Professional Learning Current Reality GAPSS Review (Part B)

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PROFESSIONAL LEARNING - *Professional learning is the means by which teachers, administrators and other school and system employees acquire, enhance and refine the knowledge, skills, and commitment necessary to create and support high levels of learning for all students.*

Professional Learning Standard 1: **The context of professional learning--the who, when, why and where—contributes to the development and quality of learning communities, ensuring that they are functioning, leadership is skillful and focused on continuous improvement, and resources have been allocated to support adult learning and collaboration.**

PL 1.1 Learning Teams

☐ **Not Addressed**	☐ **Emergent**	☐ **Operational**	☒ **Fully Operational**
Teachers do not participate in learning teams or meet regularly to plan for instruction.	Some teachers in some grade levels or subject areas meet to plan for instruction, but meetings do not occur regularly and the work is not aligned with school improvement goals.	Most teachers meet regularly in learning teams to plan for instruction (e.g., develop lesson plans, examine student work, monitor student progress). This collaborative work would be enhanced by clear alignment of group expectations with the school improvement goals.	All teachers participate in learning teams throughout the year and meet regularly to plan for instruction (e.g., develop lesson plans, examine student work, monitor student progress). The collaborative work is aligned with the school improvement goals.

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above – All teachers participate in regular learning teams throughout the year. These teams are regularly scheduled weekly or monthly and include all-staff meetings, group choice professional learning (PL) sessions, grade level PLC meetings, small group book studies, and department specific coaching. The goals of these meetings are tied to the school improvement plan (SIP).

RECOMMENDATIONS: Continue allowing time both during the school day and after school for professional learning and collaboration. While the book study options are aligned to the SIP, this learning team could be further strengthened if all book clubs met and shared their learning as a culminating activity at the end of the year, to discuss their findings and collaborate about how to best implement their new knowledge in the classroom.

PL 1.2 Learning Community

☐ **Not Addressed**	☐ **Emergent**	☐ **Operational**	☒ **Fully Operational**
There is little or no evidence that the principal, administrative team or related human resources (e.g., leadership team, coaches, central office) supports or reinforces the creation and maintenance of a learning community.	There is some evidence that the principal, administrative team, or related human resources (e.g., leadership team, coaches, central office) support or reinforce the creation and maintenance of a learning community, but additional support in this area is needed. Although administrators have created structures for meetings to occur, they have failed to provide teachers with professional development related to the collaboration process.	The principal, administrative team, and other human resources periodically support the creation and maintenance of an effective learning community to support teacher and student learning. In key aspects of the school, these individuals work collaboratively to reinforce collaborative forms of professional development and learning for staff members. Although this process is operational, it would improve if greater emphasis were given to monitoring its impact on school improvement goals and student achievement.	The principal, administrative team and other human resources consistently support the creation and maintenance of an effective learning community to support teacher and student learning. These individuals work collaboratively to reinforce teachers' skillful collaboration (e.g., facilitation skills, conflict resolution, and group decision-making). They also help to create structures to support collegial learning and implement incentive systems to ensure collaborative work. They monitor the impact of these collaborative processes on school improvement goals and on student learning, and participate with other individuals and groups in the operations of the learning community.

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above –

The academic coach facilitated the creation of group norms at the beginning of the year and also ensured they were reviewed and revised as needed throughout the year. Team surveys were used to determine the areas of greatest professional learning need prior to grade level PLC meetings. Subs are provided to give teachers further opportunities to participate in professional learning during the day. Pre and posttest writing prompt scores were documented as the school focused on improving writing this year. This data will be used to monitor the impact of the collaborative work done by grade level PLCs in the area of writing.

RECOMMENDATIONS: This area could be further strengthened by recognizing the accomplishments of the school's various professional learning communities throughout the year.

PL 1.3 Instructional Leadership Development and Service

☐ **Not Addressed**	☐ **Emergent**	☒ **Operational**	☐ **Fully Operational**
There are few if any opportunities for teachers to participate in instructional leadership development experiences, serve in instructional leadership roles, or participate in supporting school-based professional learning.	There are opportunities for teachers to participate in preparing for and serving in instructional leadership roles and contributing to the school-based professional learning plans. However, the opportunities are limited to a small number of teachers.	There are many opportunities for teachers to serve in instructional leadership roles and develop as instructional leaders. They are highly engaged in planning, supporting, and communicating professional learning in the school. This would be enhanced if there were more opportunities for instructional leadership roles among various personnel.	A variety of teachers take advantage of opportunities to participate in instructional leadership development experiences and serve in instructional leadership roles (e.g., instructional coach, mentor, facilitator). They plan, advocate for support of, and articulate the benefits and intended results of professional learning.

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above –

Many teachers are involved in instructional leadership roles. One representative from each grade level and department is part of the Building Leadership Team (BLT). These members are responsible for communicating concerns and brainstorming solutions with the administration, as well as sharing important information with their teams and facilitating grade level team meetings. Several teachers have accepted invitations to present about their areas of expertise during professional learning meetings.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

While a great number of staff are involved in these leadership roles, it seems that it is the same staff members that are invited to participate in leadership roles from year to year. Use a staff survey to gain a better feeling of the staffs' strengths and how those strengths could be better leveraged to meet the goals set forth in the SIP. Make it a priority to tap into staff that is not currently working in a special leadership capacity to strengthen the staff as a whole and prevent burnout of the current leaders.

PL 1.4 School Culture for Team Learning and Continuous Improvement

☐ **Not Addressed**	☐ **Emergent**	☐ **Operational**	☒ **Fully Operational**
There is little or no evidence of the principal and other leaders establishing ongoing team learning with clearly articulated expectations for professional learning.	There is some evidence the principal and other leaders support a culture involving ongoing team learning and continuous improvement. However, there is not a clearly articulated plan for professional learning for teachers and administrators.	There is general evidence the principal and other leaders support a culture involving ongoing learning and continuous improvement through a plan for professional learning for teachers and administrators. The professional learning would be enhanced by including a variety of designs (e.g., lesson study, peer observations, modeling, instructional coaching, collaborative teacher meetings, etc.) constituting high-quality professional learning experiences.	The principal and other leaders support a school culture that reflects ongoing team learning and continuous improvement. The principal and other leaders plan for high-quality professional learning, articulate intended results of school-based professional learning, and participate in professional learning to become more effective instructional leaders.

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above – The principal demonstrated that she supported ongoing learning when she sought out high-quality professional learning from an outside source when it was required. The meeting schedule was filled, so the only time remaining for professional learning was during the school day. The principal arranged resources to fund substitutes for the teachers attending these professional learning sessions. Several times, when a substitute position did not fill, the principal rearranged the building staff to cover the unfilled positions to allow the professional learning participants to remain in their professional learning setting, rather than return to their classroom. The principal's support and commitment indicated the high priority in which she gives professional learning time.

RECOMMENDATIONS: While the long term results of professional learning are always articulated, this area could be further strengthened by ensuring that the daily goals of each meeting are explicitly stated at the beginning of the meeting and the goals are reviewed at the end to ensure they were accomplished.

PL 1.5 Job-Embedded Learning and Collaboration

☐ **Not Addressed**	☐ **Emergent**	☐ **Operational**	☒ **Fully Operational**
Teachers spend little or no time during the work-week learning and collaborating with colleagues to improve their use of curriculum, assessment, instruction, and technology.	Some teachers spend a small amount of time during the work-week collaborating with colleagues. However, this time is often focused on non-curricular topics and typically occurs after school.	Most teachers spend time during a workday each week collaborating with colleagues about curriculum, assessment, instruction and technology use in the classroom. This professional learning would be enhanced by allocating more time each week for job-embedded learning (e.g., lesson study, peer-observations, modeling, instructional coaching, teacher meetings).	Teachers spend a significant part of their work-week in job-embedded learning and collaboration with colleagues addressing curriculum, assessment, instruction, and technology. They receive sufficient support resources (e.g., materials, time, training) and assist with securing additional resources necessary (e.g., funding, time, technology) to sustain their learning. (NSDC Standards recommend that formal and informal job-embedded learning take place during at least 25% of educators' professional time. Such time can be devoted to lesson study, peer observations and coaching, modeling, conferencing, teacher meetings, mentoring.)

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above – As stated in the SIP, several professional learning opportunities have stemmed directly from the SIP goals. In addition to weekly planning meetings, Grade Level PLCs meet weekly to focus on literacy, collaboratively score student work, and unpack standards. The academic coach and administration have worked together conduct three, all day professional learning sessions on the topic of the workshop model. A county coach was utilized to model and coach teachers in the use of Number Talks. (*LaBelle Elementary School: School Improvement Plan 2013-2014*, 2013.)   An outside professional was secured to offer reading trainings, coaching, and modeling for teachers of reading. When a need for leveled texts was brought to the principal's attention, sets of leveled books were purchased for each classroom.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Building in time during the professional learning schedule for teachers to create materials, map out a plan, and implement their new learning would make this area even stronger. It would further support the teachers in transferring the professional learning to their classrooms.

PL 1.6 Resources Support Job-Embedded Professional Learning

☐ **Not Addressed**	☐ **Emergent**	☒ **Operational**	☐ **Fully Operational**
Resources are not allocated for job-embedded professional learning that is aligned with high-priority school improvement goals. Little if any professional development is devoted to helping teachers use technology to enhance student learning.	Some resources are allocated for professional learning. However, much of the professional learning is conducted primarily after school and is not aligned with the high-priority school improvement goals. There is limited professional development devoted to helping teachers use technology to enhance student learning.	Most resources for professional learning are allocated for the identified high-priority school improvement goals. However, providing more job-embedded learning opportunities and professional development would enhance teachers' use of technology to support student learning. In other cases, these forms of professional development need to be more ongoing and sustained to ensure actual classroom implementation of training strategies and processes.	Resources are allocated to support job-embedded professional learning that is aligned with high-priority school improvement goals and technology supporting student learning. There is sustained commitment to ensuring that these professional development activities result in successful classroom implementation. There is also a process in place to determine the value-added of key strategies and processes, i.e., how they impact student achievement and related organizational short- and long-range goals.

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above – When Principal Stanton discussed her technology goals, she stated that she had two main goals for technology: 1. Technology would be used to improve student engagement. 2. Technology would be used to create and apply to push students to work at higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy. (S. Stanton, personal communication, 2014). While a few choice sessions were offered during the year surrounding these technology goals, the professional development surrounding technology has not been ongoing or consistent. Other main priority areas that were defined on the SIP were more fully addressed during professional learning this year. As discussed previously, teams collaborated weekly to score student writing, unpack standards, and improve student writing as a whole. This kind of consistency and priority is what will be needed to make progress on the technology goals. "Changes that people embrace generally have two qualities: they are more powerful than older technologies and they're easier to use" (Knight, 2007).

RECOMMENDATIONS: Embed more instructional technology trainings into the work day, especially surrounding the use of the new 5 new iPads which each grade level received. Prioritize the topics of these meetings to include the use of activities that encourage higher order thinking skills and engagement.   Put in place measures to gauge the effectiveness of the technology trainings (surveys and pretests/posttests) in improving student achievement.

Professional Learning Standard 2: **The process—the how—of professional learning is aligned with articulated goals and purposes, data-driven, research-based, evaluated to determine its impact, aligned with adult learning theory, and collaborative in design and implementation.**

PL 2.1 Collaborative Analysis of Data

☐ **Not Addressed**	☐ **Emergent**	☒ **Operational**	☐ **Fully Operational**
Teachers and/or administrators use personal experiences or opinions to determine student and adult learning needs and goals. Data is not collected and analyzed in monitoring school and classroom improvement strategies,	Teachers and/or administrators work in isolation or with limited representation to review student summative data and determine student and adult learning needs and goals. Student and teacher data is collected and analyzed at the end of the year to monitor the accomplishment of classroom and school goals.	Teachers and administrators collaboratively analyze disaggregated student learning, demographic, perception, and process data to identify student and adult learning needs and goals. They collect and analyze relevant student and teacher data at the beginning and end of the year to monitor and revise school and classroom improvement strategies. Accomplishments are celebrated and results are regularly reported to family and community.	Teachers and administrators collaboratively analyze disaggregated student learning, demographic, perception, and process data to identify student and adult learning needs and goals. They continuously (minimum of 4 times a year) collect and analyze relevant student and teacher data (e.g. action research, analyzing student work, classroom observations, Awareness Walks, and surveys) to monitor and revise school and classroom improvement strategies. Accomplishments are celebrated and results are regularly reported to family and community.

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above – At the beginning of the year, the Building Leadership Team met to analyze data before developing the SIP. The team disaggregated local, district, state, and national assessments, and also stakeholder surveys to complete a needs assessment. CRCT data and the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) were also used in determining professional learning needs of the school. This data will again be looked at the end of this year to determine growth made and new goals. Additional data from writing prompt scores has been collected throughout the year to monitor goal progress.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Improve this area by more regularly communicating accomplishments and data results to student families and community members.

PL 2.2 Evaluating Impact of Professional Learning

☐ **Not Addressed**	☒ **Emergent**	☐ **Operational**	☐ **Fully Operational**
The principal and other leaders develop and implement a plan for evaluating teachers' reactions to professional development events. Teachers' contributions to the evaluation are limited to providing satisfaction ratings. The evaluation identifies changes in teacher knowledge and skills as a result of participation, but it does not evaluate changes in practice or impact on student learning.	The principal and other leaders develop and implement a plan for evaluating professional development events. Teachers contribute to the evaluation by collecting and analyzing summative student learning data. The evaluation identifies changes in teacher knowledge and skills as a result of participation and year-end student performance, but it does not evaluate change in teacher practice.	The principal and other leaders develop and implement a comprehensive plan for conducting ongoing (formative and summative for a one- to two-year period) evaluation of the impact of professional development on teacher practices and student learning. The evaluation also emphasizes changes in school culture, organizational structures, policies, and processes. Teachers contribute to the evaluation by collecting and analyzing relevant student learning and process data.	The principal and other leaders develop and implement a comprehensive plan for conducting ongoing (both formative and summative over a three- to five-year period) evaluation of the impact of professional development on teacher practices and student learning. Evaluation also emphasizes changes in school culture, organizational structures, policies, and processes. Teachers contribute to the evaluation by collecting and analyzing a variety (student learning, demographic, perception, and process) of relevant data. The plan specifies the evaluation question(s), data sources, data collection methodology, and data analysis processes.

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above – The data being collected is mainly summative and lacks substantial formative assessment to assist in monitoring progress closely. For example, it was determined in the SIP that writing was an area of need (based on only 69% of students meeting standards) and a pre and post narrative prompt was developed to judge the summative progress of students at the end of the year. (*LaBelle Elementary School: School Improvement Plan 2013-2014*, 2013.)

RECOMMENDATIONS: Build in formative assessments throughout the year to monitor goal progress and make modifications to professional learning plans based on these formative assessments.

PL 2.3 Interpreting and Using Research Results

☐ **Not Addressed**	☒ **Emergent**	☐ **Operational**	☐ **Fully Operational**
The principal and other leaders review professional journals that summarize research instead of actual research or they do not recognize a need for reading and interpreting research when making instructional decisions regarding professional development and school improvement approaches.	The principal and other leaders review educational research. They create opportunities for a few, select teachers to study educational research. They work with them to conduct reviews of research when making instructional decisions regarding the adoption of professional development and school improvement approaches.	The principal and other leaders demonstrate modest skills in interpreting educational research (validity and reliability, matching populations, and interpreting effect-size measures). They create opportunities for teachers to learn to use educational research. They work with them to conduct extensive reviews of research to make informed instructional decisions regarding the adoption of professional development and school improvement approaches.	The principal and other leaders demonstrate advanced skills in determining appropriate research design, interpreting research results, and determining whether results can be generalized. They ensure that teachers and community members learn to use educational research. They work with them to conduct extensive reviews of research to make informed instructional decisions regarding the adoption of professional development and school improvement approaches.

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above – The principal is interested in beginning a new, school wide writing program. She thoroughly researched it herself, and then provided two teachers copies of the materials to review before she brought it to the leadership team for discussion. The principal was able to answer questions based in the research behind the program.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Create opportunities for additional teachers to learn about and use educational research to address school goals set forth in the SIP. Extend the opportunity to learn about and discuss research findings to the Building Leadership Team and Key Teams (Professional Learning, School Climate, Data and Assessment, and Community Teams) on a regular basis and have these teacher leaders bring the research to their teams to discuss further.

PL 2. 4 Long-Term, In-Depth Professional Learning			
☐ **Not Addressed**	☒ **Emergent**	☐ **Operational**	☐ **Fully Operational**
Teachers experience single, stand-alone professional development events that are typically large group, workshop designs. There is little if any evidence of implementation or change in practice in classrooms. No emphasis is given to enhancing teachers' content knowledge or understanding.	Teachers attend multiple workshops on the same topic throughout the year to gain information about new programs or practices. They experiment with the new practices alone and infrequently with limited school-based support for implementation. No emphasis is given to enhancing teachers' content knowledge or understanding.	Teachers participate in long-term (two- to three-year period), in-depth professional learning that includes a variety of appropriate professional development designs including the use of technology. The various designs are aligned with the intended improvement outcomes. They include but are not limited to follow-up support for implementing new classroom practices (e.g., collaborative lesson design, professional networks, analyzing student work, problem solving sessions, curriculum development, coursework, action research, and classroom observations). Some evidence is present of attention to enhancing teachers' content knowledge.	Teachers participate in long-term (two- to three-year period), in-depth professional learning that engages learning teams in a variety of appropriate professional development designs including the use of technology. The various designs are aligned with the intended improvement outcomes. They include but are not limited to extensive, follow-up support for implementing new classroom practices (e.g., collaborative lesson design, professional networks, analyzing student work, problem solving sessions, curriculum development, coursework, action research, and coaching with feedback). A major focus of ongoing professional development is a commitment to maintaining and updating all teachers' knowledge and understanding of the content they are teaching and changes occurring in their field(s).
EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above – Professional learning has been clearly planned for the year, and professional development in the same areas are loosely planned for the future years. This is the principal's first full year at the school, so it was necessary for her to see how much progress the school made towards its goals before defining the future professional development more thoroughly. Technology has not been introduced as a means for professional learning yet. All professional learning is done face to face, usually in staff meetings or grade level PLC meetings.			

RECOMMENDATIONS: Integrate technology into the professional learning plan. Allow teachers to access webinars, online collaborative PLC groups, and collaborate with colleagues via shared documents on Google Drive. Use online surveys as formative assessment of the progress teachers feel they are making as a result of the professional learning. Plan out a long term goals and outline professional learning to accompany it.

PL 2.5 Alignment of Professional Learning with Expected Outcomes

☐ Not Addressed	☐ Emergent	☒ Operational	☐ Fully Operational
The principal and other leaders provide single, stand-alone professional development events that are typically large group, workshops with no expectations for implementation of new classroom practices. Generally, activities are not aligned with the school improvement plan or related priorities.	The principal and other leaders provide multiple workshops on the same topic throughout the year. They articulate the learning goal, but do not discuss expectations for implementation. Teachers receive limited school-based support for implementing the new classroom practices. Activities are only generally aligned with the school improvement plan or related priorities.	The principal and other leaders align a variety of professional development designs with expected adult learning outcomes (e.g., collaborative lesson design, professional networks, analyzing student work, problem solving sessions, curriculum development, coursework, action research, and coaching with feedback). The professional learning is long-term (two-to-three year period) and in-depth with extensive school-based support for the implementation of new practices. They clearly communicate the expectations for implementation by providing rubrics that describe the desired classroom practices and communicate how those practices connect to the school improvement goals. Generally, activities are aligned with major priorities within the school improvement plan.	The principal and other leaders align a variety of professional development designs with expected adult learning outcomes (e.g., collaborative lesson design, professional networks, analyzing student work, problem solving sessions, curriculum development, coursework, action research, and coaching with feedback). They ensure that teams of teachers are engaged in long-term (two-to-three year period), in-depth professional learning with extensive school-based support for the implementation of new practices. They clearly communicate the expectations for implementation with collaboratively developed rubrics describing desired classroom practices and communicate how those practices connect to the school improvement goals.

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above – All of the school's professional learning was scheduled at the beginning of the year, based on the SIP, making all activities very closely aligned to the school's major goals. A variety of professional development designs have been used, including collaborative groups (to score work, unpack standards, and create unit plans), whole staff brainstorming sessions (to improve student reading progress), and individual coaching (to familiarize staff with Number Talks and implement new reading strategies).

RECOMMENDATIONS: Work with the staff to create explicit expectations for all major goal areas in the form of rubrics. Include the criteria that the staff will need to show the school is proficient, as well as, what the students will do to demonstrate the school has been successful in meeting each goal.

PL 2.6 Building Capacity to Use Research Results

☐ **Not Addressed**	☐ **Emergent**	☒ **Operational**	☐ **Fully Operational**
Professional development is planned with no regard for research about adult learning needs and individual and organizational change processes. The sessions provided include strategies that do not mirror the instructional strategies teachers are expected to use with students (e.g., lecturing on inquiry method, covering material instead of helping participants to use and internalize it), and sessions are the same for all teachers regardless of their career stage.	Professional development is planned using research about adult learning needs and how individuals experience the change process. The professional development sessions demonstrate classroom practices through videotapes and simulations. The experiences focus on procedural learning - "how to do it"- rather than on developing deep understanding of concepts and problem solving strategies. Some professional development is specialized for new and mentor teachers.	Professional development is planned using research about adult learning needs and individual and organizational change processes. The professional development sessions include modeling and demonstrations of expected classroom practices. The experiences impact teachers' depth of understanding enabling them to use the new strategies routinely. Some professional development is specialized to reflect career stages of new teachers, mentor teachers, and teacher leaders.	Professional development builds the capacity of the staff to use research about adult learning needs and individual and organizational change processes as they implement new strategies. Professional development sessions consistently employ the same instructional strategies that are expected to be used in their classrooms. The experiences impact teachers' depth of understanding enabling them to solve problems and adapt new strategies to classroom circumstances. Professional development is differentiated to reflect career stage needs and interests (e.g., mentoring, leading learning teams, coaching, utilizing technology, and curriculum development).

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above – Professional development is tailored based on staff needs. A New Teacher PLC was created to assist the large group of new teachers at the school this year. Reading is a major goal on the SIP, so professional development was provided specifically to the teachers teaching reading. A county coach was utilized to provide support in implementing Number Talks to the teachers that specifically did not have experience with the program or felt they needed a refresher. In all these professional learning arrangements, modeling was used to demonstrate best practices before teachers attempted the new strategy themselves.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Plan ahead for the professional learning needs of the specialists in the building that require different professional learning opportunities than the general staff. To make professional learning meaningful, it must meet individuals' most pressing needs (Knight, 2007).

PL 2.7 Knowledge about Effective Group Processes

☐ **Not Addressed**	☐ **Emergent**	☒ **Operational**	☐ **Fully Operational**
Teachers and administrators lack knowledge about effective group processes and/or work alone, disregarding collective responsibility for student learning.	Teachers and administrators have knowledge of stages of group development and effective interaction skills, but lack skill in group process strategies needed for productive collaborative work. As a result, colleagues work in temporary groups often encountering unresolved conflict or frustration. Technology (e.g., email, chat rooms, and websites) is used to support collegial interactions.	Teachers and administrators have knowledge and skills regarding group processes (e.g., group decision making strategies, stages of group development, effective interaction skills, and conflict resolution) that are necessary to accomplish tasks and satisfy the interpersonal expectations of the participants. As a result, the school culture is characterized by trust, collegiality, and collective responsibility for student learning where colleagues work collaboratively. Technology (e.g., subject area networks, lesson sharing, seminars) is used to support collegial interactions.	Teachers and administrators have knowledge and skills to monitor and improve group processes (e.g., group decision-making strategies, stages of group development, effective interaction skills, and conflict resolution) that are necessary to accomplish tasks and satisfy the interpersonal expectations of the participants. As a result, the school culture is characterized by trust, collegiality, and collective responsibility for student learning where colleagues work collaboratively in established, ongoing learning teams. Technology (e.g., online discussions, web casts, and seminars, educational blogs, listservs, downloadable resources) is used to support collegial interactions and to ensure effective and sustained implementation.

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above – The academic coach facilitated in the creation of group norms at the beginning of the year. These are revisited as necessary. A decision making strategy was employed to make the discussion process more efficient and collaborative. The strategy involves the PLC members showing their level of agreement about a topic by using 1 to 5 fingers on a hand. The group norms and decision making strategy both work to maintain a productive and collaborative environment during professional learning meetings.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Increase the level of technology integration during PLCs. Some members may feel more comfortable sharing their thoughts in a different format, such as an online discussion. Other members may be more fully engaged by first watching a web cast and then discussing its main ideas and implications. Using a range of flexible strategies during professional learning will help meet the groups' needs and fully engage a larger portion of the staff.

Professional Learning Standard 3 :   The content—the what—of professional learning reinforces educators' understanding and use of strategies for promoting equity and high expectations for all students, application of research-based teaching strategies and assessment processes, and involvement of families and other stakeholders in promoting student learning.

PL 3.1 Classroom Practices Reflect an Emotionally and Physically Safe Learning Environment

☐ Not Addressed	☐ Emergent	☒ Operational	☐ Fully Operational
Classroom practices reflect little or no evidence of teachers' training in understanding the impact that attitudes regarding race, disabilities, background, culture, high expectations, and social class of both students and teachers have on the teaching and learning process.	Classroom practices of some teachers reflect evidence of teachers' training in understanding the impact that attitudes regarding race, disabilities, background, culture, high expectations, and social class of both students and teachers have on the teaching and learning process.	Classroom practices of most teachers reflect skill in communicating high expectations for each student and adjusting classroom activities to meet student needs. Respect for students' cultures and life experiences is evident through the emotionally and physically safe learning environment where students of diverse backgrounds and experiences are taught the school code of conduct (customs) to help them be successful in the school context.	Classroom practices (e.g., considering interests, backgrounds, strengths, and preferences to provide meaningful, relevant lessons and assess student progress, differentiating instruction, and nurturing student capacity for self-management) of all teachers reflect an emotionally and physically safe environment where respect and appreciation for a diverse population is evident. There are high achievement expectations for all students and teachers. The principal and other leaders provide professional learning for teachers lacking understanding of the impact that attitudes regarding race, disabilities, background, culture, high expectations, and social class of both students and teachers have on the teaching and learning process.

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above – The SIP states, "We believe in cultivating a positive environment where students are provided pathways for success." In addition, monthly and weekly Response to Intervention (RTI) meetings are held with grade level teams and the RTI Team. This team discusses possible alternative, research based strategies and takes the responsibility to find alternative ways to reach struggling students. Grade level expectations are held for every child.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Create school wide behavior expectations and communicate them to all stakeholders (parents, community members, students, and teachers) to ensure that not only are the academic standards high, but standards for behavior are equally high. Ensure that students are held to high behavior expectations through the use of a school wide behavior plan.

PL 3.2 Deep Understanding of Subject Matter and Instructional Strategies

☐ **Not Addressed**	☐ **Emergent**	☐ **Operational**	☒ **Fully Operational**
Teachers demonstrate superficial knowledge of subject matter and mostly rely on textbooks. They primarily use lecture, seatwork, and discussion as instructional strategies and paper-and-pencil tests for assessment.	Teachers demonstrate breadth of subject matter, but the content they teach is often not aligned with required learning goals (e.g., GPS, district standards). They may use some engaging instructional strategies and a variety of assessment strategies in some contexts; however, most of their instruction is presented in traditional whole-group, teacher-centered fashion.	Teachers exhibit a deep understanding of subject matter, use a variety of appropriate instructional strategies, and use various assessment strategies to monitor student progress toward meeting rigorous and required standards. They plan interdisciplinary units with colleagues and can articulate a rationale for why specific instructional strategies and assessments are appropriate to specific content or objectives.	Teachers exhibit a deep understanding of subject matter; differentiate instruction based on needs, interests, and backgrounds; use a variety of appropriate instructional strategies; and use various assessment strategies (e.g., constructed-response test items, reflective assessments, academic prompts, culminating performance tasks and projects, interviews, rubrics, peer response groups) to monitor student progress toward meeting rigorous standards. They plan interdisciplinary units with colleagues and can articulate a rationale for why specific instructional strategies and assessments are appropriate to specific content or objectives.

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above – The SIP states, "We believe creativity and innovation are encouraged and embraced by all stakeholders." Teachers use a range of creative instructional and evaluative methods, including wax museums, plays, guided reading book clubs, and differentiated math centers to best meet the needs of all the students in their class. Growth and goals are shared with students and tracked throughout the school year in student notebooks or binders.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Make this an even stronger area by making an even higher percentage of instruction interdisciplinary and performance based in nature. Utilize technology to do so, perhaps by integrating the use of Skype with professionals, Google Earth for Social Studies and Science projects, and student blogs.

PL 3.3 Sustained Development of Deep Understanding of Content and Strategies

☐ **Not Addressed**	☐ **Emergent**	☒ **Operational**	☐ **Fully Operational**
The principal and other leaders encourage but do not require teachers to participate in district-based professional development opportunities to increase knowledge of content, research-based instructional strategies, and assessments. There is minimal if any evidence of school-based professional development to promote student achievement. They create work schedules that result in teacher isolation and individual practice.	The principal and other leaders emphasize the importance of teachers' deep understanding of content knowledge, research-based instructional strategies, and assessment strategies. They create work schedules to support collegial interaction and sharing and encourage teachers to participate in district-based professional development focused on content, pedagogy, and assessment.	The principal and other leaders promote teachers' deep understanding of content knowledge, research-based instructional strategies, and assessment strategies as a high priority. They avoid large-scale trainings that may not address the needs of all participants. They create work schedules to support collegial learning and differentiated professional development focused on content, pedagogy, and assessment. Teacher learning time and application of strategies and assessments is closely monitored.	The principal and other leaders promote the sustained development of teachers' deep understanding of content knowledge, research-based instructional strategies, and assessment strategies. All professional development activities are purposeful and aligned with specific individual and group needs. They create work schedules to support *ongoing*, collegial learning and differentiated professional development focused on content, pedagogy, and assessment. Teacher learning time and application of strategies and assessments is closely monitored.

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above –   The school's master schedule was created to give grade level teams a common planning period for professional learning with their main support personnel (English Language support and Special Education support).

RECOMMENDATIONS: Ensure that there is meaningful professional learning provided for each member of the team during each professional learning session. Specialist teachers (Music, Art, and P.E.) and specific subject area teachers (i.e. Social Studies and Science) are not always considered during the planning of professional development. Strengthen this area by consistently providing alternative options for staff members with different needs.

PL 3.4 Partnerships to Support Student Learning			
☐ **Not Addressed**	☐ **Emergent**	☐ **Operational**	☒ **Fully Operational**
There is no collaboration with parents or the community in developing activities to support learning. Communication through only written correspondence is limited to encouraging parents to attend school functions, yearly conferences, and performances.	There is a school committee to focus on developing community partnerships to support student learning. Communication through written correspondence or phone is about school programs, student progress, and encouraging attendance at school functions, yearly conferences, and performances.	There is a committee that works with families and the community through partnerships that develop programs to support student learning. Strategies are implemented to increase family involvement such as offering suggestions about ways parents can support student learning at home and communicating with families about school programs and student progress (e.g., information about report cards, grading practices, student work, homework, and school events) through a website, phone, email, voice mail, and written correspondence.	Partnerships among teachers, families, and the community are maintained to develop programs that support learning and enhance student skills and talents. Strategies are implemented to increase family involvement such as providing parent education workshops with information on child development and supporting student learning at home and communicating with families about school programs and student progress (e.g., information about report cards, grading practices, (student work, homework, and school events) through an interactive website, phone, email, voice mail and written correspondence.

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above – Parent workshops are provided throughout the year and address helping students improve reading fluency, prepare for the CRCT, and prevent bullying. Free English classes are also provided to parents. Communication is regular between school and home, and take the form of call outs, monthly newsletters, and teacher blogs. Professional learning at the beginning of the year addressed creative ways to involve parents at school.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Improve this area even more by inviting parents and community members into the school to work with students on a regular basis.

References

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