GAPSS Review – Ariel Flinn

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

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

PL 1.1 Learning Teams			
☐ **Not Addressed**	☐ **Emergent**	**X Operational**	☐ **Fully Operational**
Teachers do not participate in learning teams or meet regularly to plan for instruction.	Some teachers in some grade levels or subject areas meet to plan for instruction, but meetings do not occur regularly and the work is not aligned with school improvement goals.	Most teachers meet regularly in learning teams to plan for instruction (e.g., develop lesson plans, examine student work, monitor student progress). This collaborative work would be enhanced by clear alignment of group expectations with the school improvement goals.	All teachers participate in learning teams throughout the year and meet regularly to plan for instruction (e.g., develop lesson plans, examine student work, monitor student progress). The collaborative work is aligned with the school improvement goals.

EVIDENCE: The teachers at Findley Oaks meet regularly in grade level teams as well as vertical teams and optional cohort teams. The administrators create time in the schedule for common planning time each week as well as provide substitutes and duty days for teachers to collaboratively plan entire units of study. Teachers work in teams to create common lessons, common assessments and compare data. However, the goals of the SIP are too broad to be directly impacted by this collaborative work. Additionally, the goals in the SIP are rarely reviewed after its original publishing at the beginning of the year, so neither the teachers nor the administrators compare work done in collaborative teams to these stated goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The school (teachers and administrators) can create more specific goals for the SIP. This would give the collaborative teams a more specific direction to work for improvement. Additionally, the administrators can review the goals in the SIP throughout the school year to monitor progress and encourage collaborative teams to do the same to determine whether or not their collaborative work is helping to achieve those goals.

PL 1.2 Learning Community

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

EVIDENCE: The administrators create time in the schedule for collaborative planning within each grade level as well as vertical teams for school-wide initiatives such as STEM, humanities, and character education. However, there is little to no guidance regarding how these meetings should be run or what specific goals should be accomplished or how to accomplish them. Some teams have developed and follow meeting norms, but most teams do not use the norms they have created for their meetings. Furthermore, some grade levels are more successful at true collaboration and sharing, whereas other grade levels do not work as a cooperative team and have a hard time sharing their own lesson plans with others.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Administrators can provide professional development to team leaders about how to conduct a PLC meeting so that these teams can more successfully engage in collaboration and share best practices. Administrators can also create specific goals for teams to accomplish in their meetings and hold those teams accountable for these goals.

PL 1.3 Instructional Leadership Development and Service			
☐ **Not Addressed**	**X Emergent**	☐ **Operational**	☐ **Fully Operational**
There are few if any opportunities for teachers to participate in instructional leadership development experiences, serve in instructional leadership roles, or participate in supporting school-based professional learning.	There are opportunities for teachers to participate in preparing for and serving in instructional leadership roles and contributing to the school-based professional learning plans. However, the opportunities are limited to a small number of teachers.	There are many opportunities for teachers to serve in instructional leadership roles and develop as instructional leaders. They are highly engaged in planning, supporting, and communicating professional learning in the school. This would be enhanced if there were more opportunities for instructional leadership roles among various personnel.	A variety of teachers take advantage of opportunities to participate in instructional leadership development experiences and serve in instructional leadership roles (e.g., instructional coach, mentor, facilitator). They plan, advocate for support of, and articulate the benefits and intended results of professional learning.

EVIDENCE: Teachers who attend workshops and conferences are sometimes asked to redeliver information to staff at faculty meetings, but only a small number of teachers attend these workshops, and only a small number of workshops are ever redelivered. Teachers may sometimes approach administration for an opportunity to redeliver, but for the most part these teachers do not get that opportunity. Additionally, there are no formal structures in place for sharing best practices beyond informal staff interactions. Furthermore, administrators often create the goals in the SIP with little to no input from teachers other than a final approval by the school leadership team.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Administrators can create more opportunities for teachers to redeliver information from conferences and workshops, and set up formal structures such as peer observations and mentors to share best practices. Administrators can offer this opportunity to any teacher, not just those already serving in a formal leadership capacity.

PL 1.4 School Culture for Team Learning and Continuous Improvement			
☐ **Not Addressed**	☐ **Emergent**	**X Operational**	☐ **Fully Operational**
There is little or no evidence of the principal and other leaders establishing ongoing team learning with clearly articulated expectations for professional learning.	There is some evidence the principal and other leaders support a culture involving ongoing team learning and continuous improvement. However, there is not a clearly articulated plan for professional learning for teachers and administrators.	There is general evidence the principal and other leaders support a culture involving ongoing learning and continuous improvement through a plan for professional learning for teachers and administrators. The professional learning would be enhanced by including a variety of designs (e.g., lesson study, peer observations, modeling, instructional coaching, collaborative teacher meetings, etc.) constituting high-quality professional learning experiences.	The principal and other leaders support a school culture that reflects ongoing team learning and continuous improvement. The principal and other leaders plan for high-quality professional learning, articulate intended results of school-based professional learning, and participate in professional learning to become more effective instructional leaders.

EVIDENCE: The administrators follow a plan for professional development that is adapted from the districts' requirements. Administrators hire outside experts or ask district-level officials to deliver professional development aligned to school and district goals, such as improving reading and math scores. The administrators adopted the Lucy Calkins method and offered other book studies, and they have supported teachers in learning and implementing this method in their instruction. They offer duty days to teachers to go to workshops and conferences to learn about specific methods related to school and district learning goals. However, there is little to no input from teachers about what is needed, what is successful and unsuccessful, and what they want to learn about. Administrators rarely if ever gather follow-up data to check if teachers are implementing the strategies covered in professional learning or if they are working to improve student achievement.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Administrators and grade level teams can create structures such as peer observation for teachers to see how to incorporate new methods into existing practice. Administrators can identify strong teachers to act as instructional peer coaches to help other teachers implement new methods in their classroom. Administrators can increase their classroom visits in order to monitor and measure implementation and results thereof.

PL 1.5 Job-Embedded Learning and Collaboration			
☐ **Not Addressed**	☐ **Emergent**	**X Operational**	☐ **Fully Operational**
Teachers spend little or no time during the work-week learning and collaborating with colleagues to improve their use of curriculum, assessment, instruction, and technology.	Some teachers spend a small amount of time during the work-week collaborating with colleagues. However, this time is often focused on non-curricular topics and typically occurs after school.	Most teachers spend time during a workday each week collaborating with colleagues about curriculum, assessment, instruction and technology use in the classroom. This professional learning would be enhanced by allocating more time each week for job-embedded learning (e.g., lesson study, peer-observations, modeling, instructional coaching, teacher meetings).	Teachers spend a significant part of their work-week in job-embedded learning and collaboration with colleagues addressing curriculum, assessment, instruction, and technology. They receive sufficient support resources (e.g., materials, time, training) and assist with securing additional resources necessary (e.g., funding, time, technology) to sustain their learning. (NSDC Standards recommend that formal and informal job-embedded learning take place during at least 25% of educators' professional time. Such time can be devoted to lesson study, peer observations and coaching, modeling, conferencing, teacher meetings, mentoring.)

EVIDENCE: Administrators structure the schedule in such a way that allows on-the-job learning in the form of common planning time during the day when students go to Specials and other outside of class activities. Some days are designated as work-alone days, but most are set aside for collaborative work. Occasionally grade levels are given whole or half duty days for more in-depth collaborative planning. However, teachers do not feel this is enough time for planning and often work on their own before or after school to supplement their own planning. Additionally, these meetings rarely cover technology implementation and usually only focus on lesson planning and assessment.

RECOMMENDATIONS: If possible, administrators can create more time in the schedule for common planning time. Grade level teachers could occasionally use planning time for collaborating in a way other than common lesson planning, such as taking that time to conduct peer observations to gather best practices or work with the technology specialist to improve technology implementation strategies.

PL 1.6 Resources Support Job-Embedded Professional Learning			
☐ **Not Addressed**	**X Emergent**	☐ **Operational**	☐ **Fully Operational**
Resources are not allocated for job-embedded professional learning that is aligned with high-priority school improvement goals. Little if any professional development is devoted to helping teachers use technology to enhance student learning.	Some resources are allocated for professional learning. However, much of the professional learning is conducted primarily after school and is not aligned with the high-priority school improvement goals. There is limited professional development devoted to helping teachers use technology to enhance student learning.	Most resources for professional learning are allocated for the identified high-priority school improvement goals. However, providing more job-embedded learning opportunities and professional development would enhance teachers' use of technology to support student learning. In other cases, these forms of professional development need to be more ongoing and sustained to ensure actual classroom implementation of training strategies and processes.	Resources are allocated to support job-embedded professional learning that is aligned with high-priority school improvement goals and technology supporting student learning. There is sustained commitment to ensuring that these professional development activities result in successful classroom implementation. There is also a process in place to determine the value-added of key strategies and processes, i.e., how they impact student achievement and related organizational short- and long-range goals.

EVIDENCE: Administrators create a budget specifically for professional learning that includes funding for outside speakers, compensation for substitutes during duty days, and conference and workshop registration fees. While the outside speakers are usually hired to discuss strategies specifically related to school goals, the duty days for collaborative planning are not structured in a specific way to enhance school goals but rather just to focus on basic instructional planning. The workshops attended by teachers may or may not be related to school goals and are rarely redelivered. A handful of teachers specifically seek and attend outside opportunities for learning about technology such as workshops and conferences, but this is not a common practice and technology itself is rarely or ever covered within job-embedded learning.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Administrators can give teachers specific directions for job-embedded learning during duty days. Administrators can find outside workshops and conferences that directly related to high priority school goals and send teachers to these conferences with the explicit expectation that they will redeliver to staff. The technology specialist can make herself more of a visible asset in working with grade levels during their collaborative planning time to increase understanding of technology implementation strategies.

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

PL 2.1 Collaborative Analysis of Data			
☐ **Not Addressed**	**X Emergent**	☐ **Operational**	☐ **Fully Operational**
Teachers and/or administrators use personal experiences or opinions to determine student and adult learning needs and goals. Data is not collected and analyzed in monitoring school and classroom improvement strategies,	Teachers and/or administrators work in isolation or with limited representation to review student summative data and determine student and adult learning needs and goals. Student and teacher data is collected and analyzed at the end of the year to monitor the accomplishment of classroom and school goals.	Teachers and administrators collaboratively analyze disaggregated student learning, demographic, perception, and process data to identify student and adult learning needs and goals. They collect and analyze relevant student and teacher data at the beginning and end of the year to monitor and revise school and classroom improvement strategies. Accomplishments are celebrated and results are regularly reported to family and community.	Teachers and administrators collaboratively analyze disaggregated student learning, demographic, perception, and process data to identify student and adult learning needs and goals. They continuously (minimum of 4 times a year) collect and analyze relevant student and teacher data (e.g. action research, analyzing student work, classroom observations, Awareness Walks, and surveys) to monitor and revise school and classroom improvement strategies. Accomplishments are celebrated and results are regularly reported to family and community.

EVIDENCE: Administrators and district leaders look at end-of-year summative data from state tests (CRCT) to determine learning needs for teachers and students with little input from teachers themselves. New initiatives are often incompatible or even contradictory to previously implemented strategies due to a lack of data showing effectiveness of strategies until the very end of the year. Teachers and administrators do not review school goals throughout the year to monitor progress.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Administrators can open dialogue about professional learning needs to teachers rather than creating them without input. Teachers can submit feedback about the level of success and feasibility of professional learning initiatives throughout the implementation process rather than at the end. Teachers can advocate for their own needs by disaggregating data to uncover learning gaps that would not be shown in summative state assessments.

PL 2.2 Evaluating Impact of Professional Learning			
X Not Addressed	☐ **Emergent**	☐ **Operational**	☐ **Fully Operational**
The principal and other leaders develop and implement a plan for evaluating teachers' reactions to professional development events. Teachers' contributions to the evaluation are limited to providing satisfaction ratings. The evaluation identifies changes in teacher knowledge and skills as a result of participation, but it does not evaluate changes in practice or impact on student learning.	The principal and other leaders develop and implement a plan for evaluating professional development events. Teachers contribute to the evaluation by collecting and analyzing summative student learning data. The evaluation identifies changes in teacher knowledge and skills as a result of participation and year-end student performance, but it does not evaluate change in teacher practice.	The principal and other leaders develop and implement a comprehensive plan for conducting ongoing (formative and summative for a one- to two-year period) evaluation of the impact of professional development on teacher practices and student learning. The evaluation also emphasizes changes in school culture, organizational structures, policies, and processes. Teachers contribute to the evaluation by collecting and analyzing relevant student learning and process data.	The principal and other leaders develop and implement a comprehensive plan for conducting ongoing (both formative and summative over a three- to five-year period) evaluation of the impact of professional development on teacher practices and student learning. Evaluation also emphasizes changes in school culture, organizational structures, policies, and processes. Teachers contribute to the evaluation by collecting and analyzing a variety (student learning, demographic, perception, and process) of relevant data. The plan specifies the evaluation question(s), data sources, data collection methodology, and data analysis processes.

EVIDENCE: Other than a superficial monitoring of implementation during classroom visits, there is no formal plan for administrators to gather feedback from teachers about the implementation of professional learning initiatives. Teachers' opinions and satisfaction are rarely taken into account and teachers are told to continue with the initiative whether or not they find it worthwhile in their classes. Administrators are unresponsive to teachers' feedback and rarely seek it out themselves. There are no structures in place to gather data that measures impact on student learning.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Administrators should be more respectful of teachers' opinions regarding professional learning initiatives. The school can work to develop a comprehensive plan that measures not only teacher satisfaction but also student response to intervention at both the formative and summative level. Teachers themselves should also be encouraged to collect data related to these specific strategies to feel more involved in the evaluation process.

PL 2.3 Interpreting and Using Research Results

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

EVIDENCE: Administrators do read educational research articles and bring their interpretations of these results to the school leadership team for discussion. The administrators engage in conversation with these teachers about the strategies used in the research and discuss the possible implications of implementing these strategies at our school specifically. However, administrators do not discuss advanced research interpretation such as validity and reliability. They do not open this opportunity for discussion to the larger population of teachers, nor do they support teachers in learning how to interpret research results.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Administrators can create a book study that covers how to read and interpret educational research and offer this book study to any interested teachers. Administrators can then create a group of teachers from those who participate to develop a school strategy research team that can help interpret research results and extrapolate these findings to our specific school situation.

PL 2. 4 Long-Term, In-Depth Professional Learning			
☐ Not Addressed	X Emergent	☐ Operational	☐ Fully Operational
Teachers experience single, stand-alone professional development events that are typically large group, workshop designs. There is little if any evidence of implementation or change in practice in classrooms. No emphasis is given to enhancing teachers' content knowledge or understanding.	Teachers attend multiple workshops on the same topic throughout the year to gain information about new programs or practices. They experiment with the new practices alone and infrequently with limited school-based support for implementation. No emphasis is given to enhancing teachers' content knowledge or understanding.	Teachers participate in long-term (two- to three-year period), in-depth professional learning that includes a variety of appropriate professional development designs including the use of technology. The various designs are aligned with the intended improvement outcomes. They include but are not limited to follow-up support for implementing new classroom practices (e.g., collaborative lesson design, professional networks, analyzing student work, problem solving sessions, curriculum development, coursework, action research, and classroom observations). Some evidence is present of attention to enhancing teachers' content knowledge.	Teachers participate in long-term (two- to three-year period), in-depth professional learning that engages learning teams in a variety of appropriate professional development designs including the use of technology. The various designs are aligned with the intended improvement outcomes. They include but are not limited to extensive, follow-up support for implementing new classroom practices (e.g., collaborative lesson design, professional networks, analyzing student work, problem solving sessions, curriculum development, coursework, action research, and coaching with feedback). A major focus of ongoing professional development is a commitment to maintaining and updating all teachers' knowledge and understanding of the content they are teaching and changes occurring in their field(s).

EVIDENCE: Administrators set up professional learning opportunities for teachers that often include ongoing workshops with a district official regarding a specific strategy related to school goals in content areas, such as the Lucy Calkins method to improve reading skills. These do not typically include the use of technology in instruction. Although teachers are exposed to the same method in an ongoing format, administrators do not offer follow-up support themselves other than bringing the expert back for additional workshops. There are also no formal structures in place for teachers to support each other in the implementation of these strategies.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Administrators can offer more support themselves in the interim between workshops with the district official. They can also set up formal structures for teachers to support each other in the implementation of these strategies, such as peer observation to see the strategy put into practice and instructional coaching to send strong teachers to others' classrooms for support. Administrators can set up ongoing professional learning opportunities for teachers to learn technology implementation strategies for the classroom.

PL 2.5 Alignment of Professional Learning with Expected Outcomes

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

EVIDENCE: Whole-group faculty meetings are generally the only time that administrators themselves lead professional learning events. These meetings cover topics that generally do not connect to past or future topics. These meetings are mostly treated as an overview of a certain topic such as new testing practices, teacher evaluation, or county news and are not used to teach a new strategy for implementation in classrooms, nor are they aligned with school goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Administrators can find strategies they want to share with teachers and work to deliver these in professional learning opportunities rather than rely solely on outside experts to deliver this instruction. They can also support teachers in what they are already learning by delivering additional training on the same topic. Administrators can look to the goals stated in the school improvement plan to guide their professional learning implementation.

PL 2.6 Building Capacity to Use Research Results

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

EVIDENCE: Most in-school professional development activities are conducted as whole-group, lecture style instruction. Teachers often note that a frustrating aspect of these professional development sessions is the lack of differentiation for adult learners, even though we as teachers are asked to differentiate for the different needs of our students. Occasionally these PD activities will include various discussion protocols to heighten engagement, but mostly they are conducted as whole-group lecture style. Any handouts that are provided at these meetings are simple fact lists and are not meant to be used as instructional tools for teachers. Special Area teachers are often asked to attend content meetings that have nothing to do with their own content, and administrators do not make opportunities for learning in different content areas available to teachers within the school setting. These teachers must instead rely on outside workshops and conferences for this opportunity.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Administrators can set up professional learning activities with adult learning needs in mind, specifically hands-on experience and collaboration with peers. Administrators can use various learning and discussion protocols to engage teachers in the professional learning topic. Administrators can often differentiate the learning needs of teachers based on ability, experience, content area, and interest to heighten engagement and effectiveness of the professional learning.

PL 2.7 Knowledge about Effective Group Processes			
☐ Not Addressed	☐ Emergent	X Operational	☐ Fully Operational
Teachers and administrators lack knowledge about effective group processes and/or work alone, disregarding collective responsibility for student learning.	Teachers and administrators have knowledge of stages of group development and effective interaction skills, but lack skill in group process strategies needed for productive collaborative work. As a result, colleagues work in temporary groups often encountering unresolved conflict or frustration. Technology (e.g., email, chat rooms, and websites) is used to support collegial interactions.	Teachers and administrators have knowledge and skills regarding group processes (e.g., group decision making strategies, stages of group development, effective interaction skills, and conflict resolution) that are necessary to accomplish tasks and satisfy the interpersonal expectations of the participants. As a result, the school culture is characterized by trust, collegiality, and collective responsibility for student learning where colleagues work collaboratively. Technology (e.g., subject area networks, lesson sharing, seminars) is used to support collegial interactions.	Teachers and administrators have knowledge and skills to monitor and improve group processes (e.g., group decision-making strategies, stages of group development, effective interaction skills, and conflict resolution) that are necessary to accomplish tasks and satisfy the interpersonal expectations of the participants. As a result, the school culture is characterized by trust, collegiality, and collective responsibility for student learning where colleagues work collaboratively in established, ongoing learning teams. Technology (e.g., online discussions, web casts, and seminars, educational blogs, listservs, downloadable resources) is used to support collegial interactions and to ensure effective and sustained implementation.

EVIDENCE: Because teachers work so often in grade level PLCs, teachers have a strong knowledge of how to work and interact in collaborative groups. Some aspects of group interaction could be developed, such as conflict resolution, but teachers generally have a strong sense of trust and collaboration with each other. Vertical teams and common planning also help instill a sense of collective responsibility for student learning throughout the school beyond the walls of individual teachers' classroom walls. This sense of shared responsibility for student learning is perhaps also a result of the whole-faculty training on state tests regardless of whether your grade level implements the test. Teachers use technology to engage with each other both professionally via email and Twitter accounts as well as personally via Facebook and personal email.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Administrators can work with grade levels and individuals to develop conflict resolution strategies as they arise in collaborative teams (although this is not a common problem). Administrators can also work with the school technology specialist to better utilize technology such as screencasts, discussion forums, Wikis, blogs, etc. to engage in collaborative interactions beyond the grade level. This also gives teachers an opportunity to engage with these topics in their own time, which allows for more flexibility and therefore even more interaction among teachers.

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

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

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

EVIDENCE: The school ESOL teacher has provided some training to teachers with ESOL students about how to adjust instruction for these students, and special education teachers make sure to support teachers working with students with learning disabilities. Teachers generally model respect for all students and backgrounds and encourage students to learn more about each other's backgrounds through unstructured social interactions as well as structured learning activities such as the Genealogy Fair. Teachers hold high expectations for both academic achievement and discipline for all students, and help all students understand these expectations. However, there is no school-wide discussion on how to implement specific strategies such as culturally responsive pedagogy, and teachers rarely disaggregate data to uncover learning gaps among various populations in the school or their own classrooms.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Administrators can create opportunities for teachers to learn about strategies such as culturally responsive pedagogy that help teachers understand how to not only understand and respect but also to celebrate student diversity through both social interactions and curriculum.

PL 3.2 Deep Understanding of Subject Matter and Instructional Strategies

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

EVIDENCE: 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade teachers have recently moved to a departmentalization model where teachers only teach 1-2 subjects per day in order to specialize in that content area. Both the school and the district have directed focus, mostly through teacher evaluation discussions and collaborative grade level work, on how to incorporate differentiation and rigor to classes so that each student is learning to his/her own fullest potential. Teachers collaborate on strategies that heighted student-centered learning and engagement such as project-based learning. Teachers have begun to implement more performance assessments such as essays and experiments rather than traditional multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank tests and quizzes. Teachers use flexible grouping to differentiate by ability and interest and take time to learn specific pedagogy-content knowledge (PCK) strategies for their own content area.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Teachers can take the development of the PCK to the next level by focusing on TPCK (technology-pedagogy-content knowledge) to incorporate technology tools that are specific to that content area and appropriate pedagogical strategies to heighten student engagement and authentic learning. Teachers can also work with colleagues to create more cross-curricular lessons and units that heighten achievement and understanding in two or more different subject areas.

PL 3.3 Sustained Development of Deep Understanding of Content and Strategies

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

EVIDENCE: While administrators do not themselves lead formal professional development to enhance teacher knowledge of pedagogy and content, they do support teachers in these needs by sending teachers to workshops and conferences, hiring outside experts to conduct professional development on these topics, and directing teachers to online resources that build teacher knowledge. The school places a high emphasis on research-based teaching practices such as rigor and differentiation. Administrators specifically look for these instructional strategies during classroom observations and respond to their observations by working individually with teachers who do not demonstrate understanding or application of these strategies. Administrators structure the schedule in a way that allows for collaborative planning and interaction. However, these topics are often discussed in whole-group faculty meetings and are not differentiated to meet the needs of the different grade levels or content areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Administrators can come to grade level meetings, the time for which they themselves built into the schedule, in order to assist teachers in a small group setting based on the context of their own grade level pedagogical needs as well as content area needs rather than generalize these strategies in whole-group settings in order to deepen teachers' understanding and improve implementation of these strategies.

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

EVIDENCE: Teachers have quarterly conferences with parents on students' progress in class. Teachers host a "Curriculum Night" at the beginning of the year for parents to get a sneak preview of the curriculum being covered in the grade level that school year. The administrators host monthly "Coffee and Conversation" meetings with parents to discuss instructional initiatives taking place with the school and offer parents and avenue for input. Teachers are encouraged to send home classroom communication at least on a weekly basis to keep parents up-to-date on classroom events. The school sends out a weekly flyer about whole-school events and news. Teachers send specific strategies home for parents to help their students practice skills at home, generally in the form of review games and online resources. The PTA encourages parent involvement with various events throughout the year, both after school and during the school day. Teachers also send home bi-weekly "Thursday papers," which include a sampling of student work with teacher feedback in order for parents to monitor student progress. Parents have access to their students' grades at all times through the Home Access Center resources. Teachers send home discipline notes as needed.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The school can develop a more diverse committee of administrators, teachers, and support staff to reach out to parents and the community in order to have a more balanced two-way communication that is more reflective of the various voices of the faculty and staff. Teachers can host more "Curriculum Nights" throughout the year rather than just the beginning to give parents a more detailed overview of what the students are learning and to discuss specific strategies for helping students practice skills at home.

References

Findley Oaks Elementary (2013). *School improvement plan*. Retrieved November 10, 2014 from

http://school.fultonschools.org/es/findleyoaks/Documents/2013- %202014/School%20Improvement%20Plan%201314.pdf