

# VISION IN ACTION

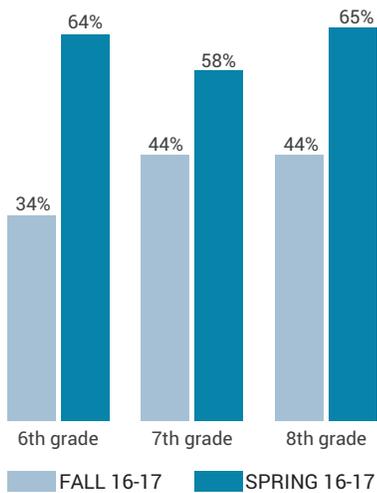
## Strengthening universal level instruction through self-assessment

### Northwestern Middle School, Poplar

#### NORTHWESTERN AT A GLANCE (2016-17)

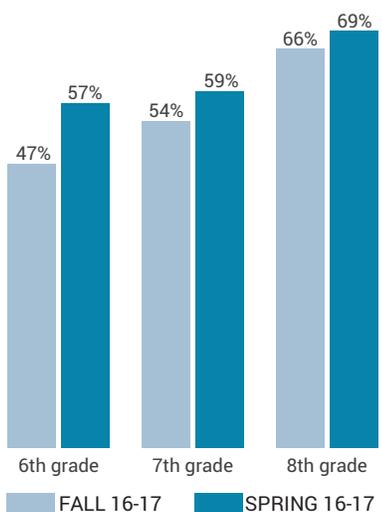
Number of students	295
--------------------	-----

#### Improvements in Mathematics Benchmarks



STAR assessment

#### Improvements in Reading Benchmarks



STAR assessment

**RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE** of collecting and using data to drive improvement, Northwestern Middle School has been assessing implementation of consistent reading and mathematics instruction with the School-wide Implementation Review (SIR) annually since 2011. “We know where we’ve been and when we move, we know where we’re going,” Principal Tanya Krieg said.

The SIR is a valuable tool to guide this work. For example, item 35 from the SIR reads: *Collaborate frequently in grade level/content area teams about universal student data and instructional practices.* Using this as a focus, the grade-level teams at Northwestern had specific conversations around student data and have agreed on what evidence to collect which demonstrates their adherence to non-negotiable best practices.

For the 2016-17 year, the school decided to focus on universal level instruction with strategic use of daily professional learning time. Each Monday, grade-level teams meet together and plan for the week. On Tuesdays, counselors meet for 30 minutes with every grade-level team. Principal Krieg meets with every grade-level team each Thursday. Teach-

ers are also given regular time to review, plan around data, and to communicate with parents and families.

In addition, the instructional team at Northwestern is in unanimous agreement: relationships between students and teachers are critical to student success. Most often, authentic connections are forged at the universal level, Krieg explained. If additional supports are needed, it makes sense to have a teacher who really knows the student deliver them. So Northwestern eliminated the broad intervention time scheduled for all students at the end of the day and implemented an 80 minute gradual release, core instructional block, which allows teachers time to attend to small group or individual needs throughout the day.

Through strong grade-level collaboration at the universal level and building a culture that nurtures each and every student, Northwestern increased the number of students at benchmark in both reading and mathematics from fall 2016 to spring 2017. “Big things are happening that contribute to student success,” Krieg said.

#### IMPLEMENTATION JOURNEY

Assessing in	Stage of implementation
Behavior since 2012	At fidelity at the universal level (tier 1) for 5 years
Reading since 2012	At full implementation at the universal level for 2 years
Mathematics since 2013	At full implementation at the universal level for 2 years