

*Exclusively from Corwin*



# Engaging in a Districtwide Dialogue About Learning

Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup>: A Proven Program for School Improvement



**The Story of Valley View  
School District, IL**

**A Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup> Case Study**

Learn more at [www.corwin.com/visiblelearning](http://www.corwin.com/visiblelearning) or call (800) 831-6640

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# About Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup>

The Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup> school change model of professional learning is based on one simple belief: every student should experience at least one year's growth over the course of one school year.

However, this simple statement can lead to a host of questions: How do we measure growth? What does a year's progress look like? What factors contribute the most to student learning? How do we account for students with different abilities?

The story of Valley View School District illustrates how Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup> functions as a system response to achievement at both the school and district level, harnessing the collaborative energy of educators to maximize the impact on student achievement.

**For more information about the Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup> model of school improvement, please visit [www.corwin.com/visiblelearning](http://www.corwin.com/visiblelearning) or contact your account manager at (800) 831-6640.**

## Exclusively from Corwin

Corwin is the exclusive provider of Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup> seminars, institutes, training, and consulting in North America. For 25 years, our mission of "Helping Educators Do Their Work Better" has guided us in finding practical, research-based solutions to the challenges that educators face. We are proud to be your partner for all Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup> professional learning.

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# Valley View School District, IL

Student population:

**17,633**

Free/reduced lunch:

**62%**

English learner population:

**12.8%**

## The Context

Valley View School District 365U (VVSD) is located about 35 miles southwest of downtown Chicago, in Romeoville, IL. Prior to Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup>, teams of school and teacher leaders from Valley View School District met each summer to analyze student data from state achievement tests and other common assessments. While this data was valuable, it was not being used to shape professional development plans or instructional strategies.

"We spent a lot of time ensuring we had the data needed to make informed instructional decisions, yet we still struggled to analyze the data to evaluate programs and practices and determine their impact on student learning," said Dr. James Mitchem, Superintendent.

## Small Beginnings

In Spring 2013, Rachel Kinder, Assistant Superintendent, and Karen Flories, Executive Director for Educational Services 6–12, delved deeply into the research of Professor John Hattie and his landmark work, *Visible Learning* (2008). Kinder and Flories realized that Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup> had to become the basis for professional practice across the district.



## Building a Foundation

The Valley View leadership team attended multiple planning calls with Corwin staff and Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup> trainers until they had a professional development plan that was customized to meet their needs and their desire for deep, district-wide implementation.

In June 2014, all building-level administrators and teacher leaders attended the first two workshops of the **Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup> Foundation Series** (Foundation Day and Evidence Into Action I). Attendees studied the key messages of the Visible Learning research and were given data-gathering tools and processes to measure their impact on student achievement.

"There was a lot of excitement to implement professional development plans focused on research-based best practices and solid evidence collection. The collaboration between building administrators and teacher leaders was strong and set the foundation for solid development of building plans for the upcoming school year," said Flories.

**“**Our trainer Dave Nagel and the Corwin team have taken a vested interest in ensuring not only that our training days were successful, but that the work is supported in a deep and meaningful way. **”**

—Rachel Kinder, Assistant Superintendent

# Valley View School District, IL

## Year One (2014-2015)

During its first year, the district focused on voice and dialogue. Teacher and student voice became one important measure of evidence that Valley View district leaders used to gauge and monitor the impact of professional development.

"We engaged in a lot of dialogue with building leaders throughout the school year, which helped us determine where we needed to continue to support the Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup> work," said Kinder.

In addition, teachers and leaders began viewing themselves as evaluators of their impact. Student assessment results were viewed as feedback for the staff. The Valley View educators were becoming change agents by focusing on solutions instead of dwelling on their challenges.

## What's Next?

Beginning in Fall 2015, Valley View schools will focus on strengthening their shared language of learning. Leaders will be intentional about supporting and monitoring the next steps in their Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup> journey. Valley View leaders are excited to continue to deeply implement all of the Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup> strands throughout the district.

*“We needed something that could help us focus our professional practice so we were collectively making the greatest possible impact on student growth and achievement. Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup> provided the compass we needed to do just that.”*

—Karen Flories, Executive Director for Educational Services 6-12

## At a Glance: How Valley View Got Started

Valley View leadership introduced Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup> to the district in phases. Cohort 1, consisting of all district and school leaders and 5-6 teacher leaders from each building, completed the **Foundation Series** in June 2014. To deeply embed Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup> practices throughout the district, Cohort 1 participated in implementation days led by Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup> consultants to create a Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup> rollout plan for all staff. Cohort 2, consisting of select elementary and secondary teachers, attended the **Foundation Day** and **Visible Learning Into Action I** for Teachers workshops in June 2015.

Date	Workshop	Participants
Jun 2014	Foundation Day	Cohort 1
Jun 2014	Evidence Into Action I	Cohort 1
Jul 2014	Implementation Day: Planning	Cohort 1
Oct 2014	Evidence Into Action II	Cohort 1
Feb 2015	Implementation Day: Planning	Cohort 1
Jun 2015	Inside Series: Creating Effective Assessments for Teaching and Learning	Cohort 1
Jun 2015	Inside Series Workshop: Using Data to Evaluate Your Impact	Cohort 1
Jun 2015	Foundation Day & Visible Learning Into Action I	Cohort 2 Elementary Teachers
Jun 2015	Foundation Day & Visible Learning Into Action I	Cohort 2 Secondary Teachers
Jun 2015	Implementation Day: Planning	Cohort 1

# 3 Ways to Get Started With Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup>



## 1. School Capability Analysis

How does your school perform against the five strands of Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup>? Certified consultants will collect and analyze baseline capability data to determine your school's readiness for Visible Learning<sup>plus</sup>.

## 2. Foundation Seminar Series

Build your team's foundational knowledge of the Visible Learning research and practices through this series of one-day seminars for teachers and leaders.

## 3. Collaborative Impact Program

This proven, research-based school improvement program aligns district leaders, school leaders, and teachers with a proven process to build capacity for change over 3-5 years, with measurable results.

**Contact your account manager for a consultation or PD proposal:**

**Email:** [info@corwin.com](mailto:info@corwin.com)

**Phone:** (800) 831-6640

**Web:** [www.corwin.com/visiblelearning](http://www.corwin.com/visiblelearning)