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FAYETTE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Client name	Fayette County Public Schools
School name	Yates Elementary School
Principal name	Twanjua Jones
Address	695 E New Circle Rd,
	Lexington, KY 40505
Review dates	January 14-15, 2019
Lead reviewer	Hayden Lyons
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Comprehensive Support and Improvement Audit Report

Fayette County Public Schools

January 14-15, 2019

Contents

1   The School Context

1.1   Introduction

In 2018 Cambridge Education was awarded a contract in response to RFP KRS 160.346(6) to provide Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) Audits to five Fayette County Public Schools. The purpose of the CSI Audit is to determine:

1. factors that limit student learning with an emphasis on underperforming subgroups of students and corresponding critical resource inequities; and
2. factors that support and enhance student learning.

Based on the CSI Audit team's findings, recommendations will be made of how to best address factors that limit student learning.

The CSI Audit report contained herein was prepared by the Lead Auditor based on the evidence collected and the assessment made by the full CSI Audit team (Lead Auditor and two Team Member Auditors). Evidence was collected via classroom observations; interviews with the administration; stakeholder perception surveys and focus groups with students, teachers, parents and other stakeholders; and review of relevant data sources.

1.2   Background information about the School

Yates Elementary School is in the Eastland Parkway neighborhood on the north side of Lexington. Its precise location is 695 E New Circle Rd, Lexington, KY 40505. The school is a Title I school and is among the lowest performing 5 percent of schools in the state of Kentucky. By virtue of this designation and in accordance with Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the school has been classified as a Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) school beginning in the 2018-2019 school year. The school serves an economically disadvantaged community, with 93.1 percent of its students qualifying for free or reduced lunch and has a transient population with almost 10 percent being homeless. The school has a Pre-Kindergarten program, but many of those students do not feed into the Kindergarten program. They leave to attend other schools. Many of the students entering Kindergarten are not prepared for school according to screening results.

1.2.1   Student enrollment and attendance

School Demographic, Attendance, Suspension Information

	School Year 2015-2016	School Year 2016-2017	School Year 2017-2018	Current as of CSI Audit
Grade Span	**Pk-5**	**Pk-5**	**Pk-5**	**Pk-5**
Total Student Enrollment	**578**	**365**	**347**	**346**
Percentage General Education Students and Total	**85.5%** **494**	**86.8%** **317**	**86%** **298**	**90%** **311**
Percentage of Special Education Students and Total	**14.5%** **84**	**13.2%** **48**	**14 %** **49**	**10%** **35**

School Demographic, Attendance, Suspension Information

Percentage of English Language Learners and Total		13.7 percent 79	24.9 91	20 percent 69	24 percent 83
Ethnicity of student population	White Black Hisp Other	39.6 percent 36.2 percent 15.7 percent 8.5 percent	29.9 percent 37.8 percent 27.4 percent 4.9 percent	30.0 percent 35.7 percent 30.5 percent 3.8 percent	27.4 percent 35.9 percent 31.3 percent 5.4 percent
Out of School Suspensions		24	30	12.57	1
In School Suspensions		40	42	2.91	1
Average Daily Attendance (ADA)		94.1 percent	94.8 percent	94.6 percent	96 percent

The chart above represents demographic information for the school over the last four years. Within this period, the population of the school changed significantly due to redistricting that resulted in the loss of over 200 students, especially those of a higher socio-economic status (SES). During that time, the percentage of White students declined from almost 40 percent in the 2015-2016 school year to 27.4 percent in the current year. While the percentage of African American/Black students remained constant, the number of Hispanic students steadily increased, almost doubling from 15.7 percent in the 2015-2016 school year to 31.3 percent in the current school year. This corresponds to the percentage of English Language Learners that increased from 13.7 percent in the 2015-2016 school year to 24 percent in the current year. This sharp increase in the number of students and parents whose first language is not English presented a unique challenge for the school and a substantial strain on its resources to meet the needs of those students and their parents.

The number of out-of-school suspensions and in-school-suspensions declined drastically over the period, from 24 and 40, respectively, in the 2015-2016 school year to both numbering one, currently. This drastic reduction coincides with the tenure of the principal, who assumed leadership of the school in 2015. The school is the only school in the county to have received a Gold Star for the implementation of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

The attendance rates hovered around the district target of 95 percent, currently exceeding it at 96 percent. The high transiency of the population resulted in the school not having a consistent cohort of students progressing from Kindergarten through third grade in the last three years. Consequently, most students who tested last year in the third grade had been at the school for only two or fewer years.

1.2.2   Administrators, teachers and staff

The principal has been in education for twenty-three years. She has worked in Fayette County Public Schools for eleven years as an associate principal at one of its middle schools and has been the principal at Yates Elementary School for the last four years. She taught math at the high school level and worked as an assistant principal in North Carolina. Her leadership team includes the Professional Growth and Effectiveness (PGE) Coach, and the School-based Instructional Specialist (SBIS). The PGE coach has been in Fayette Public Schools for over two years and has been in her current role at Yates Elementary for just over one year. The SBIS has been in the district for over seven years and has worked as an intermediate classroom teacher and is in her second year at the school in her current position.

There are 21 classroom teachers at the school, with a range of experience between 0-31 years and an average of 8 years (Pre-Kindergarten – grade five). The most inexperienced teachers are in the third and fourth grades with experience ranges of zero to three and zero to four years, respectively. Teachers who support students with disabilities [learning and behavior disorder (LBD)] and moderate and severe disability

(MSD) has been an area of concern for school leaders. Three has been consistent turnover in this classification of teachers. The current range of experience is zero to two years. The school has a counselor, a behavior specialist, and a social worker, paid through Title I. There are three interventionists – a math specialist who serves first, second and fourth grades, and two reading specialist who serve Kindergarten through third and grades first through fourth, respectively. There is very little Tier II and Tier III support for fourth and fifth grades. Only one out of three classrooms in the fourth grade receives Tier III support in reading, while co-teaching of math occurs across the grade. There is currently no Tier II and III support for fifth grade.

Current vacancies are for a 0.4 full-time equivalency (FTE) Gifted and Talented teacher and a 0.5 FTE Helping Custodian.

1.3   District initiatives and support resources

The school district provides an Empowerment Zone (EZ) Team to support the school. This team meets with school leadership once a month. During these visits, the team completes Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (ELEOT) observations on all classroom teachers, reviews recent assessment data, and progress on campus/district initiatives. The team then gives feedback and guidance for the next 30 days. The team members include: District Elementary School Chief, District Curriculum Director, Leadership Coach, Literacy Consultant, Math Consultant, ELL Consultant, Special Education Consultant, and Community and Family Engagement Consultant. These members also provide professional learning to staff in their area of specialty.

Through a Co-teaching Cadre, the district provides training and support to identified co-teachers within the building. The identified teachers are in Kindergarten, but all the teachers are encouraged to co-teach. Teachers outside of the cadre receive professional learning throughout the school year. The school has hired an extra special education teacher to support the requirements of the cadre.

The district provides instructional programmatic support through a Wonders Literacy Coach who provides monthly professional learning to lead teachers on implementing the Wonders literacy curriculum as Tier I instruction. Additionally, the district provides instructional support for the Investigations and Envision Math Curricula through regular professional learning to grade level teachers in preparation for the next unit of study.

The district also supports the school through various Campus Grants as described below:

- MAF (Math Achievement Fund): Math Specialist and two identified teachers. The Math Specialist co-teaches with identified teachers and provides Tier III intervention to identified students.

- RTA (Read to Achieve): Literacy Specialist and one identified teacher. The Literacy Specialist co-teaches with an identified teacher and provides Tier III instruction to identified students.

- Minds in Motion: This grant addresses gross motor needs of students with Autism, ADHD, and sensory issues. The activities will be available to all students beginning in February.

In terms of Human Resource (HR) support, the district provides a SBIS who serves as a curriculum specialist. She works with the leadership team to plan professional learning and PLC work. There is a part-time Math Recovery Coach who services one student directly and acts as a resource for primary teachers when she is in the building.

The district provides a variety of professional learning opportunities for all district staff. These trainings support all subject areas, classroom management, PBIS, assessment, etc. These are free of charge to the teachers. The curriculum professional development sometimes occurs during the school day in which the district provides substitutes. However, many times substitutes are unavailable, which results in

support and leadership staff covering classes or splitting classes among the other classrooms. Additional professional learning occurs after school for at least two hours, once per month.

The district provides monthly professional learning cadres for the Principal, PGE Coach, Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) Coach, and the Multiple Tiers of Student Support (MTSS) Coordinator. Most professional learning/trainings for support staff occur during the day, off-site, in whole- or half-day increments.

The district requires that all regular education teachers use Wonders for their Tier I reading instruction, Investigations for Kindergarten through second grade, and Envisions for third through fifth grade Tier I math instruction. All schools are required to use PBIS as their school-wide classroom management program.
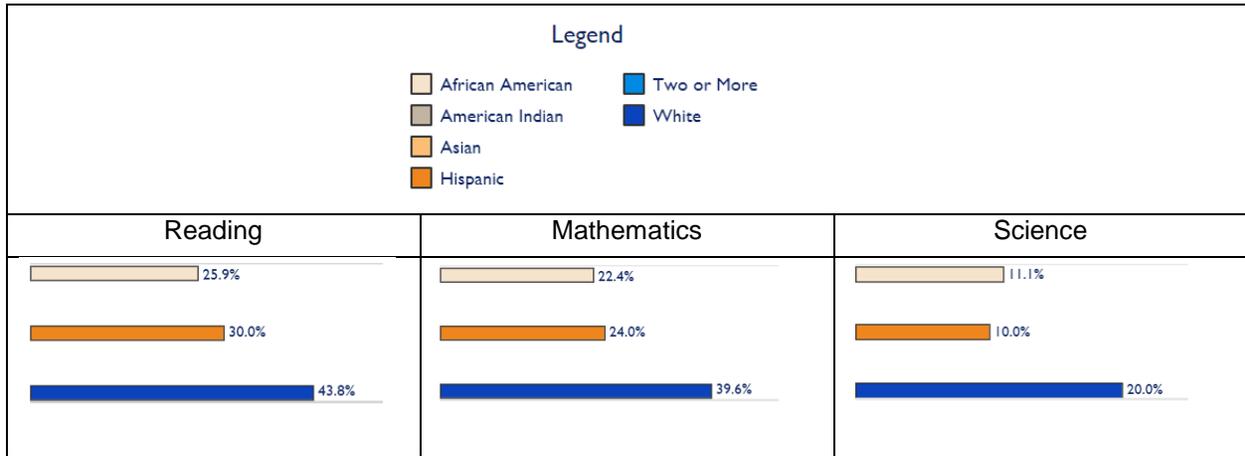
1.4   School performance data

State Test Results - Percentage of proficient students

Subject Area	School 2014-2015	School 2015-2016	School 2016-2017	School 2017-2018	District 2018	State 2018
Reading	36	37.2	34.1	32.9	54.0	54.6
Math	37.2	39.7	25.3	27.3	52.4	48
Social Studies	31.6	39.3	22.6	12.2	53.2	53
Writing	17.7	10.1	6.5	40.8	41.3	40.5

For the past four years, the school's performance declined in all content areas. Its performance in reading fluctuated over the period but was at its lowest in the 2017-2018 school year. The performance of students in writing declined significantly for three years, then drastically improved in 2018 to a proficiency level comparable to both the district and state. Social studies saw a precipitous decline over the four-year period, dropping from 31.6 percent in the 2014-2015 school year to 12.2 percent in the 2017-2018 school year, representing a 63.4 percentage decrease. In the 2017-2018 school year, the school's performance in mathematics, though declining over the four-year period, increased in 2018 over its performance in the previous year. Compared to the district and state performance in the 2017-2018 school year, the school has significantly unperformed, except in reading when it had comparable performance.

When disaggregated by race, the school has a racial achievement gap as illustrated in the chart below. In 2018, White students outperformed African American and Hispanic students by double digits in reading and mathematics. While this group outperformed Hispanic students by double digits in science, it only outperformed African American students by 8.9 percentage points. Hispanic students outperformed African American Students in reading and mathematics, but not in science. These trends are consistent across the district.

Academic Performance by race – 2018

Legend

☐ African American	☐ Two or More
☐ American Indian	☐ White
☐ Asian	
☐ Hispanic	

Reading	Mathematics	Science
25.9%	22.4%	11.1%
30.0%	24.0%	10.0%
43.8%	39.6%	20.0%

2   CSI Audit Process and Details

2.1   Background on the CSI Audit process

2.1.1   Meeting with the Principal

The review team met with the principal five times during the audit process. The initial meeting lasted one hour and thirty-three minutes and was attended by the PGE coach and the SBIS. The team met again with the principal at the end of the first day to share preliminary findings and to finalize the activities for the second day. The second day began with another meeting with the principal, and again during the day. The review ended with the team providing the main findings to the principal and her district coach.

The principal identified student-centered decisions as her greatest achievement. She explained that students are put first and that all decisions are made to advance the needs of students before those of adults. She underscored that staff now embrace this understanding.

Among the challenges of the school, the principal listed trying to serve every child and their unique needs as well as those of their parents; high transiency within the population, especially during eviction notices at the middle of the month; changing the mindset of teachers to adopt a data-driven framework for all decisions; a high teacher turnover rate; and challenges associated with getting teachers to teach the standards and not the new math and reading curricula.

The principal identified the following three priorities for the school:

1. Proficiency for all students. She identified this as the goal, to get students college and career ready. School initiatives associated with this priority include "I can" statements and success criteria that are aligned to the Kentucky CCSS standards, tasks that are aligned to the standards, and data-informed instruction including students use of data binders.
2. English Language Learners (ELL) becoming proficient in the English language. The principal indicated that she has 119 ELL students who constitute 34.4 percent of her population and that their language proficiency influences their academic progress and the progress of the school on state assessments. The score of these students on the ACCESS tests for ELL students last year was low and that was factored into the overall scores for the school. School initiatives associated with this focus include students speaking, listening reading and writing in the target language, as well as them understanding their goals and monitoring their progress.
3. Student engagement. The principal identified this as a focus area because of feedback from the district EZ visits and from Effective Learning Environment Observation Tool (ELEOT) walkthrough data. School initiatives associated with this priority include an emphasis on active engagement of students where they talk to each other and to the teacher; teachers' deconstruction of the standards to ensure they understand their true intent; and teachers planning tasks that are aligned to the standards and planning higher-order thinking questions that are congruent to the standards.

The principal indicated that last year that the school was in Education 101, and that this year they are in a better place. She highlighted that "Teachers are now more aware of assessments as tools of instruction. They are more aware of how to create good assessments. Both teachers and students care about student grades, and teachers see data as a reflection of student learning."

2.1.2   Classroom visits

The audit team visited 18 classrooms for a total of 23 visits. Three classrooms had two visits and one had three. The average time spent in each classroom was approximately 18 minutes with a maximum time of 29 minutes and a minimum of 5. In the classroom where the visit lasted 29 minutes, the lead reviewer stayed longer to capture how the teacher consolidated students' understanding about the mathematical ideas being taught. The team visited every classroom, Kindergarten through fifth grade, and saw lessons in the four main content areas – mathematics, English Language Arts, science, and social studies. In many of the classrooms, there was a second adult present, either a special education teacher of the ELL teacher

who provided additional support to students. The average number of students in each class was 19, with a maximum number of 22 and a minimum of 11. The audit team also observed the afterschool program, Accelerated Learning Lab, which provide additional supports for students in mathematics and reading utilizing SuccessMaker instructional software.

2.1.3   Focus groups

The review team met with the following focus groups:

- Teacher leaders – one teacher from each grade except Kindergarten and two from first grade, who serve as the leaders of the grade. This group was comprised of seven teachers.
- New teachers – This group was comprised of three teachers new to the school from fifth, third, and Kindergarten grades.
- Students – This group was comprised of 13 students, chosen by the school counsellor that represented the diversity of the school and each grade. There were two students from each grade Kindergarten to fourth, and three fifth-grade students. None of the students attended the school from the Pre-Kindergarten program and most were at the school for fewer years as their grade. In fact, two of the fifth-grade students were at the school for only two years. This corresponds to the high transient population.
- Classified staff – The composition of this group (seven individuals) was as follows: Special Education Paraprofessional, Kindergarten Paraprofessional, Head Custodian, Family Resource Coordinator (FRC), Kindergarten Assistant, Registrar, and the Bookkeeper.
- Instructional Specialists – This group was comprised of six individuals – Reading Recovery Teacher, Media Specialist/MAP Coordinator, School Social Worker, ELL Teacher, Special Education Resource Teacher, and Math Interventionist.
- Parents – The review team met with five parents. Grades represented were first, third, fourth, and fifth. The PBIS coordinator was responsible for recruiting parents and contacted parents who had been with the school for at least four years and were serving on a committee.
- Community members – This group was comprised of three individuals representing the Eastland Parkway Church of the Nazarene, Guide Realty, and Costco Wholesale. The FRC was responsible for recruiting the community partners.

3   CSI Audit Main Findings

In this section of the report, the CSI Audit team has identified the factors that are most significantly supporting and limiting effective student learning. (Please see the sections that follow for more details).

3.1   Factors that support effective student learning:

The principal and her leadership team have been successful in improving the climate and culture of the school. The environment is conducive to learning, students feel safe, and positive interactions among teachers, between teachers and administrators, between teachers and students, and between staff and parents are evident. This was confirmed in student, teacher, and parent focus groups, as well as in conversations with the school principal. The positive school climate is also corroborated by a significant reduction of In and out-of-school suspensions rates, as well 82 percent of parents on a survey who say that the school provides a caring and supportive environment for their children.

The communication between the school and home is strong. Parents in a focus group unanimously highlight this as a positive feature of the school and describe multiple ways in which the school keeps them abreast of school events and their children's academic and behavioral progress. This is consistent with survey results where 82 percent of parents surveyed indicate that the school communicates with them about their children's progress, and 75 percent of students indicated that the school lets their families know how they are doing at school.

The school has been successful in raising and sustaining student attendance rates that meet and exceed the district's expectations. This is reflected in attendance data, and in conversation with the school social worker. She described initiatives through which this is achieved including providing incentives for students, conducting home visits, and communicating with parents about the positive effects of regular attendance. These measures have resulted in attendance improving steadily form 94.1 percent in 2016 to a current rate of 96 percent.

3.2   Factors that limit effective student learning:

The quality of teaching and learning is not yet of a standard to improve student learning to the extent needed:

- In 20 out of 23 lessons observed, the learning targets and success criteria were not written or communicated in ways that allowed students to know what they were learning, why it was important, and how they and the teacher would know that they had met the targets for lessons. Success criteria did not always specify what students should produce in their work to show they learned the content or skills. In many instances they were a repeat of the objective with slight variations in wording. Additionally, because they were not revisited during and at the end of lessons, they did not serve the purpose of formatively guiding students' work.
- In more than 50 percent of the lessons observed, the learning tasks did not always advance student understanding, were not always closely aligned to the learning target and standards and did not always engage students in cognitively-challenging work.

Opportunities for building best practices at the school are therefore limited. Forty percent of teachers on a survey indicated that peer observation/coaching was a tool they used to improve instruction, and 50 percent indicated they engaged in classroom-based professional development activities focused on improving instruction.

The principal indicated that they do not currently provide feedback on lesson planning, and although feedback is inputted into an online system after ELEOT walkthroughs, the feedback is not substantive enough to improve teachers' practice. When asked about feedback on a survey, only 54 percent of

teachers indicated that feedback from classroom observations leads to meaningful change in instructional practices.

Teachers do not sufficiently engage students in work on projects and complex problems that would allow them to develop higher order thinking skills including critical thinking and problem solving. This was confirmed in 23 class visits, where students were not observed working on projects, nor were there posters or charts posted that indicated work on projects. The principal indicated that this has not been consistent focus.

3.3   Recommendations:

School leaders should continue to support teachers with writing standards aligned learning objectives with explicit and measurable success criteria that are aligned to the learning objective and the standards. They should also support teachers in effectively communicating these in ways that allow all student to fully understand what they are learning, why it is important and how they would know whether they met the objectives for lessons. When understand what they are learning and why it is important it contributes to them taking ownership of their learning.

School leaders should develop and enact a system for facilitating professional learning and the development and dissemination of best practices across the school. For example, when teachers attend district professional development there should be an expectation and opportunity for them to share their newly acquired knowledge and skills with their colleagues. School leaders should also explore the development of routine peer observation and the possibility of setting up model classrooms to build best practices. By doing so, teachers will be held accountable for sharing and implementing new learning which should have a positive impact on student learning.

School leaders need to provide substantive, meaningful and timely feedback to teachers on their planning and delivery of lessons. Additionally, school leaders need to hold teachers accountable for the feedback they receive and to monitor and further support them based on needs identified through the feedback process.

Teachers should plan lessons that incorporate students' work on complex problems and challenging tasks, in addition to occasional projects. School leaders should provide support and oversight for the incorporation of these into the learning experiences of students.

School leaders should ensure that teachers' work on collecting and analyzing multiple sources of data results in targeted supports for students that ensure all students make adequate progress, and that addresses the achievement gaps which currently exist at the school.

4   Individual Domains

In the sections below, each domain received a rating based on the evidence collected during the CSI Audit. The judgments have been broken down into *Factors that Support Effective Student Learning* and *Factors that Limit Effective Student Learning*.

4.1   Domain 1: Quality of Learning & Teaching

The quality of learning and teaching requires support and action in targeted areas.

4.1.1   Factors that support effective student learning:

Teachers are generally adept at dealing with behavioral issues in a measured and well-considered way that effectively supports students. All students in a focus group feel cared for and respected by most adults in the building. Teachers and students alike speak about the positive effects of the school's PBIS system and in and out of school suspensions have been both drastically reduced to just one each this school year. In all but one classroom observed, students were compliant and on task. As a result, classrooms across the school are generally conducive to learning. In student surveys, nearly 90 percent of the students affirmed that they understand the rules and behavior that everyone is expected to follow.

All teachers generally use technology to enhance their lessons. Work is projected on the whiteboard, and videos and animations employing multimodal formats are utilized to motivate and engage students and to create enhanced access to concepts and ideas being presented. Additionally, students use laptops for instructional support and practice in programs such as SuccessMaker and Lexia.

4.1.2   Factors that limit effective student learning:

Teachers utilize district benchmark assessments, which are aligned to the reading and mathematics programs, and MAP common formative assessments to assess student learning but data is not used effectively to plan next steps for student learning and to ensure that all students make adequate progress.

Posting learning objectives and success criteria, and the way they are communicated to students, needs improvement. When questioned about what they were learning, all students asked could say what they were doing, but not what they were learning and why they were learning it.

Critical thinking and problem solving are not a feature of lessons and student learning. The absence of work on complex problems and projects was confirmed by the principal who indicated that it had not been a consistent focus of the school.

Grading does not generally provide students with detailed information about what aspects of the work they did well on and how they could improve their work.

4.1.3   Recommendations

School leaders should ensure that teachers' collection and analysis of multiple sources of data results in targeted supports for students and address the achievement gaps which currently exist at the school. This work should begin in Professional Learning Community meetings, where teachers are supported to incorporate differentiated learning activities into their plans. School leaders should monitor the implementation of these plans and assess the extent to which they are meeting the needs of individuals and groups of students and whether their performance is improving. Professional development on differentiated instruction should also be provide for teachers who feel challenged by this requirement.

School leaders should continue to support teachers with writing standards-aligned learning objectives with explicit and measurable success criteria that are aligned to the learning objective and the standards. They should also support teachers in effectively communicating these in ways that allow all student to fully understand what they are learning, why it is important, and how they would know whether they met the objectives for lessons.

School leaders should ensure that student learning experiences include opportunities for developing higher order thinking skills, critical thinking, and problem solving. This can be achieved through the effective use of questioning and discussion strategies that promote effective student discourse, and the engagement of students in work on complex tasks and problems, as well as projects that promote productive struggle and the development of habits of mind that will predispose them to success. School leaders should assess teachers' readiness to meet these expectations and provide professional development where needed.

School leaders should support teachers in helping students to take ownership of their learning. In addition to students keeping Accountability Folders in which they track their MAP data, teachers should support them to identify specific things they need to work on to improve their performance. Teachers should also support students' consistent use of rubrics to help them guide their work towards stated criteria.

4.2   Domain 2: Curriculum & Assessment

Curriculum and assessment require support and action in targeted areas.

4.2.1   Factors that support effective student learning:

The curriculum is supported by periodic common assessments. These assessments are aligned to the reading and mathematics curricula, which are purported to be aligned to state standards and state tests. All teachers in a focus group and more than 90 percent of respondents to the staff survey report that they regularly use common assessments to monitor student performance. The leadership team also identified a series of assessments that teachers use. Some of these include MAP common formative assessments, FastBridge Formative Assessment System, and other unit assessments from the Wonders and Envision curricula. Despite the use of these various assessments, school leadership and teachers express some concern with their alignment to the standards, especially assessments based on the Wonders curriculum.

4.2.2   Factors that limit effective student learning:

The school utilizes the district mandated curricula for English Language Arts and mathematics, but teachers and the principal alike report that these possess gaps in alignment with the Kentucky Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

4.2.3   Recommendations:

School leaders should ensure that data from the assessments are utilized to make instructional decisions and concrete plans and interventions that are targeted to the needs of individuals and groups of students.

School leaders need to expand the learning opportunities in the extended-day program and to actively recruit students. There is need for strict monitoring of student progress to determine whether this intervention, in the absence of other structured opportunities for support, is advancing student progress to the extent needed to make need changes.

School leaders should explore ways to broaden the curriculum to include the arts and provide for the holistic development of students as well as additional opportunities for them to experience success at school. The arts provide another point of entry for students to access or connect with some core academic content as well.

The principal and her leadership team should continue to emphasize the message and expectation that teachers need to teach the standards and not the programs. School leaders should also consistently support teachers in planning and delivering standards-based instruction and hold them accountable through review of planning documents and the delivery of lessons. In at least three classrooms that were visited, there were standards identified that were not for the grade, and tasks were not always aligned to the rigor of the standards.

4.3 Domain 3: Instructional Leadership, Management, and Accountability

Instructional leadership requires support and action in targeted areas.

4.3.1 Factors that support effective student learning:

School leaders have been able to cultivate a school climate that is conducive to learning. This has been achieved through the implementation of effective policies and practices to manage and reinforce positive behaviors. The school is the only Gold Star school in the district for the implementation of PBIS. Teachers, parents, students, community partners and school leaders all regard the interactions between and among all stakeholders as strong and positive, and report that the school runs smoothly. All students and parents in focus groups regard the school as safe and students feel cared for and supported. They all report that there is an adult in the building to whom they can go in confidence if they have a problem. When questioned about the school environment on surveys, 70 percent of students, 71 percent of staff and 82 percent of parents indicate that the school has a supportive learning environment.

School leaders have implemented good measures to promote good attendance. The current rate of 96 percent at the time of the audit exceeds the district's expectation of 95 percent. Actions that contributed to the good attendance rate were repeated home visits, incentives provided to student, and communication of the positive effects of regular attendance. As a result, more students are consistently at school to benefit from learning experiences. Students in a focus group were unanimous in stating that their teachers cared about their health, safety and learning..

4.3.2 Factors that limit effective student learning:

The school improvement plan is not sufficiently known and understood by all stakeholders. Teachers indicated in a focus group that they are just superficially aware of what the plan contains and what the priorities are. They were not widely involved in creating the plan, except for representatives who served on the School-based Decision-Making team (SBDM) and are not fully aware of what they are supposed to do to ensure its success. Parents and community partners have echoed similar sentiments and are also unsure of how they can support the improvement of the school beyond their own initiatives. As a result, the school does not currently benefit from buy-in and expertise that may reside in and out of the school that may be exploited to the benefit of improving the school. On surveys administered to staff and parents, 64 percent of teachers indicated the school meets regularly to monitor implementation of the school improvement plan, and 71 percent of parents indicated that the school's improvement goals are shared with them.

School leaders have not yet been able to ensure that all staff members are highly effective through regular feedback on their instructional routines (including lesson planning, use of data, implementation of lessons, analysis of student work). principal.

Although school leaders have identified teacher leaders on each grade, they are not yet significantly involved in leadership responsibilities. They do not lead their PLC meetings. This is done by the SBIS. Teachers unanimously agree in a teacher leader focus group that they are not acquainted with the improvement plan and how they can contribute to it.

A review of the KPREP and MAP data reveal achievement gaps exists in all content areas and they persist partly because there are no detailed plans to address the gaps among the various underperforming groups.

The school leader has not yet implemented effective measures to manage change processes. Although the vision of the school is shared, commitment through collaborative leadership has not yet been built. Though a work in progress, the willingness and capacities of the principal are budding. In response to the initial feedback presented on the second day of the audit, she created an action plan to implement the feedback and recommendations. The plan is well streamlined and involved participation of her leadership team and will be disseminated to the faculty.

4.3.3   Recommendation**s:**

School leaders should ensure that communication about school initiatives related to the improvement plan is widely known by all stakeholders. In addition, they should seek buy-in and support for the initiatives by including as many stakeholders as possible in decision-making related to the improvement of the school. Opportunities for active participation from stakeholders in support of the initiatives should also be sought. Teacher leaders should be especially targeted in this regard. They can be a conduit for information between leadership and faculty and can serve as motivators for their peers in implementing the initiatives and for taking ownership for change processes.

School leaders should ensure that consistent feedback is provided to teachers about their instructional routines. Feedback should be substantive, meaningful and timely and should be monitored for its impact on teachers' practice. Teachers should receive targeted feedback on their planning that is streamlined and focused on priority areas. Feedback on instructional delivery should be timely and focused on priority areas, which may be different for different teachers.

School leaders should ensure that data collection and analysis results in instructional decisions that are targeted to individual and groups of students to address their specific needs. The instructional decisions should yield measurable plans that are monitored for their effectiveness and revised when found to be lacking. Attention should be paid to underperforming groups to address achievement gaps and to ensure that all students make adequate progress. This work should take place largely in PLCs.

School leaders should adopt a big picture perspective of the school, identifying progress on the priorities and how they are working to move the school to effectiveness. Critical analysis of initiatives should be undertaken to determine strengths and challenges, with a view to adjusting, revising, and course correcting. Involvement of all stakeholders in this process through shared leadership and delegated responsibilities is pivotal to this end. The principal coach could be a resource in this regard.

4.4   Domain 4: The Culture of Learning

The culture of learning is established.

4.4.1   Factors that support effective student learning:

School leaders and staff ensure that the school provides a learning environment that is safe, respectful and welcoming. Most students (10/13) and all parents in focus groups regard the school as safe and welcoming. In surveys, 72 percent of student report feeling safe at school, and 88 percent of parents report that their child feels safe. Students feel cared for and shared that teachers advance their best interest. Parents feel welcome and valued. The principal explained that new parent to the school are "on boarded" by the registrar. They receive a packet with information about the school and are invited to participate in a breakfast event when school expectations are explained.

School leaders and staff promote, show respect for, and maintain positive relationships with all members of the school community. All staff model and reinforce expectations of appropriate behavior. Positive interactions among teachers, between teachers and administrators, between teachers and students, and between staff and parents are evident. This was confirmed in student, teacher, and parent focus groups and surveys, as well as in conversations with the school principal.

4.4.2　Factors that limit effective student learning:

Although school leaders and staff ensure that the learning environment is safe, respectful, and welcoming, the learning environment is not yet sufficiently challenging to help students develop critical thinking, problem solving, and other higher order thinking skills. Seven out of 13 students in a focus group indicated that the work they get is too easy and not challenging. Additionally, most lessons observed demonstrated the absence of rigor and work on complex problems and challenging tasks or on projects. There were too many instances when students worked on a worksheet or simply filled in a graphic organizer without having opportunity to bring together, in a cohesive whole, seemingly disparate bits of information on the graphic organizer, which in many instances were not well written.

4.4.3　Recommendations:

School leaders should ensure that in addition to the safe and welcoming aspects of the school, that the learning environment should be also characterized by a culture of high expectations with numerous opportunities for students to be appropriately challenged in their learning.

4.5　Domain 5: Family and Community Engagement

Family and community engagement is established.

4.5.1　Factors that support effective student learning:

School leaders and staff place a high priority on regularly communicating with families to build collaborative relationships and to engage them as partners in the learning of their children. The principal explained that the school employs multiple means to communicate with families including: planners, letters about school events, report cards for academic progress, phone blast, through Infinite Campus (the student management system) and through Class DOJO. Seventy-five percent of students report in the survey that the school communicates regularly with their families, and 73 percent of staff agree that the school effectively communicates with families. Parents in a focus group indicated that they liked Class DOJO because of its ease of use and its facilitation of reciprocal communication. The parents in that focus group corroborated the multiple means of communication as described by the principal and expressed satisfaction with the way the school communicates with them about the academic and social progress of their children. The principal highlighted Class DOJO communication as a non-negotiable for teachers. She also indicated that parents contact her if they do not receive feedback for their child/ren's teachers.

The school has been successful in establishing partnerships with community entities that support the school in various ways. The principal listed 15 different organizations that support the school in the Self Evaluation Form (SEF). Among them is the Eastland Park Nazarene church, Guide Realty, Costco, and the AKA Sorority. These various organizations support the school with initiatives including a food program, backpack program, mentoring of students, hosting back-to-school rallies, tutoring in reading, and supporting other non-academic events at the school. The three partners in a focus group indicated that they came to the school on their own initiative being aware of the performance of the school and their desire to help.

School leaders make concerted efforts to celebrate the cultural diversity of the school and ensure that these important aspects of the school's life are publicized to encourage parent and community participation. In recognition of its many cultural traditions, the school has instituted opportunities to celebrate its diversity including Hispanic Heritage Month and African Heritage Celebration in February.

4.5.2 Factors that limit effective student learning:

The school does not yet have a system for recognizing parents as assets, encouraging and managing their volunteerism, and mentoring and building their capacity to support the school and their children's learning. As a result, parents remain an underutilized resource that can support the school.

Only 40 percent of staff reported in the survey that the school seeks input from parents for important decisions. Parents in a focus group indicated that they are not significantly involved in decision-making, except for the one parent on the Advisory Council. None of the parents who attended the focus group meeting was aware of the instructional areas of focus or the school's goals. The PTA started two weeks prior to the audit. As a result, parents are only superficially engaged with the school, and are not encouraged to be active agents of change and to advocate for their children.

4.5.3 Recommendations:

School leaders should work to develop a system for identifying parent volunteers, place them in mentored roles, and build their capacity to support the school and their children's learning. School leaders should strategically work with the newly formed PTA to develop a plan to promote and increase parent volunteerism and engagement with the school.

School leaders should explore ways to more meaningfully engage parents in the operations of the school such as in decision-making. This would serve to communicate a message that they are regarded as an asset to the school and can potentially bolster their engagement and support.

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