

## Standards “Self Assessment” Summary

### **Domain 1: Leadership Capacity**

The vision of the Clayton County Public Schools is to be a district of excellence by preparing all students to live and compete successfully in a global society. In order to achieve this, we embark on the mission of being held accountable to all stakeholders for providing an education that empowers students to achieve academic and personal goals and to become college and career ready, productive, responsible citizens. Our belief statements guide our mission and are the basis of our Strategic Improvement Plan.

In order to review, revise, and communicate the mission, vision, belief statements, and strategic goals, all stakeholders are provided the opportunity to participate. The communication for all activities regarding this process is publicized through printed materials, television advertisements, website notifications, calling posts, social media outlets, and on school campus marquees.

Each school site also seeks stakeholder input on the school’s mission and vision which are aligned with the district’s statements. A key component at this level is the inclusion of the School Council which is mandated by Georgia law and is intended to bring parents and community members together with school personnel for decisions regarding school improvement.

Collaborating on the continuous improvement process at the district level is the primary purpose of the District Cross-Functional Team. There is dedicated time each week for district leaders to participate in professional development and to refine the Strategic Improvement Plan. These team meetings generate action steps and timelines that hold personnel accountable.

A systematic process to review, revise, and communicate the Strategic Improvement Plan is implemented continuously. Although a variety of communiqués is used to inform stakeholders of progress, improvements, changes, and challenges, many stakeholders report there is a need for clearer communication and documented evidence of actions and outcomes. Stakeholders will continue to be engaged in school and district improvement processes through workshops hosted at the Parent Resource Centers located at each school and district level meetings.

The committee for implementation capacity found after reviewing the governing authority and its’ effectiveness in ensuring policies and processes, it has predominantly shown that the Clayton County Board and Superintendent work collaboratively to support the system’s operations and did so with good quality. The Board, Superintendent, and all school support systems work primarily, and with excellent quality, to ensure that all budgeted allocations are used to provide resources to strengthen the capacity of the system to improve teaching and learning.

When engaging in professional development, the Board and the Superintendent attend ongoing trainings on a regular and frequent basis to not only strengthen their roles but also their responsibilities in the continuous improvement process. They regularly attend the Board training through the Carl Vinson Institute at the University of Georgia and have regular board retreats

throughout the year. The majority also attend the State Board Conference each year and other pertinent and relevant trainings.

Using the continuous improvement model to assess the organizational effectiveness, the Superintendent has taken an intentional approach to re-organize the system's leadership roles and structure. As a result, the capacity of the system has been strengthened by good quality decisions. The system-wide strategic plan implemented under the leadership of the Clayton County School Board and School Superintendent have taken deliberate actions to improve the capacity of the system's teaching and learning. The Superintendent, Principals, and other system level leaders, have monitored this continuing process to ensure excellent quality output.

The implementation capacity committee has identified that most of the system's leadership frequently engages in professional development and training in support of their roles and responsibilities. As a result of the system-wide leadership remodel, the system staff positions have also experienced adjustments. New staff members are often trained to effectively perform the duties and responsibilities of their roles to provide quality support in the success of all learners. The system staff have been provided the opportunity to engage in ongoing professional development and trainings in support of their roles and responsibilities on a frequent basis.

While parental and community engagement is growing, there are limited measures to analyze the confidence level of the system's capacity to improve learning outcomes for their children. Each school is rated using a parent satisfaction survey to determine the satisfaction level of individual schools. Currently, the percentages of returned surveys by parents could be improved at the local level.

Community engagement is a high priority for the Superintendent and his support team. While community support is growing under the new leadership, there is much room for growth in the area. The Superintendent has taken action to address this barrier by gaining School Board approval to establish a new division titled "Community Engagement, Governmental Relations, and Partnerships."

## **Domain 2: Learning Capacity**

Strategic Goal One supports the AdvancED's Impact of Instruction. At the onset of the 2017-2018 school year, Clayton County Public Schools' Board of Education appointed a new superintendent – Dr. Morcease J. Beasley. To ensure a coherent instructional system, Dr. Beasley immediately established and has consistently communicated to all stakeholders five *Focus Areas* that foster a greater impact of instruction on learners. They include:

1. Academically challenging and safe environments grounded in the instructional priorities of literacy, numeracy, critical thinking, and technology integration
2. Academic and wrap-around support for students to achieve grade-level and above grade-level content mastery
3. Professional development to improve content knowledge, pedagogy, and leadership capacity
4. Family and community engagement, governmental relations, and partnerships grounded in responsiveness, excellent customer service, and collaboration

## 5. Communication, public relations, and marketing to improve community support and image

These focus areas help drive the district's commitment to high performance. Additionally, they emphasize the need to align instruction with the rigorous expectations of the standards, to administer assessments and use data results to determine the necessary training for teachers and supports for students and to intentionally engage and collaborate with various stakeholders in order to cultivate successful outcomes for our students. Essentially, the expectations for teaching and learning have been clearly defined by the district's Superintendent.

To ensure alignment, academic coordinators use the state provided instructional standards and supporting documents to create the district's curricular materials such as scope-and-sequences, instructional calendars, supporting resources, and assessments. These supports identify what students should know, do, and demonstrate. The district expects all instructional staff to plan, prepare, and deliver instruction using the state standards and the district's curriculum resources. To support high-quality instruction, each school has been assigned instructional site facilitators for the four core content areas. They attend monthly professional learning and are expected to redeliver the critical content to teachers. Their major duties involve: facilitating collaborative planning, engaging teachers in data analysis and usage, conducting side-by-side coaching, and modeling lessons that reflect the discipline-specific standards and high-impact practices.

These high-impact practices were developed to emphasize the evidence-based strategies that contribute to students learning at deeper levels. Although all of these communicated processes and instructional expectations are not being implemented across the district with fidelity, there is evidence that more teachers are planning for and delivering standards-based instruction. Furthermore, recent student growth data from the Georgia Milestones Assessments indicate students are showing growth in achievement.

Through various district platforms, district and school-level leaders receive ongoing communication on the leader's role in the continuous improvement process. Leaders are required to monitor and evaluate learner engagement and outcomes and show evidence of their school-level monitoring and accountability practices. One way the district monitors these efforts is through instructional focus walks. These are conducted to measure the quality of instructional delivery, to engage school leaders in discussions on what additional support is needed, and to provide the necessary support (e.g. training, side-by-side coaching, resources, etc.) based on findings from the observations. The walkthrough reports are another source of data that leaders can use to determine strengths and areas for improvement. Based on feedback from various stakeholders, it was indicated that leaders and teachers have access to several data points in order to monitor student learning; however, the intentional and purposeful use of the data requires continued development and focus. As a result, more professional learning is needed on how to use data to improve teaching and to increase learning.

In addition to data sources, the school system provides an abundance of resources and instructional intervention programs for all students. Team members from Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment and Student Support Services are making stronger efforts to collaborate to ensure appropriate emphasis on instruction while maintaining compliance. It is important for this collaboration to occur to support the needs of all learners: Regular Education,

Special Education, and English Learners. Additionally, there are various intervention programs available to close students' achievement gaps. These programs support students' literacy and numeracy remediation or acceleration needs. Through diagnostic testing, the schools are able to identify which students qualify for the Early Intervention Program, Remedial Education Program, or Gifted and Talented programs. The work of the district and schools is to ensure the percent of students requiring remediation is decreasing while increasing the percent of students who qualify for enrichment or advanced learning opportunities.

District stakeholders understand that a key ingredient to high performance is stronger involvement from parents, community, and business leaders. While various systems are in place for parents, families and legal guardians to connect their children's learning experiences with engagement, outcomes, and overall learner success, the active involvement of parents is minimal based on survey data and other artifacts. The Superintendent has instituted methods to better engage this larger audience, such as conducting community forums, creating advisory committees, and using multiple and varied ways to communicate the business and successes of the school system. Based on observations and discussions at community forums, some community members appear to have a positive perception of the district's quality of teaching and learning and overall systems of operating. This indicates that there is a shift in the community's perception.

The Superintendent has been instrumental establishing a commitment to high performance by increasing communication methods, collaboration, and continued professional learning for all stakeholders. To determine the impact that professional learning offered by the district is having on learning and leadership, Clayton County Public Schools has developed a plan for measuring the impact of professional development (Adapted from Guskey, Thomas R. "Does It Make a Difference? Evaluating Professional Development." *Educational Leadership* 59.6 (2002): 45-51.). The professional learning department is collaborating with team members from curriculum, instruction, and assessment to collect data in the following areas:

- The quality of the professional development, including the pedagogy, accessibility, alignment to content and quality standards, outcome alignment with district priorities and educator needs
- Educator reactions to the professional development offered and the usefulness, relevance, and level of engagement
- The skill and knowledge acquired by the educator during the professional development
- Changes in educators' instructional practices after participating in the professional development.
- Student outcomes as measured by summative assessment data, formative assessment data, student work, and other possible outcomes such as discipline

In the data collection process the areas mentioned above will be measured by or with:

- Reviewing professional development plans to ensure plans align with district priorities
- Reviewing professional development syllabi to ensure course content aligns with appropriate standards, job-embedded practices align with educator needs, and key course assessments demonstrate educator proficiency in with new skills/strategies learned

- Using a professional development quality rubric to evaluate all professional learning offerings
- Surveys and course evaluations
- Focus group feedback
- Educator assessments of content learned during professional learning administered by course instructors
- Lesson plans that include strategies/skills learned during professional learning
- Observations of educators' implementing instructional practices learned during professional learning (observations are conducted during focus walks by the curriculum, instruction, and assessment team)
- Educator evaluation data from the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES)
- Educator's reflection on their own practice, through videotaping and journaling
- Summative and formative student assessment data
- Student work
- Data from other student outcomes(e.g. discipline data after taking classroom management course)

In addition to the collaboration with the curriculum, instruction, and assessment team, all data is shared with the professional learning advisory subcommittees and overall committee as part of the continuous improvement process for the professional learning department. These committees analyze data, provide feedback, and make revisions to professional development practices to ensure that professional learning provided is of high quality and has a positive impact on student learning.

Overall, the District is doing the right work and headed in the right directions as evidenced by student growth data, survey data, and classroom observations. Clear expectations for teaching and learning have been delineated, and supports are in place to strengthen leadership, the impact of instruction, and collaboration with the community. The district needs to continue to monitor and measure the impact of practices on student learning and engage in purposeful, evidence-based decision-making as it commits to high performance!

In accordance with the district's Strategic Goal 3, Clayton County Public Schools maintains a core belief that education is the shared responsibility of the student, the parent/guardian, the school and the community. Additionally, we believe communication and understanding among all stakeholders of our diverse community are essential to achieving the goals of education. We further believe that a learning environment where everyone experiences security, care, dignity and respect is essential. The quality factors related to a district's *Healthy Culture* along with Clayton County Schools' effective practices and conditions were evaluated by a team of internal and external stakeholders. The areas assessed included governing authority, leadership, system's staff, parents, families, legal guardians and community.

As a collective body, the group agreed that the district has made significant progress towards ensuring that all stakeholders develop a sense of trust, a spirit of collaboration, and collegiality. The district has effected this progress in open communications, increased stakeholder input and improved district feedback in focus groups and town hall meetings. The Superintendent has shared nine characteristics of high performing schools with all staff. These nine characteristics

serve as guiding principles for the district's teamwork and collegial interactions. Collaboration is the expected behavior and is demonstrated at all levels, from the Board to the classroom teacher. An area of continued challenge for the district is the perception that parents and legal guardians have related to an environment that safe and supportive of their children. The district's development of the Office of Family and Community Engagement will support efforts to improve stakeholders' understanding of and input in district decision-making processes.

The district's Strategic Improvement Goals One through Five support AdvancED's High Expectations Factor and the Clayton County Public School System is committed to the continuous expectation of higher learning outcomes for our students. Student learning outcomes are measured carefully and closely monitored through setting specific learning targets and achievement goals at the elementary, middle and high school levels. The Instructional Area of focus for the SY 17-18 is centered on providing research-based and evidence supported instruction to students in order for students to reach content-area mastery. At each grade band, students who have identified deficiencies are provided with a remedial education program to address their academic needs. We also offer Read 180, Language Live, and Math 180 to ensure that students attain content mastery. Our students who need additional interventions also have an opportunity to complete lessons by utilizing I-Ready and Achieve 3000. Students will continue to be supported in the classroom with the use of instructional strategies using the Explicit Instructional Model, which will allow them to remain actively engaged and academically challenged.

The district also remains committed to providing professional development to the staff. Staff members are encouraged by administrative staff to sign up for courses through the PD Express (Professional Development Express Catalog) throughout the school year and use the instructional strategies taught in those courses in their classrooms. CCPS also engages in several job fair opportunities throughout the southeast with the goal in mind of recruiting highly qualified teachers and staff.

The leadership within our district has proven to be proactive in providing staff, students, parents and stakeholders a roadmap to success. The Superintendent of Clayton County Public Schools, Dr. Morcase Beasley has provided a 3-year action plan that outlines his vision for the system. This action plan is the blueprint to achieve high performance through several dimensions. It includes teachers continuing to deliver research based instructional strategies with best practices. It also looks at the overall needs of the district that need to be addressed which includes the following: qualitative online training, accountability measures, additional training for staff and improved communication in cross functional teams.

The strategic improvement plan is another solid initiative that has been put into place by our new Superintendent. This improvement plan is a snapshot of the most current test data for all testing grades, which highlights the strengths, and weaknesses of our students. The plans includes performance objectives and initiatives to meet those objectives. The Goal of the Department of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment is to ensure alignment of what is being learned through the Georgia Standards of Excellence, and what is being taught via instruction.

Parents are an integral part of Clayton County Public School's continued commitment to improve student achievement. The district often provides parent workshops to assist parents with assisting their students at home. These workshops offer strategies that easily transfer from the school level to their homes. These opportunities are also useful to answer questions that parents may have regarding academics. We are committed to involving parents and caregivers in the process of creating a sustainable and challenging environment for our students to soar to great heights and become successful, productive citizens.

### **Domain 3: Resource Management**

As a district that is committed to high performance, Clayton County Public Schools maximizes the use of all of its resources to increase academic performance and meet student needs. The district's human resource assets are assigned in an equitable manner to meet the needs of all learners. Consistent with Strategic Goal VI to recruit and retain highly qualified and effective staff, targeted and differentiated recruitment efforts, retention incentives, and the use of alternative and provisional certification programs have led to a drastic reduction in the number of teacher vacancies. Teachers are supported through comprehensive professional development programs that are designed based on the analysis of data relative to student learning. The use of instructional site facilitators has been re-configured so as to maximize their impact on content specific instruction while focusing on the academic priorities of the district (literacy, numeracy, critical thinking and integrated technology).

Strategic Goal V is to provide high quality support services delivered on \_me and within budget to promote student academic success in Clayton County Public Schools. Material resources are acquired using best practices in procurement and must be aligned with the strategic goals of the district. Technology is available throughout the district and great strides have been made with its use as a tool in instructional programs. Instructional technology staff have strategically deployed to facilitate this improvement. All operational support functions are continuously evaluated for effectiveness and opportunities for improvement in the delivery of services "on \_me and within budget".

The fiscal resources of the district are budgeted in alignment with the instructional priorities of the district and the needs of students. Adjustments have been made to accommodate innovative intervention programs geared to support developing learners who do not otherwise qualify for assistance. A system-wide effort has been made and continues to ensure that students are appropriately scheduled so as to maximize state funding based on full \_me equivalency. The district is above average in the effective use of its finances as evidenced by a rating of 3.5 for the past three years on the State's Financial Efficiency Star Rating.

The Superintendent is leveraging the impact of community and parent involvement through a series of critical conversations with various stakeholder groups, the development of multiple advisories and the strengthening and expansion of strategic partnerships. In addition, he has organized a new division within the organizational structure of the district that specifically focuses on community engagement, governmental relations and partnerships. This is consistent with Strategic Goal III, which is to create an environment that promotes active engagement, accountability, and collaboration of all stakeholders to maximize student achievement.