



Nine Essential Elements

A FRAMEWORK FOR CONTINUOUS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

OFFICE OF SCHOOL SUPPORT AND IMPROVEMENT
OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION



At the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE), we believe that all students can grow and all schools can improve. As outlined in Oklahoma Edge, the state's 8-year strategic plan to meet the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the plan identifies the Nine Essential Elements as a tool for all schools to use for continuous improvement.

The Nine Essential Elements are based on the research of Robert Marzano's *What Works in Oklahoma Schools*, a study conducted to identify elements of high-performing schools. As a framework for improvement, the Nine Essential Elements define high-quality initiatives that support student achievement, build capacity of districts to meet student achievement goals, provide support and resources to meet individualized needs of schools and districts and carve out a pathway for continuous improvement.

We look forward to collaborating with you to support the learning of each of your students.

If you have questions, please contact the Office of School Support and Improvement at (405) 522-0140.

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WHAT WORKS IN OKLAHOMA SCHOOLS?

A comprehensive needs assessment of Oklahoma Schools

Purpose of the 2009-11 study by Marzano Research Laboratory (MRL)

Commissioned by the OSDE, the purpose of the study was twofold:

1. To determine what schools not designated for improvement (Non-improvement schools) do differently from designated Improvement schools, and
2. To help identify areas of strength and areas of need related to the Oklahoma Nine Essential Elements for school improvement efforts.

Information obtained by the study can be used by schools designated for improvement to identify specific future actions that might help them move out of Improvement status.

Design snapshot of the 2009-11 MRL study

Out of 61 selected schools, 59 chose to participate; 32 of which held **Improvement** status, while the remaining 27 held **Non-improvement** status.

- 12 high schools
 - 7 Improvement
 - 5 Non-improvement
- 28 middle schools
 - 16 Improvement
 - 12 Non-improvement
- 19 elementary schools
 - 9 Improvement
 - 10 Non-improvement

Schools were matched as closely as possible on demographic factors, including socioeconomic status, gender, Hispanic/Latino, ethnicity (American Indian, Alaska native, Asian, Black/African American, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, White) and Special Programs (ELL, SPED, GT).

Phase I surveyed primary stakeholders (site administrators, teachers, students, parents), while Phase II focused on what occurs in classrooms through principal interviews and classroom observations (on-site and video recorded).

Summary of Phase I Study Findings

- The Oklahoma Nine Essential Elements (9EE) differentiate between Improvement and Non-improvement schools.
- Five significant areas of focus were indicated for staff of Improvement schools in the following Essential Elements:
 1. Curriculum (EE1)
 2. Classroom Evaluation/Assessment (EE2)
 3. Instruction (EE3)
 4. School Culture (EE4)
 5. Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation (EE6)
- The areas of focus for improvement were indicated by significant differences between average responses in Non-improvement and Improvement scores by both teachers and administrators, and by a correlation between these elements and student achievement.
- Addressing the lack of agreement between administrators and teachers in Improvement schools may be a good beginning for improvement.
- Some student perceptions distinguish between Improvement and Non-improvement schools. Areas highlighted as important to address for Improvement schools include:
 - Grades 3-5—Students' respect for each other, teachers making lessons interesting, teachers treating all students fairly, students' feelings of safety in class, teachers regularly letting students know how they are doing in class;
 - Grades 6-9—Behavioral issues (school's tolerance for inappropriate behavior, clearly communicating school's rules and expectations for students, students feeling safe in class), teacher fairness, grading practices;
 - Grades 9-12—Behavioral issues (clearly communicating rules and expectations for students, fair and consistent disciplinary procedures, intolerance for inappropriate behavior in school).



2009-11 MRL Study Conclusions

Based on surveys, principal interviews, on-site observations, and videotape analyses conducted during Phases I and II, MRL provided five recommendations to help schools move from Improvement status to Non-Improvement status.

1. Administrators and teachers should seek agreement on the school's strengths and weaknesses regarding school performance.
2. All teachers should set personal goals regarding instructional strategies.
3. Student engagement should receive a school-wide focus.
4. Students' perceptions of acceptance and order should be examined.
5. Schools should find ways to work together (e.g. professional learning communities).

Note: All recommendations imply that schools should continually gather data, analyze results, and modify teacher and administrator behavior to increase student achievement.

References

- Marzano Research Laboratory. What Works in Oklahoma Schools: Phase I State Report. 2010.
- Marzano Research Laboratory. What Works in Oklahoma Schools: Phase III Action Steps. 2011.



EE1	<h2>Curriculum</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none">1.1 Curriculum alignment1.2 District facilitates and communicates OAS curriculum standards1.3 Discussion of overlaps and gaps in curriculum1.4 Curriculum transition points1.5 Continuing education, including postsecondary education, life and career options1.6 Systematic evaluation of curriculum ensuring its alignment to OAS1.7 Common academic core, as identified by OAS
EE2	<h2>Classroom Evaluation/Assessment</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none">2.1 Multiple classroom assessments2.2 Design of assessment tasks2.3 Student awareness of academic expectations2.4 Identification of curriculum gaps using test scores2.5 Assessments provide meaningful feedback2.6 Communication of performance standards2.7 Implementation of assessment and accountability2.8 Use of student sample work
EE3	<h2>Instruction</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none">3.1 Effective and varied instructional strategies used in all classrooms3.2 Alignment of instructional strategies and learning activities3.3 Monitoring of instructional strategies and learning activities3.4 Teacher knowledge and motivation techniques3.5 Use of technology3.6 Instructional resources3.7 Collaborative examination of student work3.8 Homework

ESSENTIAL ELEMENT 1

Curriculum



1.1 Curriculum alignment

- a. The implemented curriculum is directly based on and fully aligned with academic expectations, core content and the OAS curriculum standards and defines what students should know and be able to do in all content areas.
- b. The content and sequence of the implemented and fully aligned curriculum promotes mastery of learning.
- c. The implemented and fully aligned curriculum is intentionally age and developmentally appropriate and is culturally responsive.
- d. The implemented and fully aligned curriculum demonstrates the connections within and between different content areas.
- e. The school or district initiates active collaboration among schools within the district to ensure alignment with academic expectations, core content, and the OAS curriculum standards.
- f. The school or district initiates collaboration among schools to prioritize and sequence the curriculum to promote mastery of learning.
- g. The implemented curriculum is scientifically research- based to ensure that it is age and developmentally appropriate and differentiated to address the individual learning styles of the school's diverse student population.
- h. The implemented curriculum is systemic, demonstrating strong connections within and among various content areas.

1.2 District facilitates and communicates OAS curriculum standards

- a. The district initiates and facilitates sustained discussion by grade level across content areas (horizontal alignment) in a systematic process to ensure OAS curriculum standards are articulated and illustrated within student work. The process is communicated to schools to ensure full implementation.
- b. The district initiates and facilitates sustained discussion throughout all grade levels within each content area (vertical alignment) in a systematic process to ensure OAS curriculum standards are articulated and illustrated within student work. The process is communicated to schools to ensure full implementation.
- c. The school initiates and continues internal discussion among all teachers to ensure horizontal alignment.
- d. The school initiates and continues discussion with feeder/receiver schools to ensure vertical alignment.
- e. The district provides multiple forms of support (e.g., extended employment, expert consultants, scientifically based research materials) for schools to maintain district-wide discussions by grade level across content areas to ensure OAS curriculum standards are articulated throughout the district.
- f. The district provides multiple forms of support (e.g., extended employment, expert consultants, scientifically based research materials) for schools to maintain district-wide discussions throughout all grade levels within each content area to ensure OAS curriculum standards are articulated throughout the district.

- g. The school meets regularly with common grade-level schools within the district to ensure horizontal alignment.
- h. Designated school personnel facilitate formal curricular discussion on vertical and horizontal alignment.

1.3 Discussion of overlaps and gaps in curriculum

- a. The district (in consultation with schools) develops, communicates and implements a systematic process, based on OAS curriculum standards, to eliminate unintentional curricular overlaps. The process is reviewed, monitored and revised for school improvement efficacy.
- b. The board of education adopts board policy requiring schools to fully implement the district process. The district provides support and follow-up to ensure implementation of the policy.

1.4 Curriculum transition points

- a. The district systematically facilitates discussion within (e.g., from primary to Grade 4/5, from Grade 9 to Grade 10) and between (e.g., from elementary to middle school, from middle school to high school) schools to identify key curriculum transition points. The process is fully developed, communicated and implemented.
- b. The district provides equitable resources (e.g., stipends, substitutes, materials, transportation) to ensure successful transition planning for all students in all schools throughout the district and with other institutions.

1.5 Continuing education, including postsecondary education, life and career options

- a. The curriculum provides intentional connections (e.g., dual credit courses, articulation agreements, early college courses) to familiarize all students with a variety of post-secondary education and career options.

- b. The curriculum integrates opportunities for application of skills, knowledge, processes and life skills (e.g., budgeting, problem solving, consensus building) that will prepare all students to be self-sufficient and productive citizens.
- c. Each student (Grades 8-12) has an implemented individual graduation plan collaboratively developed by the student, parents and advisor. These plans are reviewed and revised annually.
- d. The curriculum consistently emphasizes connections and provides experiences (e.g., advisor/advisee, career planning fair, college fair, career majors) that present a variety of post-secondary education and career options.
- e. The curriculum intentionally integrates and expands learning opportunities in school and within the community (e.g., mentoring, service learning, shadowing, school-based enterprises, co-op programs) for students to apply skills, knowledge and processes that prepare all students to be self-sufficient and productive citizens.
- f. The school curriculum ensures that all students exit Grade 8 with and continue thereafter to develop and implement an individual graduation plan and a career portfolio for use in making a successful transition from high school to adult life.

1.6 Systematic evaluation of curriculum ensuring its alignment to OAS

- a. The school has adopted a curriculum policy and school leadership has implemented procedures to address curriculum issues (e.g., curriculum development, revision; vertical and horizontal alignment; key transition points).
- b. The district has a curriculum committee that meets regularly and uses multiple indicators of student performance in a systematic process for monitoring, evaluating, reviewing and making recommendations for any needed revisions to the curriculum.

- c. The school has a curriculum committee that meets regularly and uses multiple indicators of student performance (e.g., OAS curriculum standards, student performance on classroom and state assessments, student academic needs defined by other sources) to evaluate, monitor and make recommendations for any needed revisions to the curriculum.
- d. The school analyzes student performance data and reviews their policies and procedures to make data-informed curricular improvement decisions.
- e. The district initiates collaboration among schools within the district to ensure implementation, monitoring, evaluation and revision (as needed) of the aligned curriculum and to ensure that school staff members are cognizant of the most up-to-date curricular trends.
- f. Designated school staff members initiate collaboration with other schools to ensure implementation, monitoring, evaluation and revision (as needed) of the aligned curricula of the schools and to ensure that school staff members are cognizant of the most up-to-date curricular trends.
- e. The curriculum is challenging and provides expanded opportunities (e.g., field experiences, shadowing, apprenticeships, work-based learning, foreign exchange) in all content area beyond the common academic core.
- f. The curriculum elicits higher-order thinking and problem solving from all students and provides opportunities for authentic application of these skills.
- g. The curriculum provides interdisciplinary courses to accommodate the learning needs of all students while maintaining expectations for high academic performance.
- h. The curriculum standards and expectations in all content areas are identified and communicated to all stakeholders.
- i. The school extends learning opportunities beyond the physical boundaries of the school for all students to access academic expectations, core content and OAS curriculum standards in ways that are compatible with the varied interests of the school's diverse student population.

1.7 Common academic core, as identified by OAS

- a. A challenging curriculum that addresses a common academic core is available to all students.
- b. The curriculum elicits higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills from all students at age and developmentally appropriate levels.
- c. The curriculum accommodates the learning needs of all students while maintaining expectations for high academic performance.
- d. The curriculum standards and expectations in all content areas are identified and communicated to all students. Course offerings provide opportunities for all students to access academic expectations, core content and OAS curriculum standards.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENT 2

Classroom Evaluation/Assessment

2.1 Multiple classroom assessments

- a. All assessments are aligned with academic expectation, core content and OAS curriculum standards.
- b. The school adopts a classroom assessment policy and school leadership implements procedures to ensure that classroom assessments are frequent and are consistently used to ensure continuous student progress.
- c. Teacher-designed assessment tasks are intentionally standards-based, rigorous and authentic requiring students to use inquiry, problem-solving and higher-order critical-thinking skills at a proficient level.
- d. All assessments are aligned with academic expectations, core content and OAS curriculum standards, and a number of these assessments are also interdisciplinary and multi-modal.
- e. School leadership and staff members develop and implement a systematic, school-wide classroom assessment program to ensure continuous student progress.
- f. Teacher-designed assessment tasks are standards-based, rigorous, authentic and integrated across content areas.

2.2 Design of assessment tasks

- a. Teachers intentionally and regularly collaborate to design appropriate authentic assessment tasks (e.g., exhibits, videos, story boards) that are aligned with academic expectations, core content and OAS curriculum standards.
- b. All assessment tasks require valid and appropriate demonstrations of what students should know and be able to do. Students are provided choice from a range of forms for assessment.

- c. The collaborative design of assessment tasks is ongoing and regularly reviewed with school leadership; appropriate feedback is provided to teachers.
- d. All teachers within and across all content areas collaborate to design appropriate authentic assessment tasks that are aligned with academic expectations, core content and OAS curriculum standards and informed by current research.
- e. Students and teachers collaborate to design a variety of assessment tasks that require students to provide valid and appropriate demonstrations of what the students should know and be able to do.
- f. School and district leaders model and participate in the collaborative design of assessment tasks.

2.3 Student awareness of academic expectations

- a. Teachers collaborate to develop and use clearly defined rubrics for skills and processes to assess what students know and are able to do to be proficient in all content areas.
- b. Students can articulate what they should know and be able to do to be proficient in each content area. Students can describe the characteristics of quality work.
- c. Students reflect upon and formally evaluate their own performances. Students share their self-evaluations with teachers and peers.
- d. Teachers collaborate with students and other teachers to develop clearly defined rubrics for skills and processes to assess what students know and are able to do to be proficient in all content areas.



- e. Students can articulate what they should know and be able to do to be proficient in all content areas, and they can demonstrate connections among academic disciplines.
- f. Students intentionally reflect upon, evaluate, identify areas for improvement in and modify their own performances. Students can communicate these concepts to teachers, parents and peers in student-led conferences.

2.4 Identification of curriculum gaps using test scores

- a. The school staff members and other stakeholders conduct ongoing analysis of the results of multiple assessments (OSTP, benchmarks), disaggregating the data to determine gaps in the curriculum and instructional implications.
- b. The school staff members and other stakeholders use the results of data analysis to modify curricular, instructional and assessment practices as needed for all students and sub-groups.
- c. The practice of the school ensures a clear process for the ongoing analysis of assessment data from multiple sources to identify curricular issues and gaps.
- d. The school staff members and other stakeholders monitor the implementation of curricular, instructional and assessment modification and provide assistance and support to ensure that the implementation effort is sustained.

2.5 Assessments provide meaningful feedback

- a. There are multiple opportunities for students to choose ways in which they demonstrate learning based on multiple intelligences and preferred learning styles.

- b. Multiple forms of classroom assessments are analyzed to determine necessary instructional modifications (e.g., resources, time frames for learning, lesson plans, and units of study) that will ensure student learning at the proficient level.
- c. Students receive meaningful feedback from teachers and are encouraged to use the feedback to continuously strengthen future performances.
- d. There are opportunities for students to design ways to demonstrate learning based on multiple intelligences and preferred learning styles.
- e. Multiple forms of classroom assessments are analyzed by instructional staff members and students to determine necessary instructional modifications that will ensure student learning at the proficient level across content areas.
- f. Students receive meaningful, ongoing feedback from a variety of sources (e.g., staff members, family members, peers) on their performances and use the feedback to continuously strengthen future performances.

2.6 Communication of performance standards

- a. Teachers use the OAS curriculum standards and performance-level descriptions to develop clearly defined rubrics that are shared with students prior to assignments/assessments.
- b. Models of actual student performances and teacher-made examples are used to clarify the task and to show distinctions between the levels of performance. Strategies for improving student performance are regularly identified, discussed, and implemented in the classroom and observable in student work.

- c. Classroom assessment tasks allow students to demonstrate characteristics of rigorous work as described in the OAS curriculum standards and the performance level descriptions.
- d. Student assessment tasks are designed to be age and developmentally appropriate.
- e. School leadership ensures that teachers provide regular and meaningful communication to families about student progress.
- f. Teachers use the OAS curriculum standards and performance-level descriptions to collaborate with students and other teachers to develop clearly defined rubrics prior to assignments/assessments.
- g. Models of actual student performances and teacher-developed examples are shared across content areas and grade levels. School leadership provides support to teachers to ensure school-wide implementation of strategies to improve student performance.
- h. Teachers, students and other instructional staff members collaborate to design classroom assessment tasks across content areas that allow students to demonstrate characteristics of rigorous work as described in the OAS curriculum standards and the performance-level descriptions.
- i. Student assessment tasks are designed to be age and developmentally appropriate and are designed with input from the students.
- j. By school policy and practice, teachers and other staff members engage in regular and meaningful two-way communication with families about student progress.

2.7 Implementation of assessment and accountability

- a. School/district leadership has a process for ongoing monitoring and assistance for the ethical administration of the state's assessment and accountability system.
- b. School/district leadership monitors the implementation of the policies and operational procedures that address the state's assessment and accountability system.
- c. School/district leadership develops a testing schedule and communicates that schedule and comprehensive information explaining the purposes of assessment to staff members, students, parents/family members and community members.
- d. School/district leadership supports teachers in their efforts to seamlessly integrate the use of assessment accommodations for individual students into the instructional program of eligible students.
- e. School/district leadership has a process for ongoing monitoring and assistance for the ethical administration of the state's assessment and accountability system.
- f. School/district leadership monitors the implementation of the policies and operational procedures that address the state's assessment and accountability system.
- g. School/district leadership develops a testing schedule and communicates that schedule and comprehensive information explaining the purposes of assessment to staff members, students, parents/family members and community members.
- h. School/district leadership supports teachers in their efforts to seamlessly integrate the use of assessment accommodations for individual students into the instructional program of eligible students.

2.8 Use of student sample work

- a. Teachers have received training in and regularly implement protocols for analyzing student work across all content areas and grade levels.
- b. Student work is regularly analyzed by teachers and students using performance-level descriptions, and the results of this analysis consistently targets teaching and learning.
- c. Teachers collaborate within content areas and/or grade levels to analyze student work to target and revise instruction, curriculum, pedagogy and assessment.
- d. Teachers use student portfolios in all content areas as a way to measure student growth over time.
- e. All teachers are proficient in and consistently implement the use of protocols for analyzing student work across all content areas and grade levels.
- f. Student work is regularly analyzed by teachers and students using performance level descriptions, and the results of this analysis are applied to target curricular decision-making and to make connections within and beyond the implemented curriculum.
- g. Teachers collaborate across all content areas and grade levels to analyze student work to target and revise instruction, curriculum, pedagogy and classroom assessment and to enhance student achievement.
- h. Students complete culminating performances as a demonstration of their growth over time.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENT 3

Instruction

3.1 Effective and varied instructional strategies used in all classrooms

- a. The school has adopted instructional practices policy and school leadership implements procedures to ensure effective and varied instructional practices in the classroom.
- b. Teachers use a variety of student-centered, culturally responsive instructional strategies (e.g., learning centers, cooperative learning, hands-on activities) that current research indicates a high likelihood of effectiveness.
- c. Classroom instruction routinely accommodates various learning styles, multiple intelligences and brain research.
- d. Classroom activities require all students to use higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills.
- e. Content area and interdisciplinary connections are intentionally planned, implemented and observed in classroom instruction.
- f. Courses, units of study and lessons are standards-based and culturally responsive, requiring students to focus on guiding and essential questions.
- g. The school commits time (e.g., participates in training, classroom observations and research review) to study effective and varied instructional practices to inform their policy.
- h. District leadership provides multiple forms of support that allow teachers to research and implement a variety of effective, student-centered, culturally responsive instructional strategies.
- i. Classroom instruction accommodates various learning styles, multiple intelligences and brain research. Instruction is monitored to determine its effectiveness for diverse learners and modified as necessary.
- j. Classroom activities require all students to use inquiry learning as well as higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills.
- k. As a result of content area and interdisciplinary connections that are implemented in classrooms, students are able to extend and apply knowledge and skills in new learning environments.
- l. Teachers collaborate to develop standards-based, culturally responsive courses, units of study and lessons across content areas.

3.2 Alignment of instructional strategies and learning activities

- a. Selection of instructional strategies is informed by analysis of the results of continuous assessment, standards-based units of study and current research. The instructional strategies are aligned to the school curriculum, which is based on the OAS learning goals.
- b. Learning activities routinely require students to complete assessment tasks similar to those on the state assessments (e.g., open-response questions, experiences with various types of reading, converting data to graphs).
- c. District leadership provides multiple forms of support that assists teachers in the design and/or selection of instructional strategies and learning goals that are aligned to the school curriculum based on the OAS curriculum standards. District leadership also provides support to make connections across content areas and/or grade levels and seamlessly integrate pertinent assessment expectations for student learning.



- d. In addition to requiring assessment tasks that mirror those found on OSTP, learning activities further require students to complete assessment tasks similar to those on national assessments (e.g., SAT, ACT, PSAT).

3.3 Monitoring of instructional strategies and learning activities

- a. School leadership monitors classroom instruction on an ongoing basis to ensure that teachers plan and modify instruction to meet the needs of a diverse student population.
- b. Instructional strategies, activities and content are intentionally responsive to various learning needs and learning styles of students, intentionally addressing multiple intelligences and brain research.
- c. School leadership, teachers and students collaborate to design a systematic process for ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of instructional strategies and activities. Students provide feedback to teachers who use feedback to modify instruction as necessary to meet the needs of the school's diverse student population.
- d. Instructional strategies, activities and content intentionally elicit student products that demonstrate various learning styles, multiple intelligences and brain research.

3.4 Teacher knowledge and motivation techniques

- a. School leadership intentionally recruits and retains a diverse staff of highly qualified personnel certified to teach in their assigned areas and/or grade levels.
- b. All teachers are appropriately certified.
- c. All teachers participate in sustained, classroom-focused professional development that updates their content

knowledge and current professional practices to challenge and motivate students to high levels of learning.

- d. School leadership recruits and provides financial incentives to retain teachers who are either already National Board certified or who agree to immediately seek such certification. The local board of education and district leadership assists school leadership in this effort.
- e. A number of teachers seek National Board Certification or other forms of professional recognition in their designated fields.
- f. Teachers and administrators collaborate in a school-wide professional development program, including coaching and mentoring, that updates their content knowledge and current professional practices to challenge and motivate students to high levels of learning.

3.5 Use of technology

- a. Teachers appropriately use technology as an integral part of instruction in all content areas (e.g., research, product development, data organization) and support students in making choices in the use of technology to extend their learning and create products for various purposes, audiences and situations.
- b. Technology is regularly used to expand the classroom into the community.
- c. Technology is readily available and equitably accessible to all students, and they are encouraged to use it as a way to demonstrate learning.
- d. The school has established policy and school leadership has implemented procedures that define the effective use of technology in instruction.

- e. School leadership evaluates the effective use of technology for instructional purposes during classroom observations and walkthroughs. Feedback and support are provided to teachers to assist them in modifying their instructional technology practices.
 - f. Teachers, students and other instructional staff members effectively use a variety of technology to extend learning, increase productivity and create products for various purposes, audiences and situations.
 - g. Community resources are identified and partnerships formed to expand technology from the classroom into the community.
 - h. The school makes its technological resources available to community stakeholders during hours beyond the regular school day.
 - i. The local board of education provides extensive technological resources to the school that allows technology to be effectively used in instruction.
 - j. School leadership collaborates with teachers to research the effectiveness of various instructional technology systems and select those with the greatest potential of enhancing student achievement.
- e. The media center provides current and appropriate instructional resources to support the school's implemented curriculum and the diverse needs of students.
 - f. Community stakeholders form ongoing partnerships with the school and district to provide electronic and printed instructional resources (e.g., virtual library, public libraries, educational television, local historic sites) to effectively deliver the curriculum and support learning in the classrooms.
 - g. Extensive resources are available in all content areas to support the school's implemented curriculum.
 - h. The school's collection of instructional resources throughout the school and in all classrooms is evaluated in the context of the curriculum, current research and the needs of students, and it is regularly expanded as necessary in order to be responsive to the diversity of the students and to ensure that resources are current and proven to further student learning.
 - i. The selection of instructional resources is research-informed to ensure that the selected resources are age and developmentally appropriate and differentiated to address the individual learning styles of the school's diverse student population.
 - j. The media center provides an extensive variety of current and appropriate instructional resources to enhance the school's implemented curriculum and support the needs of the entire school community.

3.6 Instructional resources

- a. A sufficient variety of current electronic and printed instructional resources supplements instruction and learning in classrooms.
- b. Instructional resources are sufficient in all content areas to support the school's implemented curriculum.
- c. Instructional resources responsive to the diversity of students are selected and purchased after a thorough review of the considered materials. The school's collection of instructional resources is routinely reviewed, and items are replaced as necessary.
- d. Instructional resources are age and developmentally appropriate for all students.

3.7 Collaborative examination of student work

- a. Teachers have received training in and regularly implement protocols for analyzing student work across all content areas and grade levels.

- b. Teachers meet regularly and collaboratively analyze student work (including writing samples) in all content areas, identifying individual student strengths and needs to make instructional decisions.
- c. Teachers collaboratively analyze student responses from released test items to inform instructional practice and to improve student performance.
- d. Individual teachers regularly analyze the work of their own students, using the analysis results to inform their instructional practice. The school leadership provides assistance to teachers through mentoring, coaching and conferencing opportunities.
- e. All teachers are proficient in and consistently implement the use of protocols for analyzing student work across all content areas and grade levels.
- f. Teachers and administrators meet regularly to collaboratively analyze student work, identifying individual student strengths and weaknesses and next steps for instruction.
- g. Teachers collaboratively develop test items found in released test items.
- h. Students collaborate with teachers and peers to analyze their own work and provide feedback to the teachers based on the results of such analysis. Teachers use this feedback to inform their decision-making to improve their instructional practice.
- c. Instructional follow-up and specific, timely teacher feedback, focusing on content and performance standards, are provided to individual students for all homework assignments.
- d. The school has adopted a homework policy and school leadership has fully implemented procedures regarding homework.
- e. Students and teachers conference on the purpose of homework and the relationship between homework and classwork. Students view homework as an extension of their learning and offer suggestions to teachers on different types of homework that would extend and deepen their knowledge and skills.
- f. Teachers collaborate to design homework within and across content areas and grade levels. This is part of their curriculum mapping process and unit design and that is linked to the content and skills of the school's curriculum, which is based on OAS and clearly defined performance standards.
- g. Instructional follow-up, teacher feedback and opportunities for student self- and peer-evaluations, focusing on content and performance standards, are provided for all homework assignments. Teachers use feedback from homework assignments to inform their decision-making to improve their instructional practice.
- h. Students and teachers provide formal feedback to the school leadership on the efficacy of the homework policy and procedures as a systematic process to enhance student learning. The school leadership considers the feedback when reviewing policy.

3.8 Homework

- a. Students can articulate the purpose of homework and the relationship between class work and homework. They view homework as essential to their learning.
- b. Homework in all classrooms is monitored and frequent. It intentionally extends student learning and provides opportunities for authentic application.



EE4	<h2>School Culture</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none">4.1 Safe, orderly and equitable learning environment4.2 Facilitation of belief that all children can learn at high levels4.3 Academic and behavioral expectations are high4.4 Decision-making processes involve staff4.5 Teacher recognition of role in student success4.6 Assignment of teachers maximizes opportunity for students4.7 Teachers communicate regularly with student families4.8 Teachers and staff inspire best efforts4.9 Dissemination of information to stakeholders4.10 Student achievement is publicly celebrated4.11 Provisions for the needs of all students
EE5	<h2>Student, Family and Community Support</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none">5.1 Family and community involvement in promotion of programs and services5.2 Access to the curriculum5.3 Reduction of barriers to learning5.4 Learning support beyond the classroom5.5 Student record system
EE6	<h2>Professional Growth, Development and Evaluation</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none">6.1 Long-term professional growth needs addressed6.2 Professional development plan6.3 Professional development priority alignment6.4 School improvement goals connect with student learning goals6.5 Professional development is ongoing and job-embedded6.6 Professional development plans connect with student achievement data6.7 School/district provides a clearly defined evaluation process6.8 Sufficient fiscal resources provided for professional development6.9 Employee evaluation and individual professional growth plan6.10 Process of personnel evaluation6.11 Improvement plan identification of leadership needs6.12 Evaluation process of teachers

ESSENTIAL ELEMENT 4

School Culture



4.1 Safe, orderly and equitable learning environment

- a. The physical structures and condition of the school provide all students and staff members with a safe, healthy, orderly and equitable learning environment.
- b. The school adopts a classroom management and discipline policy and school leadership implements procedures to provide a safe, healthy, orderly and equitable learning environment.
- c. In order to provide an orderly learning environment, school leadership establishes policies and implements operational procedures to minimize disruptions to instruction.
- d. Academic and behavior standards are well defined, clearly communicated to students and equitably applied throughout the learning environment.
- e. Learning environment data are regularly collected through various means (school surveys) and analyzed for use in planning and decision-making to provide a safe, healthy, orderly and equitable learning environment.
- f. Community members (e.g., facility experts, emergency support personnel) provide proactive assistance, guidance and support to schools in an effort to ensure a safe, healthy, orderly and equitable learning environment.
- g. School leadership collaborates with community representatives to design policy and identify procedures that ensure a safe, healthy, orderly and equitable learning environment.

- h. In order to provide an orderly learning environment, school leadership collaborates with community, family and student representatives to establish and implement policies and operational procedures to minimize disruptions to instruction.
- i. Peer adjudication and community justice systems are active partners with school leadership in the equitable application of academic and behavior standards.
- j. District and school leadership regularly conduct joint walkthroughs of the school to collect ongoing data concerning the learning environment and establish a feedback loop on safety, health, order and equity issues.

4.2 Facilitation of belief that all children can learn at high levels

- a. The practice of school leadership demonstrates a commitment to high academic expectations for all students.
- b. School leadership and staff members facilitate ongoing learning experiences intended to encourage family members, business leaders and other community members to share in the school's vision of student learning.
- c. School leadership provides opportunities for teachers to regularly share their innovations (e.g., novel instructional strategies, effective resources, technology integration) that have resulted in higher student achievement.
- d. School leadership establishes and sustains a focus on continuous improvement in student learning.

- e. The practice of school leadership includes support for learning during extracurricular and co-curricular activities.
 - f. Family members, business leaders and other community members establish collaborative partnerships to design, initiate and sustain authentic learning experiences in support of student learning.
 - g. School leadership establishes a learning community and safe environment in which teachers can openly share successes and failures and constructively analyze and criticize practices and procedures.
 - h. School leadership implements a systematic process to ensure continuous school-wide improvement and higher student achievement.
- b. Structures and systems are effectively implemented to promote collaboration and collegiality in both formal (committee structure) and informal decision-making regarding teaching and learning.
 - c. Non-teaching staff members establish a professional learning community with teaching staff members to resolve challenges in their areas of responsibility (e.g., scheduling of routine maintenance/ housekeeping to avoid disruption to instruction, maintaining “learning” bulletin boards in the cafeteria) to contribute to a positive learning environment for students.
 - d. The mission and belief statements of the school are the decision-making filter and compass for staff members, students and family members in the work of the school.
 - e. Structures and systems maximize the potential for staff members to be collegially self-directed and empowered in both formal and informal decision-making regarding teaching and learning.
 - f. Non-teaching staff members collaborate with the teaching staff to expand the scope of their areas of responsibility to include teaching and learning experiences.

4.3 Academic and behavioral expectations are high

- a. Teachers set high academic expectations for all students, challenge the students to set high expectations and provide the structure and support to ensure student success.
- b. Standards of student behavior are collaboratively developed, clearly communicated to stakeholders and equitably applied to all students.
- c. Students and staff members collaborate to establish, sustain and demonstrate in practice school-wide high academic expectations that are applicable to all.
- d. Students and staff members collaborate to research and adopt an effective program of school-wide student behavior that emphasizes self-discipline and responsibility.

4.4 Decision-making processes involve staff

- a. All staff members are knowledgeable of and make decisions guided by the school’s mission and belief statements.

4.5 Teacher recognition of role in student success

- a. School policy acknowledges the link between teacher efficacy and student achievement and sets the procedures that teachers and administrators use to systematically review and revise instructional practice based on student performance.
- b. Teachers acknowledge and strengthen the impact of their instructional effectiveness on the success of their students by regularly reflecting on and changing their classroom practices as needed.

- c. Teachers provide students with opportunities to evaluate the instructional performance of the teachers and use the feedback to improve their classroom practice as needed.
- d. School policy establishes clear guidelines and support structures for teachers and administrators to study, understand and act upon the role of teacher efficacy in student success.
- e. School leadership expects teachers to recognize and accept their professional role in student success and failure and provides opportunities for teachers to study the connection between instructional practices and student success and consider that connection in the design of their instruction.
- f. Students collaborate to design instruments to be used for school-wide evaluation of the instructional performance of the teachers and the curriculum of the school, resulting in instructional and curricular modifications to better meet the diverse needs of students.
- d. The school has adopted policy and school leadership has implemented a procedure requiring a flexible master schedule that allows teaching assignments to be adjusted to maximize the impact of the strengths of specific teachers on student learning.
- e. Alternative scheduling options are designed and implemented to ensure that all students have equitable access to all classes regardless of cultural background, physical abilities, socio-economic status and intellectual abilities.
- f. Students self-monitor their progress toward learning goals and collaborate with staff members to adjust flexible groupings.
- g. The district provides additional fiscal resources beyond those required by the funding formula to lower student/teacher ratio below that required by school policy.
- h. School policy requires that decisive changes in teaching assignments, as well as the inclusion of community resources, be made based upon student achievement data in to capitalize on the in-depth knowledge of specific persons on a variety of content. School and district leadership teams collaborate to discuss effective and ineffective master schedules to inform this change process.

4.6 Assignment of teachers maximizes opportunity for students

- a. Students have equitable access to all classes regardless of cultural background, physical abilities, socio-economic status and intellectual abilities.
- b. Student groupings are created based on instructional needs and provide for flexible grouping and regrouping with continuous assessment and adjustment that allows the strengths of staff to be matched with the needs of students.
- c. The school has adopted policy and school leadership has implemented a staffing procedure that ensures an effective student/teacher ratio for meeting the needs of all students.

4.7 Teachers communicate regularly with student families

- a. The local board of education has adopted policy and school leadership has implemented procedures guiding interactive school/home communication about student progress.
- b. Student progress reports are sent home regularly and include specific, written explanations of student performance beyond computer-generated statements and, if appropriate, progress on the goals of individual education plans.

- c. Teachers regularly contact families (e.g., home visits, phone calls, e-mail) to discuss student progress.
- d. Teachers involve students (e.g., student-led conferences, journals) in reporting student progress to families.
- e. The school exceeds the requirements of local board of education policy regarding communication about student progress to foster a school culture of collaborative learning and dialogue.
- f. The school's website contains links to the web pages of individual teachers and, through secure password entry, families can obtain information on the progress of their students.
- g. The school has established regular "phone hours" during which parents are able to easily contact teachers to discuss student progress.
- h. Students collaborate with staff members to initiate opportunities to demonstrate their progress to their families and/or community members.
- e. School staff and community members collaborate to provide a support structure (e.g., mentors, safe places, after school programs) that ensures a nurturing learning environment for all students.
- f. Students, staff members and community members establish, sustain and participate in an adult/peer advocacy network.
- g. Staff members nurture students by extending appropriate student/staff interactions into areas of student interest beyond the classroom and/or school.
- h. Staff and community members use innovative strategies (e.g., classroom web pages, marquees) to provide appropriate praise and positive reinforcement, motivating students to high levels of achievement in areas within and beyond the classroom and/or school.

4.8 Teachers and staff inspire best efforts

- a. Staff members have established a nurturing learning environment (e.g., school-within-school concept, team structure, advisor-advisee program) for all students.
- b. Each student has been formally assigned and meets regularly with an adult who serves as an advocate for the student.
- c. There are frequent and meaningful interactions between students and staff regarding academic performance, attendance, behavior and individual needs of students.
- d. Staff members use appropriate praise and positive reinforcement to motivate students to high levels of achievement.

4.9 Dissemination of information to stakeholders

- a. The school has published and implemented a systematic communications plan that guides written, face-to-face and electronic communication with stakeholders.
- b. School staff members use a variety of technological resources (e.g., voice mail, website, web pages, cable access channels) and communication strategies to provide interactive communication with stakeholders.
- c. Representatives of all stakeholder role groups from the school community collaborate to develop the school's systematic communications plan.
- d. The school collaborates with the district to seek technological resources from the community to ensure state-of-the-art communication capabilities in support of a climate conducive to student performance excellence.

4.10 Student achievement is publicly celebrated

- a. School staff members regularly and equitably recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of students for academic success, including formal and informal recognition.
- b. Staff members implement a process for the use of student performance exhibitions and showcases of student work for recognition of achievement in all content areas.
- c. Quality student work and scoring rubrics are consistently displayed in classrooms and throughout the school and are used to guide student self-reflection.
- d. Student academic achievement is publicly shared with community and business partners.
- e. School and district leadership provide opportunities for the accomplishments of students to be recognized at local, state and national levels.
- f. School staff members, students and other stakeholders collaborate to recognize student achievement through exhibitions and showcases.
- g. School and district staff members collaborate with students and stakeholders to honor and display quality student work in the community.
- h. School and district staff members collaborate with stakeholders to publicize student academic achievement and to provide additional sources of recognition (e.g. scholarships).

4.11 Provisions for the needs of all students

- a. The school has adopted policies addressing, and school staff members have incorporated into their practice, a commitment to equity and an appreciation of diversity.
- b. Racial and ethnic considerations are reflected in instructional strategies and seamlessly integrated into the curriculum.
- c. School staff members establish and sustain a culture that minimizes the impact of physical, cultural, and socio-economic factors on learning.
- d. Data on the practice of staff members is collected and analyzed to determine if the commitment to equity initiatives and appreciation of diversity practices has a positive impact on student achievement.
- e. Varied instructional strategies based on racial and ethnic considerations are integrated into the curriculum, resulting in the reduction and eventual elimination of achievement gaps.
- f. The school functions as a learning community that negates the impact of physical, cultural, and socio-economic factors on learning by meeting them as challenges, rather than recognizing them as barriers.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENT 5

Student, Family and Community Support

5.1 Family and community involvement in promotion of programs and services

- a. The school has adopted a policy and school leadership implements procedures that ensure active, effective recruitment of parents, community members and minority representatives to serve on school committees.
- b. Families and the community are involved in significant ways to remove barriers to learning.
- c. Interactive communication between home and school is meaningful and regular.
- d. Programs and strategies (e.g., training for parents, open house, curriculum fair) that promote interaction between teachers and families are developed, implemented and evaluated for effectiveness.
- e. Parents/family members are welcome in the school and their assistance (e.g., parent resource room, school committees) is sought.
- f. School and district staff members collaborate with family members and community partners to provide programs, services and resources (e.g., service learning projects) that create, implement, maximize and sustain learning opportunities for all students.
- g. The school leadership analyzes patterns of committee participation as a planning tool to maximize active and effective parent, community and minority involvement in committee work.
- h. Family and community members evaluate the effectiveness of the collaborative effort to remove barriers to learning for all students and make changes as appropriate.
- i. Interactive communication among home, school and community is consistently and intentionally proactive.
- j. Family, school and community stakeholders collaborate to select programs and strategies that ensure interaction among teachers, families and the community at large.
- k. Structures are in place to encourage and enhance family and community participation.
- l. Students and family members collaborate with school staff members, district staff members and community partners to design programs and services and identify resources to create, implement, maximize and sustain learning opportunities.

5.2 Access to the curriculum

- a. Data on student participation in extended school services is analyzed to ensure that students enter and exit the program as needed, based on specific and clearly defined criteria.
- b. Extended school services are designed and implemented to support and promote individual student achievement with emphasis on those students with the greatest needs. The program is evaluated and modified as necessary.
- c. The school guidance programs promote and support student learning by coordinating targeted and effective support services that remove barriers to learning for at-risk students. The programs are evaluated and modified as necessary.
- d. Title I activities are seamlessly integrated into the school's instructional program to promote and support student learning.



- e. School counselors collaborate with staff members and families to implement a school-wide guidance program that provides support services to meet the intellectual, social, career and developmental needs of students.
- f. The school/district provides a variety of technology (e.g., distance learning, computer- assisted learning) for all students to access the common academic core.
- g. The school has adopted policy and school leadership has implemented procedures that ensure all students have equal access to a common academic core.
- h. Achievement data on students who have exited extended school services are collected from multiple sources and analyzed to ensure that academic gains are maintained.
- i. Family and school staff members collaborate to analyze data from multiple sources (e.g., OSTP, benchmarks, other standardized assessments, classroom assessments) to determine the extent to which extended school services enhances the achievement of those students with the greatest needs and to inform program decision-making and modifications.
- j. Family and school staff members collaborate to determine the effectiveness of support services intended to remove barriers to learning for at-risk students.
- k. Title I activities enhance the school's instructional program by leveraging the integration of resources to promote and support student learning.
- l. School counselors partner with the total school staff and community to develop a network of support (e.g., a school-wide student assistance program that includes peer counseling and adult advocate components).
- m. Community agencies and the school/district establish partnerships to provide extensive technology resources to ensure that all students have access to the common academic core.
- n. The school regularly evaluates the adopted policy and modifies the policy as necessary. Implementation of procedures is monitored to ensure that all students have equal access to a common academic core.

5.3 Reduction of barriers to learning

- a. A variety of instructional materials and resources that promote active learning are integrated into the curriculum, and staff members have had appropriate implementation training, which is ongoing and informed by research.
- b. School leadership has developed and implemented procedures to refer students for health and social services. The procedures are clearly communicated to students, staff members and families.
- c. School leadership has established procedures to identify and implement support programs for the identified students who experience learning problems. Training on student identification and program implementation is provided to all staff members.
- d. The school collaborates with community agencies in planning and implementing specific actions to reduce barriers to student learning.
- e. School leadership ensures that all teachers have professional development that addresses impact of cultural differences on learning.

- f. School staff members incorporate differentiated instructional strategies (based on learning styles, developmental stages and skill levels) into classroom practice to meet student needs and reduce barriers to learning.
- g. The school leadership allocates sufficient financial resources for reducing barriers to learning and ensures that these resources are used effectively.
- h. Community and business partners collaborate with school staff members to provide active learning opportunities for students.
- i. Health and social services are seamlessly integrated into a fully functioning comprehensive student services program.
- j. School leadership recruits and trains family and community volunteers to participate in student assistance teams that provide support for students experiencing learning problems.
- k. Multiple private and public resources (e.g., scholarship opportunities, medical services) are integrated and leveraged to enhance the implementation of specific actions to reduce barriers to student learning.
- l. School staff members and community members establish a collegial support/coaching network and feedback loop to ensure that respect for cultural differences is embedded into classroom instruction.
- m. Short-term flexible staff and/or student groupings are integrated into the school's instructional practices in order to meet the learning needs of all students and reduce barriers to learning.
- n. The school leadership makes reducing all barriers to learning a priority when allocating resources, seeks additional avenues of funding and ensures that the resources are used effectively.

5.4 Learning support beyond the classroom

- a. Students requiring additional assistance beyond initial classroom instruction are provided with a variety of opportunities to receive assistance.
- b. Extended school services instructional time is effectively used to support student achievement.
- c. Classroom teachers collaborate with extended school services teachers to meet student needs and to close achievement gaps across subpopulations.
- d. Support programs and services (e.g., Title I, extended school services, special education children services) are evaluated, modified and/or expanded to meet the needs of participating students.
- e. There is collaboration and coordination among support programs and services (e.g., Title I, extended school services, and school guidance programs) to eliminate gaps and unnecessary overlaps in delivery of services supporting student achievement.
- f. Co-curricular programs support student learning, and all students have equitable access to the programs.
- g. The school and community partners collaborate to provide all students with opportunities for service learning.
- h. District and school staff members collaborate with outside agencies to identify and implement innovative approaches to provide students with assistance beyond the classroom.
- i. Classroom and extended school services instructional time is seamlessly integrated to maximize the impact on student achievement.

- j. Stakeholders and students assist in the development and implementation of extended learning opportunities (e.g., service learning, before/after school tutoring, Saturday school, and/or summer school, 21st Century Learning Centers).
- k. School staff members participate in an ongoing dialogue with community agencies and institutions of higher education to form a collaborative network of services supporting the learning needs of students.
- l. Schools collaborate to ensure a seamless network of support programs and services across the district to provide a total service delivery system supporting student achievement.
- m. Schools collaborate to coordinate co-curricular programs district-wide.
- n. Service learning opportunities are fully integrated into the educational program of all students.
- f. Artifacts that document student performance are maintained in a venue that allows them to be a complement to cumulative student records.
- g. Cumulative student records are maintained in a secure interactive electronic environment that allows access by students and, when appropriate, parents/guardians.
- h. Extensive state-of-the-art technology resources facilitate and enhance data management practices at the school, classroom and individual student levels.

5.5 Student record system

- a. The school maintains cumulative student records that provide a profile of each student's academic and educational development.
- b. Relevant, current and accurate data from multiple sources are included in cumulative student records.
- c. Cumulative student records are well organized and appropriately controlled. Information is readily available to designated staff members.
- d. Sufficient technology resources provide support for sustaining an accurate student record system and efficient data management practices at the school, classroom and individual student levels.
- e. Students are proactively involved in the development and maintenance of an academic portfolio that enhances and extends the cumulative student records.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENT 6

Professional Growth, Development and Evaluation

6.1 Long-term professional growth needs addressed

- a. The school does long-term planning for continuous support of professional growth needs. Professional development is viewed as a change process that occurs over time.
- b. Professional development opportunities are offered that support the enhancement of leadership abilities (e.g., collaboration, problem-solving consensus building) for all staff members and other appropriate stakeholders.
- c. The learning community encourages and provides support to all staff members and stakeholders to be life-long learners.
- d. Long-term professional development planning leads to professional growth embedded in a change process that improves the structure and culture of the school as an organization.
- e. Professional development opportunities are expanded to include formal and informal experiences (e.g., internships, aspiring principal networks, and curriculum resource teachers) for teacher leaders to participate in leadership responsibilities.
- f. School leaders collaborate across the district to create an extended learning community that encourages and supports district staff members and stakeholders to evolve into multi-school instructional teams.

6.2 Professional development plan

- a. The school has developed and implemented a formal process to identify professional development needs for all staff members.
- b. School professional development planning considers both the identified needs of individual staff members and the school-wide focus for improvement.

- c. School staff members analyze information on student achievement to help schools determine the short and long-term professional development needs of instructional staff members and administrators.
- d. The formal process for identifying professional development needs specifically evaluates and addresses the true impediments to student learning.
- e. School professional development planning considers both the identified needs of individual staff members and the school-wide focus for improvement and includes short- and long-term checkpoints to monitor the effectiveness of the planning. Ongoing activities and follow-up (e.g., study groups, action research) are emphasized.
- f. Schools initiate a formal process and collaborate to analyze information on student achievement to determine the short and long-term professional development needs of all stakeholders across the district.

6.3 Professional development priority alignment

- a. Decisions concerning professional development opportunities are based on the results of analysis of student achievement data and formal personnel evaluations.
- b. Professional development opportunities are aligned with the school's learning goals for students, the individual growth plans of staff members and the comprehensive school improvement plan.
- c. The process for determining professional development opportunities specifically identifies the true impediments to student learning and strategies for meeting the unique learning needs of the students.



- d. Professional development opportunities are aligned with the school's learning goals for students, the individual growth plans of staff members and the comprehensive school improvement plan. The professional development opportunities are focused directly on the root causes of achievement gaps.

6.4 School improvement goals connect with student learning goals

- a. A formal process (e.g., annual survey, needs assessment, development of individual growth plans) is used to determine priorities for school professional development.
- b. Professional development is of high quality, is focused on enhanced professional practice and is aligned with academic expectations and student learning goals.
- c. Staff members participate in effective professional development that will update their content knowledge and integrate the acquired knowledge into classroom instruction to improve student learning.
- d. Longitudinal comparisons of the collected data are studied to identify emerging trends and priorities for school professional development.
- e. Schools collaborate to form a district-wide professional learning community that provides high-quality professional development, collegial support and job-embedded coaching to ensure teacher efficacy and enhanced professional practice that is observable in the classroom.
- f. Participants use knowledge gained through content-area professional development to coach and mentor colleagues, providing practical support and encouragement for classroom-focused improvement.

6.5 Professional development is ongoing and job-embedded

- a. Professional development emphasizes a process for sustained and continuous growth through job-embedded opportunities.
- b. Job-embedded professional development provides time for colleagues to reflect, discuss and process new learning.
- c. Follow-up to professional development is consistent and intentional and is a priority.
- d. The school includes the use of nontraditional avenues (e.g., on-line professional development opportunities) to provide and/or embed professional development.
- e. By policy and practice, professional development is sustained, continuous and the shared responsibility of all staff members.
- f. Professional development (structured as an inquiry into curriculum, instruction and assessment) will provide synergy and result in initiatives that have greater student impact.
- g. Staff members establish small-group work teams to provide professional development follow-up by sharing responsibility for their own learning and providing assistance to one another through collegial support and coaching.
- h. School staff members engage in action research in their classrooms focusing on experimental and innovative approaches to professional development.

6.6 Professional development plans connect with student achievement data

- a. Ongoing professional development opportunities are provided as necessary on the analysis of assessment data and student work.
- b. Multiple sources of data are analyzed for professional development planning purposes.
- c. Multiple ongoing professional development opportunities address the learning needs of students identified through analysis of assessment data and student work, including the needs of subgroups with demonstrated achievement gaps.
- d. The district collaborates with institutions of higher education and other research organization entities to provide any necessary professional development opportunities on the analysis of data and student work.
- e. Sets of longitudinal data are analyzed to identify emerging trends for professional development planning.
- f. Long-term job-embedded professional development opportunities address the learning needs of students identified through analysis of assessment data and student work, focus directly on the root causes of achievement gaps and fuel the school's capacity to serve all students.

6.7 School/district provides a clearly defined evaluation process

- a. The local board of education has adopted policy and school leadership has implemented procedures regarding the evaluation of all personnel that meet state requirements.
- b. The evaluation of certified personnel is focused on the student learning goals of the comprehensive school improvement plan and the individual growth needs of staff members.
- c. Within 30 days following their first working day, each certified staff member participates in a meeting in which the evaluation process is explained and discussed.

- d. The local board of education has adopted policy and school leadership has implemented procedures regarding the evaluation of all personnel that surpasses state requirements.
- e. The evaluation of certified personnel is focused on the student learning goals of the comprehensive school improvement plan, the individual growth needs of staff members and the projected long-term needs of the school and district.
- f. Staff members regularly participate in reviews of the evaluation process, including discussions and reflections that provide an impetus for individual professional growth.

6.8 Sufficient fiscal resources provided for professional development

- a. Available fiscal resources are maximized to provide support for professional growth and development, using state professional development allocations and other funding sources (e.g., local, state, federal, private).
- b. The school adopts policy and school leadership implements procedures to ensure the appropriate (i.e., based on the identified needs of individual staff members) and equitable allocation of professional development resources (e.g., funds, substitute teachers, professional training programs, curriculum support staff) among all staff members.
- c. Schools collaborate to obtain all possible funding from outside sources and to maximize the impact of that funding on professional development.
- d. The school evaluates the adopted policy and modifies the policy as necessary to ensure professional development activities are focused on identified needs. Implementation of procedures is monitored to ensure that professional development resources are appropriately and equitably allocated among all staff members.

6.9 Employee evaluation and individual professional growth plan

- a. The evaluation of certified employees and individual growth plans correlate with the instructional needs of students and the professional needs of all staff members as reflected in the comprehensive school improvement plan.
- b. Individual growth plans are collaboratively developed and are based on professional needs identified through the certified evaluation process.
- c. Individual growth plans foster purposeful reflection and refinement of professional practice.
- d. Evaluation is viewed as an important part of individual staff growth, and the process is valued by all staff members as a route to staff proficiency.
- e. The evaluation of certified personnel and individual growth plans correlate with the instructional needs of students, the professional needs of all staff members and the projected long-term needs of the school and district.
- f. Individual growth plans are directly aligned with the Oklahoma Essential Elements and Performance Standards.
- g. Individual growth plans are intentionally used to encourage and support the aspirations of potential school leaders.
- h. Evaluation is viewed as an integral part of the work of the school, encompassing individual professional growth and establishing a self-renewing learning organization.

6.10 Process of personnel evaluation

- a. Personnel evaluations meet the requirements of state statute and regulation and are fairly and consistently administered.
- b. School administrators implement a personnel evaluation system that requires multiple observations of staff, providing opportunities for coaching and feedback to improve effective teaching practices and improve student achievement.
- c. Personnel evaluations exceed the requirements of state statute and regulations. Growth plans and summative evaluations are completed annually for all staff; multiple forms of documentation (e.g., portfolios, peer review, product or performance tasks/ activities) of performance effectiveness are used.
- d. The personnel evaluation system includes a peer review/coaching component.

6.11 Improvement plan identification of leadership needs

- a. The comprehensive school improvement plan is based on analysis of multiple forms of data, identifies instructional leadership needs and includes an action plan and available resources to address those needs.
- b. School administrators collaborate with district personnel to select professional development that addresses both the needs of individual school administrators and the requirements of the state guidelines.
- c. The comprehensive school improvement plan incorporates goals, objectives and activities congruent with new and innovative approaches to improve instructional leadership.
- d. School leadership collaborates with the Oklahoma State Department of Education and other districts to design and/or obtain professional development that addresses both the needs of individual school administrators and the requirements of the state.

6.12 Evaluation process of teachers

- a. The individual growth plans of teachers are an integral part of the evaluation process and are collaboratively developed by administrators and teachers.
- b. School leadership provides regular meaningful feedback to teachers as an integral part of the evaluation process to challenge teacher thinking and to change behavior.
- c. Teachers are provided with follow-up and support (e.g., professional development, fiscal resources, materials) to ensure that the evaluation process results in improved instructional practice and higher student achievement.
- d. The development of individual growth plans of teachers includes a peer review/coaching component.
- e. School leadership and teachers engage in interactive discourse and establish an ongoing feedback loop focused on long-term strategic changes in teacher behavior and practice as an integral part of the evaluation process.
- f. The district evaluation process shows a clear connection between student and teacher performance and individual growth plans; cognitive coaching is embedded in the daily work of all teachers.



EE7

Leadership

- 7.1 Leadership's shared vision
- 7.2 Leadership's decision process
- 7.3 Administrator's growth plan
- 7.4 Use of disaggregated data in school plan
- 7.5 Instructional staff's access to curriculum training
- 7.6 Time spent on curricular and instructional issues
- 7.7 Resource allocation, monitoring and infrastructure facilitates school improvement
- 7.8 Safe and effective learning environment
- 7.9 Process for implementation of school policy
- 7.10 School staff focuses on academic performance
- 7.11 Leadership skills of the principal

EE8

Organizational Structure and Resources

- 8.1 School's use of resources
- 8.2 Students have access to entire curriculum
- 8.3 Staff allocation
- 8.4 Use of instructional time
- 8.5 Staff team planning
- 8.6 Schedule alignment
- 8.7 Clearly defined process for use of fiscal resources
- 8.8 Discretionary funds are directed by an assessment of need
- 8.9 Funding requests are analyzed by school leadership team and school boards
- 8.10 Allocation and integration of program resources

EE9

Comprehensive and Effective Planning

- 9.1 The school's vision, mission, and beliefs
- 9.2 Collection of data for planning
- 9.3 Use of collected data for planning
- 9.4 Planning reflects research and internal review
- 9.5 Planning reflects unique learning needs
- 9.6 Planning shows desired results
- 9.7 Identification of strengths and limitations in organizational effectiveness
- 9.8 Defined goals for improving organizational effectiveness
- 9.9 Action steps in school improvement plan aligned with school improvement
- 9.10 Action steps in school improvement plan have timelines and resources
- 9.11 Established evaluation of school improvement plan
- 9.12 Alignment of school improvement plan
- 9.13 School improvement plan is implemented as developed
- 9.14 Evaluation of achievements from the school improvement plan
- 9.15 Evaluation of impact on class and student performance of school improvement plan
- 9.16 Commitment to continuous improvement

ESSENTIAL ELEMENT 7

Leadership

7.1 Leadership's shared vision

- a. School leadership team involves representatives of the school community's stakeholder groups in a collaborative process to develop the school's vision, mission, and belief statements.
- b. School leadership team communicates the mission and belief statements to all stakeholders of the school community.
- c. School leadership team continuously reinforces and supports the mission and belief statements of the school and uses them to guide decision-making.
- d. School leadership team focuses the staff on implementing the mission and belief statements by using them as a foundation for designing instructional programs.
- e. School leadership team provides updates to all stakeholders on the progress toward accomplishing the mission.
- f. The vision of the school is developed in conjunction with the vision of the district and the other schools of the district.
- g. Representatives of all stakeholder groups establish a communications team to share the mission and belief statements throughout the school community.
- h. School leadership team establishes a systematic process to ensure that all decisions are regularly reviewed and considered for modification to sustain alignment with the mission and belief statements.
- i. School leadership team focuses the community on implementing the mission and belief statements by using them as a filter for school improvement initiatives.

- j. School leadership team establishes a feedback loop to ensure that the mission and belief statements are revised as necessary and that strategies are appropriately modified to maintain momentum toward accomplishment of the mission.

7.2 Leadership's decision process

- a. School leadership team, in collaboration with school staff members, regularly analyzes student performance data and information from other sources and uses the results of that analysis to inform programmatic and academic decisions.
- b. School leadership team collaborates with district and community stakeholders to analyze student performance data and information from multiple sources and establishes a feedback loop to inform programmatic and academic decisions.

7.3 Administrator's growth plan

- a. The individual growth plan of each administrator focuses on effective leadership skills designed to support teaching and learning and promote student achievement.
- b. The individual growth plan of each administrator is designed and implemented in collaboration with the evaluator and addresses professional needs based on district-developed and state-approved leadership standards, as well as goals identified in the comprehensive school improvement plan.
- c. The individual growth plan of each administrator is fully implemented, reviewed regularly and revised as needed.
- d. The individual growth plan of each administrator focuses on effective leadership skills that sustain a balance between strong support of student achievement and effective organizational management.



- e. The administrators of all schools in the district collaborate to develop common goals for individual growth plans that support the improvement plans of the district and all the schools.
- f. The administrators of all schools in the district establish a collaborative coaching/mentoring network to provide follow-up and support to each administrator for the effective implementation of the individual growth plan and enhancement of leadership skills.

7.4 Use of disaggregated data in school plan

- a. Analysis of disaggregated data is an integral part of the school's improvement planning process and is used to identify goals and needs.
- b. School leadership team analyzes data comparing academic achievement of population subgroups (e.g., by income level, ethnicity, gender, exceptional children) to inform decision-making to meet the needs of the school's diverse population.
- c. The school leadership team reviews the disaggregated data and determines targets and timelines for reducing gaps.
- d. The results of analysis of disaggregated data are validated against educational research to identify goals and needs for the comprehensive school improvement plan.
- e. School leadership team compares the academic achievement of population subgroups of the school with the academic achievement of comparable population subgroups in similar and high performing schools to inform decision-making to meet the needs of the school's diverse population.
- f. The school leadership team collaborates with other stakeholders in a proactive process for sharing disaggregated data results with the larger community.

7.5 Instructional staff's access to curriculum training

- a. School leadership team ensures that staff members have access to and are trained in the use of OAS curriculum documents, other curriculum-related materials and data resources.
- b. School leadership team shares and discusses curriculum information from internal and external professional sources (e.g., district office, Oklahoma State Department of Education, national sources) with staff members.
- c. School leadership team establishes and supports a leadership team within the school to build internal training capacity on OAS curriculum standards.
- d. School leadership team ensures that OAS curriculum standards, curricular materials and data resources are readily available to and used by school staff members in an on-line environment.
- e. School leadership team provides opportunities for staff members to participate in external curriculum development experiences (e.g., national conferences, state-wide workshops).
- f. School leadership team provides research-informed resources and incentives to the leadership team to enable them to initiate and sustain capacity-building efforts focused on standards-based curriculum materials in support of OAS learning goals.

7.6 Time spent on curricular and instructional issues

- a. School leadership provides the necessary structure and support for staff members to use time as a resource to provide quality instruction and maximize student learning.

- b. School leadership establishes policy and school leadership fully implements procedures to minimize disruptions of instructional time.
- c. School leadership and all other staff members collaborate to design the necessary structure and support that allows time to be a resource to provide quality instruction and maximize student learning.
- d. School leadership and other stakeholders collaborate to implement and practice the procedures to minimize disruptions to instructional time, including the additional time and assistance provided outside mandated school hours.

7.7 Resource allocation, monitoring and infrastructure facilitates school improvement

- a. Allocation of resources (e.g., fiscal, human, physical, time) by school leadership is equitable; consistent with the vision, mission and strategic priorities of the school and focused on student learning.
- b. Resource allocation is sufficient to support the learning goals of the school, and leadership demonstrates sound fiduciary responsibility.
- c. School leadership team monitors and modifies the instructional programs, organizational practices and physical facilities of the school, as needed, to sustain continuous school improvement.
- d. School leadership secures additional resources and/or reallocates funds to support the vision, mission and strategic priorities of the school.
- e. Exemplary use of sufficient resources supports the learning goals of the school.
- f. Leadership of all the schools of the district establishes a “critical friends” network to monitor and modify the instructional programs, organizational practices and physical facilities of the schools across the district. The network provides an opportunity for “shared learning” and collaboration that maximizes the impact of resources in these areas.

7.8 Safe and effective learning environment

- a. School leadership establishes policy and school leadership implements procedures that maintain a supportive, safe, healthy, orderly and equitable learning and working environment for both students and staff members.
- b. School leadership ensures that resources are allocated to provide quality facilities and equipment to support a safe and effective learning environment.
- c. The school leadership regularly evaluates the adopted policy and modifies the policy as necessary. Implementation of procedures is monitored to ensure that a supportive, safe, healthy, orderly and equitable learning and working environment is maintained for both students and staff members.
- d. School leadership collaborates with community stakeholders to obtain additional funding to provide extraordinary facilities and equipment to enhance the learning environment.

7.9 Process for implementation of school policy

- a. The school leadership has led the school in the development and implementation of policies in all areas required by state guidelines.
- b. School policies are regularly reviewed and revised as necessary to address anticipated needs. The policies are distributed to all staff members and the parent members of the school and are available to the public.
- c. School leadership and staff members have a working knowledge of all existing school policies and provide feedback to the stakeholders concerning the impact of the policies on teaching and learning.
- d. The school leadership has led the school in the development and implementation of appropriate policies impacting teaching and learning, beyond those required by state guidelines.

- e. School policies are regularly distributed to the public as well as all staff members and parent members of the school.
- f. School leadership, staff members and other stakeholders have an extensive knowledge of all school policies and the relationship of those policies with “best practices” in education.

7.10 School staff focuses on academic performance

- a. The school staff regularly analyzes student performance data to guide the work of the staff toward establishing priorities for student academic performance and closing gaps among subgroups.
- b. The actions of the school staff are aligned with their priorities to improve student academic performance and are congruent with the school’s vision, mission and beliefs.
- c. The results of analysis of data are validated against educational research to guide the work of the staff toward establishing priorities for student academic performance and closing gaps among subgroups.
- d. The school conducts periodic self-assessments to ensure that the implementation of priorities results in improved student academic performance.

7.11 Leadership skills of the principal

- a. The principal consistently implements all school policy.
- b. The principal of the school regularly engages staff members and students in conversations focused on student academic performance.
- c. The principal demonstrates knowledge of OAS curriculum standards and provides assistance to staff members with their use by regularly focusing faculty meetings on improving student academic performance.
- d. The principal conducts frequent informal and formal classroom observations and provides timely feedback to staff members on their instructional practice.

- e. The principal leads and collaborates with staff members to sustain a supportive, safe, orderly, equitable and healthy learning environment for teachers and students.
- f. The principal provides organizational direction, develops distributed leadership capacity and maximizes the use of resources to support high student and staff performances.
- g. The principal regularly consults with the other members of the school staff to ensure that school policy is being implemented as intended.
- h. The principal initiates opportunities to engage community stakeholders in conversations focused on student academic performance to generate the commitment needed to affect deep reform.
- i. The principal inspires and provides opportunities for staff members to share ideas, research, instructional strategies and learning experiences and leads faculty meetings focused on intensive implementation of school improvement initiatives based on organizational needs.
- j. The principal collaborates with teacher leaders to share the leadership responsibility of ensuring that effective and varied instructional strategies are routinely implemented in all classrooms.
- k. The principal collaborates with district leadership to establish and maintain a learning and working environment that fosters sustained innovation by teachers and students.
- l. The principal provides organizational direction and establishes distributed leadership in the school at such high levels that school improvement will be sustained and advanced in their absence.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENT 8

Organizational Structure and Resources

8.1 School's use of resources

- a. Representatives of multiple stakeholder groups and staff members participate in the development of resource management policies and procedures that are clearly communicated, fully implemented, regularly reviewed and modified as needed.
- b. Representatives of multiple stakeholder groups and staff members collaborate to develop a budget that allocates fiscal resources according to the identified needs of the school.
- c. Standing committees (e.g., textbook, technology, budget) to address the allocation of resources are appointed and are fully functional.
- d. The school equitably allocates resources (fiscal, human, physical, time) to encourage high student and staff performance.
- e. The school has augmented its resources by taking advantage of external opportunities (e.g., local artists to teach students specialized skills, community or university library, surplus materials from local industries).
- f. Resource management policies and procedures are routinely validated against the practices of high-performing and efficient organizations.
- g. The school has expanded the budget process to establish budget projections for anticipated needs.
- h. The school effectively uses ad hoc committees to address rapidly emerging resource issues.
- i. Abundant resources are allocated to encourage high student and staff performance.
- j. The school systematically establishes partnerships with external entities (e.g., local or national) focused on a specific identified need of the school.

8.2 Students have access to entire curriculum

- a. School has adopted policy and school leadership implements procedures requiring equitable access to the curriculum for all students.
- b. Students have equitable access to all classes regardless of cultural background, physical abilities, socio-economic status and intellectual abilities.
- c. Sufficient course offerings are provided for all students to address OAS curriculum standards.
- d. The school leadership regularly evaluates the adopted policy and modifies the policy as necessary. Implementation of procedures is monitored to ensure that all students have equitable access to the curriculum.
- e. Alternative scheduling options are designed and implemented to ensure that all students have equitable access to all classes regardless of cultural background, physical abilities, socio-economic status and intellectual abilities.
- f. The master schedule provides opportunities for students to access course offerings beyond the curriculum of the school. The school has developed external partnerships, such as those with colleges and universities to offer courses for credit/dual credit.

8.3 Staff allocation

- a. The school leadership adopts policies and implements procedures to ensure that staff assignments are made to address specific student needs that are based on analysis of student performance data.



- b. All teachers are certified to teach in their assigned areas and/or grade levels.
- c. Classroom assignments maximize opportunities for resource sharing, mentoring and collaboration among teachers and students of similar grade levels or subject areas.
- d. Instructional assistants are assigned to effectively implement programs and meet the learning needs of students.
- e. The school leadership revises their policy on staffing assignments based upon analysis of student performance data and emerging student needs.
- f. School leadership recruits teachers with multiple certifications to allow more flexibility in staff assignments.
- g. School and district leadership collaborate to ensure that building design and/or renovation specifically facilitates resource sharing, mentoring, and collaboration among teachers and students of similar grade levels or subject areas.
- h. Instructional assistants are assigned and reassigned to optimize program implementation and to meet the learning needs of students.
- d. Programs that occur during instructional time (e.g., assembly programs, field trips) reinforce specific learning goals of students, extend classroom instruction and occur at appropriate points in the curriculum.
- e. The school leadership regularly evaluates the adopted policy and modifies the policy as necessary. Implementation of procedures is monitored to ensure that instructional time is protected to maximize student learning.
- f. The school/district provides clerical and technological resources to teachers that enable them to more efficiently handle classroom management and organizational practices.
- g. A subcommittee of the school conducts ongoing research into effective instructional time practices and makes specific recommendations for adjustments to the school's schedule to maximize student learning.
- h. Teachers collaborate on programs that occur during instructional time to ensure that the programs support instruction in multiple content areas.

8.4 Use of instructional time

- a. The school has adopted policy, and school leadership has implemented procedures to protect instructional time.
- b. Classroom management and organizational practices are structured to ensure that instructional use of class time is maximized.
- c. The staff adjusts the schedule (e.g., varying class length, allowing additional time for project development), as appropriate, based on instructional needs.

8.5 Staff team planning

- a. Staff members collaborate to develop and implement a schedule that provides regular common team planning time by content area and/or grade level.
- b. Staff members use common team planning time to collaborate by content area and/or grade level to focus classroom instruction on the goals and objectives of the comprehensive school improvement plan.
- c. Staff members post lesson plans and curriculum maps in a shared online environment or other convenient venue to promote horizontal and vertical team planning.
- d. Staff members evaluate the impact of the team planning on student performance and make adjustments as necessary.

- e. Resources (time, space, people, money, materials) are used to support teacher collaboration and team planning to meet the individual learning needs of students.
- f. Staff members collaborate to develop and implement a schedule that provides regular common team planning time by both content areas and grade levels.
- g. Staff members use common team planning time to collaborate by both content area and grade level to focus classroom instruction on the goals and objectives of the comprehensive school improvement plan.
- h. Staff members collaborate with the staff members at other schools across the district to electronically share lesson plans and curriculum maps to more effectively address vertical transitions.
- i. Staff members from multiple schools collaborate to implement a district-wide, research-informed evaluation of team planning on student performance and make adjustments as necessary to achieve the goals and objectives of the comprehensive school improvement action plan.
- j. Abundant resources are used to support teacher collaboration and team planning to meet the individual learning needs of students.

8.6 Schedule alignment

- a. The school's schedule is designed so that maximum instructional time is available for staff members to provide quality instruction to accomplish the mission of the school.
- b. The developmental needs and learning styles of students are given priority in arranging student schedules.
- c. Staff members implement a variety of effective instructional strategies and provide extended time for learning to promote successful student performance.
- d. The school's schedule is designed so that maximum instructional time is available for staff members to provide quality instruction to accomplish the missions of the school and the district.

- e. Creative scheduling and technological resources are combined to meet the developmental needs and learning styles of students.
- f. Staff members implement research-informed and innovative instructional strategies and time usage practices to promote successful student performance.

8.7 Clearly defined process for use of fiscal resources

- a. The school has adopted a clearly defined budget policy, and school leadership has implemented budgetary procedures to allocate funds to meet the identified needs of students.
- b. School leadership supports staff members in obtaining resources from external sources (e.g., grants, instructional materials) to augment school allocations.
- c. The school's financial records are published in a form that is understandable by school staff members and regularly reviewed at school meetings.
- d. Teachers have equitable access to fiscal resources to meet the identified needs of their students and are expected to participate in fiscal decision-making.
- e. Representatives of multiple stakeholder groups (e.g., parents, teachers, community leaders, students) are involved in budget development.
- f. School leadership has established a clearly defined process for supporting staff members in obtaining resources from external sources to augment school allocations.
- g. The school's financial records are posted in a public venue (e.g., web page) and school members are provided access to basic finance and budget support.
- h. Teachers have access to abundant resources to meet the identified needs of their students.

8.8 Discretionary funds are directed by an assessment of need

- a. Expenditures of discretionary funds support the vision and mission statements of the school and relate directly to student needs identified from appropriate data.
- b. The school has adopted policy and school leadership has implemented operational procedures for distribution of discretionary funds.
- c. The school conducts a needs assessment for budget planning purposes with all staff members and other stakeholders.
- d. Established operational procedures are followed in the expenditure of discretionary funds and result in the funding of educational priorities related directly to student needs.
- e. Abundant discretionary funds support the vision and mission statements of the school and relate directly to student needs.
- f. The school has developed policies with input from staff members and other stakeholders.
- g. The school implements a comprehensive research-informed needs assessment process for budget planning purposes.
- h. The operational procedures for expenditure of discretionary funds are informed by organizational efficiency research.

8.9 Funding requests are analyzed by school leadership team and school boards

- a. Budget decisions are data-informed, intentional and aligned with the action components of the comprehensive school improvement plan.
- b. Funds are expended in accordance with the comprehensive school improvement plan and requirements of grants.

- c. Expenditures are monitored regularly and adjusted as necessary to meet changing student needs.
- d. Budget decisions are data-informed, intentional and aligned with the action components of the comprehensive school and district improvement plan.
- e. Funds are integrated and expended in accordance with the comprehensive school and district improvement plan and requirements of grants.
- f. School leadership team engages representatives of all stakeholder groups in long-term financial planning to ensure that expenditures proactively meet the anticipated future needs of the school's students.

8.10 Allocation and integration of program resources

- a. All allocated funds are allocated to support identified student needs.
- b. The expenditure of allocated funds is monitored and analyzed frequently. Program strategies are revised based on the evaluation of specific student needs.
- c. Revenue from multiple sources is consistently integrated to maximize student achievement.
- d. All allocated funds are appropriately and effectively integrated with general funds to maximize support of identified student needs.
- e. Allocated funds are expended to encourage research-informed and innovative program strategies to be implemented in the classroom to meet specific student needs.
- f. School leadership team engages representatives of all stakeholder groups in long-term financial planning to ensure that expenditures of revenue from multiple sources are leveraged to maximize student achievement.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENT 9

Comprehensive and Effective Planning

9.1 The school's vision, mission, and beliefs

- a. Representatives of stakeholder groups reflecting the diversity of the school's learning community collaborate to draft and finalize the school's vision, mission, beliefs and goal statements.
- b. Drafts of these statements were presented to the general public at open meetings, and public comment was encouraged and considered prior to final adoption.
- c. During the development of the school's vision, mission, beliefs and goal statements, representatives of stakeholder groups confer with and obtain input from their constituent organizations.
- d. Drafts of these statements were presented by teams composed of representatives of stakeholder groups at open meetings, and public comment was sought and considered prior to final adoption.

9.2 Collection of data for planning

- a. There is a systematic process for collecting, managing and analyzing data that enables school leadership to determine areas of strength and limitation and that informs decision-making at the school and classroom levels.
- b. School profile data reflect the school's overall performance and are disaggregated and analyzed by appropriate subgroups (e.g., gender, race/ethnic group, economic level).
- c. The sets of data collected in each area of the profile are integrated and analyzed using a systems approach, and the analysis includes comparison to similar and high-performing schools.

- d. A data management system is in place that allows ready access to the school's longitudinal profile data for revision and analysis over time.
- e. The systematic data analysis process includes the identification of trends, projections, and correlations of data, as well as the identification of emerging issues to inform decision-making at the school and classroom levels.
- f. School profile data are disaggregated, analyzed and disseminated to all staff members who apply the implications of the data to instructional decision-making.
- g. The analysis of data is validated against educational research to design curriculum, assessment and instruction that fosters positive change and creates a culture of high achievement for all students.
- h. The district establishes and maintains a district-wide, state-of-the-art data management system that is also accessible throughout the district.

9.3 Use of collected data for planning

- a. The collected data are used to identify and prioritize areas of need for the comprehensive school improvement plan. Student achievement data are a significant part of the data used to identify and prioritize needs.
- b. The analysis of the data contained in the school's profile guides the school improvement planning process and is reflected in the objectives of the plan.
- c. The collected data are used to anticipate and proactively address future needs.



- d. Analysis of trend data is conducted and is reflected in the objectives of the comprehensive school improvement plan. The data are viewed as a stimulus for improvement rather than merely a snapshot of current conditions.

9.4 Planning reflects research and internal review

- a. The school improvement planning team conducts a review of the latest educational research that has implications for student learning and reports its findings to staff members.
- b. School leadership considers district and state standards as they work with the school improvement planning team to determine the goals and objectives of the plan.
- c. Staff members implement the educational research findings of the school improvement planning team in designing appropriate instructional strategies that are specified in the comprehensive school improvement plan.
- d. School leadership incorporates interdisciplinary school-wide goals for student learning into the comprehensive school improvement plan.

9.5 Planning reflects unique learning needs

- a. The school leadership team conducts an analysis of the results of surveys of stakeholders on the strengths and limitations of the school in meeting the unique learning needs of students.
- b. Data are collected to verify strengths and to establish a baseline in areas of limitation so that improvements in student learning can be monitored over time.

- c. School leadership team analyzes student performance data to identify students with unmet special learning needs and to identify achievement gaps within the student population as a whole.
- d. The school leadership team conducts additional surveys of stakeholders as needed.
- e. The school leadership team has established self-assessment mechanisms and collects data to ensure that their efforts are serving the school improvement effort as a whole.
- f. School leadership team regularly analyzes student performance data and develops a school strategy that empowers teachers and administrators to make decisions that support success for students with special learning needs and for all population subgroups.

9.6 Planning shows desired results

- a. The desired results for student learning are clearly and concisely stated, defined in measurable terms and accompanied by benchmarks.
- b. The desired results for student learning reflect meaningful and challenging learning goals and are aligned with the school's vision.
- c. School leadership team has identified a manageable number of student learning goals as priorities for the comprehensive school improvement plan. Staff members share a sense of responsibility for achieving the goals of the plan.
- d. The desired results for student learning are regularly reviewed and modified as necessary.

- e. The desired results for student learning anticipate the needs of the school's population as life-long learners with a focus on access and equity.
- f. School leadership team and representatives from all stakeholder groups collaborate to identify the student learning goals and share a sense of responsibility and commitment for achieving the goals of the comprehensive school improvement plan.

9.7 Identification of strengths and limitations in organizational effectiveness

- a. Staff members and representatives of stakeholder groups review survey data to identify strengths and limitations of the school to inform school improvement planning.
- b. Additional data are analyzed to verify strengths and limitations in the organizational and instructional domains of the school to validate the goals of the comprehensive school improvement plan.
- c. Staff members and representatives of stakeholder groups use data triangulation to review survey data from multiple sources to corroborate the identification of strengths and limitations of the school.
- d. School leadership team ensures that all four types of data (student learning, demographic, perception and school processes) are collected and intentionally used to verify the strength and limitations in the organizational and instructional domains of the school and to validate the goals of the comprehensive school improvement plan.

9.8 Defined goals for improving organizational effectiveness

- a. School improvement goals are stated in clear, concise and measurable terms and are focused on building the school's capacity for instructional and organizational effectiveness.

- b. School improvement goals are visionary, validated against educational research and balanced between the school's instructional and organizational activities.

9.9 Action steps in school improvement plan aligned with school improvement

- a. The action components of the comprehensive school improvement plan include an intentional focus on closing achievement gaps among subgroups.
- b. The goals, objectives and activities of the comprehensive school improvement plan are all in alignment.
- c. Activities in the comprehensive school improvement plan are grounded in research and are sufficient to achieve the objectives.
- d. The action components of the comprehensive school improvement plan are intentionally focused on equity of academic opportunity and access for all individual students as well as subgroups.
- e. The goals, objectives and activities of the comprehensive school improvement plan are seamlessly integrated into the practice of the school resulting in a culture of high achievement for all students.
- f. Activities in the comprehensive school improvement plan are validated against best practices of similar and high-performing schools.

9.10 Action steps in school improvement plan have timelines and resources

- a. The timelines established for the action components in the comprehensive school improvement plan are realistic and designed to have maximum impact on student performance.
- b. Adequate resources are identified for all activities in the comprehensive school improvement plan.

- c. All funding sources are integrated in the budget to support the plan. The comprehensive school improvement plan identifies those persons responsible for implementation of the action components, and this responsibility is shared among staff members.
- d. The timelines established for the action components in the comprehensive school improvement plan are realistic without compromising educational idealism or detracting from the immediacy of impacting student performance.
- e. Abundant resources are available for all activities in the comprehensive school improvement plan, constructing a bridge of support between goal setting and implementation of the plan.
- f. The persons responsible for implementation of the action components of the comprehensive school improvement plan include representatives of other stakeholder groups as well as staff members.

9.11 Established evaluation of school improvement plan

- a. School leadership systematically conducts implementation and impact checks to monitor the effectiveness of the activities of the comprehensive school improvement plan over time.
- b. School leadership analyzes the data collected through implementation and impact checks and makes appropriate modifications to the comprehensive school improvement plan.
- c. School leadership provides appropriate and timely academic press and support to ensure effective implementation of the activities of the comprehensive school improvement plan.
- d. School leadership validates the results of data analysis against educational research and makes recommendations for appropriate modifications to the comprehensive school improvement plan.

9.12 Alignment of school improvement plan

- a. The action components in the comprehensive school improvement plan are aligned with the school's mission and beliefs.
- b. The action components in the comprehensive school improvement plan support the desired results for student learning and instructional and organizational effectiveness as reflected in the school's mission and beliefs.
- c. The action components in the comprehensive school improvement plan are aligned with the mission and beliefs of the school and the district.
- d. The action components in the comprehensive school improvement plan anticipate the needs of the school's population as life-long learners and enhance the instructional and organizational effectiveness of the school.

9.13 School improvement plan is implemented as developed

- a. School leadership provides ongoing direction, support and resources for effective implementation of the comprehensive school improvement plan.
- b. Staff members know the goals of the comprehensive school improvement plan and implement the plan as developed.
- c. School leadership models a collaborative approach to the implementation of the comprehensive school improvement plan.
- d. Stakeholders know the goals of the comprehensive school improvement plan and are involved in implementing the plan as developed.

9.14 Evaluation of achievements from the school improvement plan

- a. School leadership team collects and analyzes data in the areas targeted by the comprehensive school improvement plan and compares levels of student performance at regular intervals to evaluate the degree to which the goals of the plans are achieved.
- b. School leadership team validates the analysis of data against educational research and compares levels of student performance to those in similar and high-performing schools.

9.15 Evaluation of impact on class and student performance of school improvement plan

- a. School leadership team collects and analyzes data in the areas targeted by the comprehensive school improvement plan, and compares levels of student performance at regular intervals to evaluate the degree to which the expected impact on classroom practice is achieved.
- b. School leadership team validates the analysis of data against educational research and compares levels of student performance to those in similar and high-performing schools to assimilate a culture of high performance expectations into the practice of classrooms and the school.

9.16 Commitment to continuous improvement

- a. School leadership team implements a systematic and ongoing process to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the school's progress in achieving the goals of the comprehensive school improvement plan. Feedback is collected from stakeholders, and modifications to the plan are made as necessary.

- b. School leadership team regularly provides school improvement reports to the school staff and other stakeholders. Accomplishments are formally recognized and celebrated.
- c. New or emerging objectives for improving student performance are identified, and activities are selected and implemented to address these objectives.
- d. School leadership team ensures that implementation strategies are relevant, appropriate, drawn from research and customized for school context, resulting in a high level of staff support and commitment.
- e. Formal recognition and celebration of accomplishments are thoroughly assimilated into the practice of the school and are a vital impetus for school improvement.
- f. School leadership team engages representatives of the learning community in long-term planning to identify new or emerging objectives that proactively meet the anticipated future learning needs of the school's students.

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