teachers to say, “Literacy has no place in our content area”. That’s not the case at Marshall Middle School. Ms. Gipp’s effort to promote literacy in her Encore classroom is just one shining example of the extraordinary efforts being made by this group of teachers. Ms. Gipp has created a web site (<http://www.marshallteched.com>) that is exclusively dedicated to supporting instruction within her classroom. Among other things, this web site includes specific learning objectives for each of the various modules in her program. When students log onto their work stations they merely go to the module for which they are currently working and access the expectations and directions for the lesson. This web site also promotes our school’s efforts to develop vocabulary skills. As part of an extra credit activity, students receive daily pop up activities on the class web site. They are encouraged to respond to these vocabulary skill builders by e-mailing Ms. Gipp their answers. In turn, Ms. Gipp follows up with an email of her own. She lets students know whether or not they have correctly answered the vocabulary prompt. Each week there is a new word included. This engaging web site also lists the school’s daily announcements, in the event that parents or students did not hear them. Upon reflection, Ms. Gipp has found this has been a very successful tool for seventh grade students especially, and no doubt, will continue to grow

as the students advance throughout Marshall Middle School's Technology Education program.

In an effort to promote public engagement, Ms. Gipp sought a service learning opportunity for her eighth grade Technology Education students. Originally planned as a web development module for area businesses, Ms. Gipp, along with her partner Mr. Bretl, realized this activity might be best accomplished "in house". In short, eighth grade students created a series of questions they could ask teachers throughout Marshall Middle School so, in turn, they could create individual teachers' web pages. These web pages were designed to showcase each teacher's professional credentials, classroom experience, examples of students' work and other information pertinent to our program. As this program continues to be successful we will see more and more teachers' web pages as a part of our school's official web site. Eventually, Ms. Gipp plans on engaging the community to determine if there are small businesses that might find interest in having our students develop their web page. What a terrific way to give back to the Marshall community!

A few years ago the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction changed the criteria they utilize for recertification. While most teachers currently practicing in the profession were "grandfathered in", new teachers are expected to complete a comprehensive Professional Development Plan (Current practitioners merely need to obtain six college credits in order to recertify). No stranger to hard work, Ms. Gipp decided participating in this new process would be professionally rewarding. During the 2007-2008 school year, Ms. Gipp reflected on her current practices in the classroom and formulated measurable goals that could be monitored during the next three to four year period. She's completing this process by using the "Quality Educator Initiative" web site. There, she has linked her Technology Education portfolio (which was completed for coursework at the University of Wisconsin at Platteville). I learned during one of our quarterly visits, Ms. Gipp considered applying for Master Education status and discussed with Dr. Donna Behn how she could participate in the PDP writing class offered by the School District of Janesville. I'm eager to see her goals come to fruition.

3. Demonstration of Meeting Professional Objectives

The administrative team had the opportunity to observe Ms. Gipp and her students in a variety of settings (e.g. IEP meetings, encore meetings, parent conferences, etc.). In addition, Ms. Gipp and I met on following four formal occasions during the 2007-2008 school year to develop, monitor, and assess her goals for improving teacher effectiveness: September 17th, December 11th, February 12th, and May 20th.

Instructional Delivery:

In every sense of the word Ms. Gipp is a trailblazer. Whether she's implementing best practices in Technology Education, creating web sites that allows students to pace

themselves by examining daily benchmarks, or developing collaborative lessons with her colleagues, Ms. Gipp puts her heart and soul in everything she sets out to accomplish.

Human Relations:

Wisely, Ms. Gipp knows that students perform for teachers they like, and clearly, students like Ms. Gipp a great deal. Ms. Gipp knows one of the best ways to validate students' work is to showcase it using her web site, <http://www.marshallteched.com>. Ms. Gipp has posted a great deal of her students' work. Recently, I was surfing the internet and saw two students' creation titled "Extreme Larry". Ms. Gipp worked collaboratively with these students in order to develop their creativity using *Flash* programming.

Professional Attitudes and Traits:

Among the many things I have come to appreciate about Ms. Gipp's work ethic is her demonstration of energy, vitality, and enthusiasm for our important work. She continually shows interest and involvement in student activities and where possible spearheads opportunities to help students to fully realize the middle school philosophy. She works hard to keep up-to-date with any new developments within her field, and she took a risk in completing her Technology Education certification when she was already demonstrating professional success as a mathematics teacher.

4. Commendations/Recommendations:

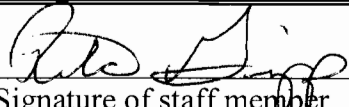
Marshall Middle School is fortunate to have a team of educators that is dedicated to providing students with academic, social, and emotional developmental opportunities. Ms. Gipp is a silent leader in this regard. When Marshall Middle School was looking for a new advisor for the *Redcoat*, it was Ms. Gipp who approached me, and expressed interest in moving this extra curricular activity to an entirely new level. Recognizing this publication is representative of our school, Ms. Gipp went to great lengths in order to fine tune and enhance its look and grammatical accuracy. Everything from assuring the correct punctuation and grammar to unifying the size and fonts within articles was considered. She organized her plan for improvement in a document entitled "Top Ten Items of Resolution in Redcoat Publishing". Since then, these quarterly newspapers have represented the very best of our students and staff.

The following recommendations come as a result of our school and district initiatives. They should not be construed as a deficiency in her performance. Rather, these are areas all members of the Marshall team are expected to implement in their pedagogy:

- ✓ Continue seeking ways of providing students with rigorous and relevant curriculum.
- ✓ Seek programs and workshops (content specific or otherwise) that will enhance classroom instruction for the students of Marshall Middle School.

- ✓ Explore and utilize best practices in enhancing instruction for students of color, special needs students, and the economically disadvantaged.
- ✓ Continue sponsoring various activities or clubs that will lead to the academic, social and emotional growth of our students. As we have discussed on numerous occasions the clientele of Marshall Middle School continues to change, how we respond to those students is essential in further enhancing our already very strong program.
- ✓ Continue utilizing student performance data in order to promote individualization and differentiation of instruction. For example standardized tests, teacher antidotes and best practices.
- ✓ Continue developing methods of including parents as partners in their student's education.
- ✓ Continue seeking ways of providing students with relevant, social and emotional classroom instruction.
- ✓ Identify methods and tools that can be used to enhance management of time.
- ✓ Continue embracing the learning and literacy initiative taking place at Marshall – e.g. explicit teaching of vocabulary, use of graphic organizers and summary frames, etc.
- ✓ Continue reflecting and implementing Dr. Robert Marzano's "high yield strategies" for improvement. Further meaningful gains will realized by implementing these concepts faithfully.

Signatures indicate completion of the process, not necessarily agreement.



 Signature of staff member

5/21/08

 Date

 Signature of supervisor

 Date

Copy: Staff Member
 Principal
 Director of Human Resources

SVS: bb