

Organization and Problem Overview

The United States Department of Education is an agency of the federal government “that establishes policy for, administers and coordinates most federal assistance to education.” It helps the president carry out the legislation passed by Congress as well as his national education initiatives. The Education Department's main focus is to serve children by encouraging educational quality, guaranteeing equitable access, and promoting student accomplishment and readiness for global competition. The U.S. Department of Education can be seen as an ‘umbrella institution,’ signifying the 50 subdivisions in each state that have its own department of education to manage students, faculty, administration and monetary funds per academic year and institution. Therefore, the mission of the US Department of Education is to aid and support students during their academic years in various aspects. However, there are several issues that the department is currently facing including a significant learning loss and disparities in the areas of mathematics and humanities education amongst younger populations, indicating there is a significant issue in human resource management.

Scope of Problem & Focus

Human Resource Guru's intervention plan is to attack the dropping math and reading scores that have been reported by the National Assessment of education progress (NAEP). The intervention plan will specifically address the fast-dropping rates in elementary through middle school, more specifically 4th-8th graders. According to the NAEP the average math score for 13-year-olds declined 9 points between 2019-2020 and 2022-2023 school years. Reading scores for 13-year-olds declined 4 points between 2019 –2020, and 2022-2023 school years. It is important to recognize for this case that although covid accelerated these drops in numbers the

reading and math scores have been dropping amongst these grade levels since 2012. It is essential that we attack the growing disparities in children's education so that they're more equipped to deal with the upcoming challenges in their education journey. These are future high school and college students. It is important that we address this problem early so that they aren't left behind when they get further in their journey.

Steps to implementing intervention plan

The first step to implementing a plan to address disparities amongst 4th–8th graders is more funding. Funding is the most important step because the rest of the steps aren't possible without the proper funding. We must also make sure that these funds are being allocated properly towards education. Since education is funded by property taxes for areas with low property tax it is essential that they receive MORE funding so that they aren't left behind in the process to accelerate education for the youth that continues to fall behind each year. The education of the youth is essential to the continued development of the country.

The second step is to address teachers that have plagued education the last few years since Covid. In order to properly address this shortage, we must raise the pay our educators receive. We must also focus on the development of future educators, so we won't have to deal with a teacher shortage in the future. We need more educators for the future of our children more than ever.

The third step is implementing a rigorous curriculum to help accelerate education for those that have been left behind in education. Education in elementary and middle schools has been greatly impacted by Covid but it is important to note that the reading and math scores have been slowly dropping before the pandemic. The only way to combat this is to accelerate the

student's education. We do this by improving the curriculum by emphasizing more math and reading initiatives in curriculum and adding skills that are relevant to the changing times. We need a complete curriculum overhaul.

The last step is simply more resources in and out of school. In school resources should include paid tutors to help guide students through the new curriculum that will probably be hard for students to adjust to at first. Out of school resources mean more after school programs that are dedicated to helping students with their work out of school. It is important to know that these out of school programs must coordinate with the schools on curriculum so that they know where to help the students. This step is essential because it will show kids that all the adults in their community are dedicated to their educational success. Parents must also be involved in this process and should make sure they are sending their kids for extra help. If kids continue to fall behind, we must make these resources mandatory.

Opportunities for Initiatives regarding Intervention Plan

The education sector is encountering challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated. These challenges include teacher shortages, learning gaps, and a lack of resources, among other issues. Nevertheless, hope exists. A set of initiatives has been implemented to address these challenges head-on, ultimately unlocking the education sector's potential and creating a brighter future for all.

The first initiative aims to mitigate the issue of teacher shortages by creating appealing career paths, offering incentives, and establishing partnerships with academic institutions to encourage teacher education programs. This initiative acknowledges the importance of recruiting high-quality educators who can adapt to diverse teaching methodologies and address learning

gaps caused by the pandemic. Additionally, it emphasizes the need for ongoing professional development opportunities to enhance educators' skills and knowledge.

The second initiative focuses on implementing targeted academic support programs for students adversely affected by the pandemic. This initiative recognizes that the pandemic has disrupted the academic progress of numerous students, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. It advocates for designing learning programs based on comprehensive data analysis, considering statistical significance and qualitative context to enable effective policy-making. The initiative also stresses the importance of providing additional resources and support to students, including tutoring, counseling, and mentorship programs.

The third initiative centers on providing professional development, stress management workshops, and resourceful tools to support educators facing heightened demands. This initiative acknowledges that the pandemic has placed significant stress on educators and aims to provide them with the support they need to cope with these demands. It also stresses the importance of training educators on interpreting data beyond statistical labels to foster informed decision-making. The initiative recognizes the role of data in improving educational outcomes and seeks to equip educators with the necessary skills to use data effectively.

After thoroughly evaluating all the initiatives, we recommend Option 2, Tailored Learning Programs and Support, as the most appropriate. This initiative adopts a holistic approach that considers insights from all aspects and highlights the need to address individual learning requirements post-pandemic while leveraging comprehensive data analysis. Implementing targeted support programs aims to bridge the resource gap and provide tailored support to both students and educators, creating an environment that fosters improved academic achievement in math and reading for 4th-8th graders. This initiative aligns with the Department

of Education's goal of improving foundational skills, and its implementation will result in improved academic outcomes for students. This initiative, as discussed in the preceding paragraph, takes a holistic approach that considers diverse insights and emphasizes the importance of addressing individual learning needs in the post-pandemic era. Now, let's delve into the specific details of why this option stands out as the most appropriate choice for fostering positive educational outcomes.

Adequate funding is a cornerstone for transformative changes in the educational landscape, with profound implications for both students and educators. When schools receive sufficient funding, they can allocate resources to reduce class sizes, ensuring that teachers can provide more personalized attention to each student. Smaller class sizes have been consistently linked to improved student engagement and enhanced learning outcomes. Furthermore, increased funding allows for the improvement of facilities and the provision of updated materials, creating better learning environments that can foster curiosity and academic exploration. With more opportunities for students, such as access to extracurricular activities and advanced courses, the overall educational experience becomes richer and more fulfilling.

Investing in educators through higher pay and professional development initiatives is crucial for attracting and retaining high-quality teachers. Addressing the shortage of skilled educators is vital for maintaining a robust educational system. By recognizing and rewarding the expertise of teachers, schools can create a more stable and motivated teaching force. Professional development opportunities enable teachers to stay abreast of the latest educational methodologies and technologies, ultimately enhancing their effectiveness in the classroom.

Overhauling the curriculum to emphasize math and reading initiatives, along with incorporating relevant skills, represents a strategic approach to bolstering education. Prioritizing these

foundational subjects can have a cascading effect on overall academic achievement. By ensuring that students have a solid foundation in core subjects, they are better equipped for advanced coursework and critical thinking skills necessary for future success. This approach also addresses the concerning trend of declining scores in these fundamental areas, providing a structured framework for academic improvement.

Increased resources, including tutoring and summer programs, are powerful tools for targeted assistance to students who need it most. These initiatives contribute to academic catch-up, providing essential reinforcement of learning and preventing students from falling behind. Tutoring sessions offer personalized support, addressing individual learning needs and helping students navigate challenging subjects. Summer programs not only prevent the "summer slide" but also provide opportunities for enrichment and exploration, fostering a continuous learning mindset among students. In summary, the outcomes of adequate funding in education are multifaceted and impactful. They encompass improvements in class sizes, facilities, and materials, leading to enhanced student engagement and academic achievement. Investing in educators addresses the shortage of high-quality teachers, while curriculum overhauls and targeted resources contribute to a holistic approach in tackling academic challenges. These outcomes collectively create an educational environment that nurtures learning, fosters growth, and equips students with the skills needed for future success.

Risks in Implementing Plan

Based on our research and dive into previous new articles and reports, there are several risks associated through the implementation of our intervention plan for the U.S. Department of Education. The first and arguably, the greatest challenge is how test scores and academic performance is recorded, measured and shared amongst the academic chain of command.

According to the Government Accountability Office, “ Weaknesses in Education's internal controls have hindered its oversight and monitoring of grantees and its assessments of K-12 program performance. In April 2017, GAO reported that Education's oversight of discretionary grants monitoring was limited. Some offices, including the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, did not consistently document required monitoring activities in official grant files.” (K-12 Education:Challenges to Assessing Program Performance and Recent Efforts to Address Them). As a result the assessment highlights there is no advance and clear structure to record data amongst hundreds of thousands of students in a way that is universal, thereby causing inaccurate and skewed data of a students performance. Additionally, it demonstrates a disorganized structure in both leadership and network.

Secondly, we must consider the complex structure of introducing our intervention plan across different districts and states given the disparity in resources, function and overall capabilities of different leadership teams. Therefore, we need to identify a unilateral method of accountability for schools across the country implementing the plan without affecting ongoing progress and stability of students currently or in the future. We must also consider the external circumstances that our intervention plan may not be able to control or change, including the learning environment and behavior of children to how the measured impact and effectiveness will be reported.

Human Resources Strategy Evaluation

Recruitment and Development is a critical component in Human Resource Administration because the quality and preparedness of administrators significantly impacts and shapes the academic understanding and performance of students. While evaluating our intervention plan and agency, we observed that this was not a mere monopoly, but true in several instances through the

organization from those in each department of education managing performance records and impacting data to the quality and quantity of teachers. In Performance Management and Training, Chapter 9: Training Learning and Development, “Employees often begin new jobs with the expectation that they will receive sufficient training, but this is seldom the case, at least in terms of training in any formal sense...Development increases staff potential, assists in succession planning, and is tied to strategic organizational development, ensuring that agencies have employees with relevant skills.” (Berman, Bowman, West, Van Wart, page 557). As a result, our strategy would be to create a system of retention by Using consistent data platforms to store and submit results to educational boards across the district, making sure there is a stable and consistent structure in place for the distribution of monetary funds and curriculum guidelines. Additionally, we would formulate a long term plan of sustainability through the construction of a baseline structure that is universal for our intervention plan and then partnering with states and departments to tailor needs as it relates to specific school districts, access, and capabilities, all while maintaining a national standard.

Conclusion

In conclusion, by evaluating the ongoing human resource challenges in the U.S. Department of Education’s structure as it relates to student performance and test scores, we are able to identify the weakness, strategies and areas of opportunity in an active system. As a result, we were then able to formulate an intervention plan that will bridge the gap of human resource management and critical issues affecting academic performance in the range of 4th-8th graders, detailing the process, steps, and plan of action necessary to strengthen performance and overall government effectiveness both in a current and future state. Our approach consisted of a particular lens towards a huge government agency rather than a more narrow field so that we can

identify strengths and weaknesses through a unique process. This allowed us to gain insight into a new perspective and truly understand just how far the reach of human resource management is, and the complexities for which it holds.

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