

LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS – Quality IMPROVEMENT PLAN - 2023-2024
Elementary ❖ Middle ❖ K-8 ❖ HS ❖ Programs

School Name: S. Christa McAuliffe Elementary School

Principal: David Anderson

School-Site Council Members:

Parents: Charlotte Bryant, Yaira Ramos-Bryson, Stacey Resto, Jennifer Rey, Anne Thompson

Teachers: Barbara Burgess, Emily Cohn, Marilyn Jonas, Kristin Wade

Community Representative: Sima Suon

School Mission

The S. Christa McAuliffe Elementary School community strives to educate the whole child intellectually, emotionally, culturally, socially, and physically by offering rich and engaging instruction in a safe, respectful, and caring environment. Our students and staff strive to be independent thinkers and life-long learners. We believe that collaboration among school, home, and community is essential in ensuring students meet our high academic and behavioral standards and achieve their fullest potential.

School Vision

Excellence in teaching and learning are the essential elements necessary to render academic results that allow children to attain their future academic goals, to compete in the global market, and to achieve their dream of a satisfying life.

Core Values/Commitments

Core Values

- A high quality education is a fundamental civil right of every child we serve.
- Teaching and learning are at the core of our work. Everything we do must support what happens in the classroom.
- Parents are our partners. They are our students' first teachers in the home.
- There is no silver bullet to improving our schools. Sustainable school improvement requires hard and steady work over time.
- Every adult in the system is accountable for the success of our students. Putting every child on a path to college and career success is the responsibility of the entire community.

Commitments

- Eliminate the racial ethnic and linguistic achievement and opportunity gaps among all students.
- Provide equitable funding and resources to meet the needs of the students in the school.
- Engage all families with courtesy, dignity, respect and cultural understanding.

School Strategic Objectives and Initiatives

<p><u>Leadership, Shared Responsibility, and Professional Collaboration</u> Collective, distributed leadership structures and practices are apparent throughout the school building in the form of an active, well-represented instructional leadership team and grade-level and vertical teams. Administrators and teachers are jointly committed to and have assumed shared ownership and collective responsibility for improving student achievement.</p>	<p><u>Intentional Practices for Improving Instruction – Engaged Learning</u> School leadership has identified a clear instructional focus and shared expectations for instructional best practices that address clearly identified, student-specific instructional needs. Administrative observations lead to constructive, teacher-specific feedback, supports, and professional development. Provide an engaging, rigorous, and relevant program to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of each student.</p>	<p><u>Student-Specific Supports and Instruction to All Students</u> Administrators and teachers use a variety of ongoing assessments (formative, benchmark, and summative) to frequently and continually assess instructional effectiveness and to identify students' individual academic needs (e.g., content or standard-specific academic needs) in order to provide student-specific interventions, enrichment, and supports.</p>	<p><u>School Climate and Culture</u> Provide human and financial resources to support high quality, engaged learning. <i>Student Safety</i> Ensure two-way, respectful communication, with families, and the LPS community.</p>
<p>Increase opportunities for all stakeholders, including those whose first language is not English, to be involved with school functions and decision-making.</p> <p>Increase teacher leadership and facilitation of school-based committees.</p>	<p>Examine and align current curricular materials to ensure instruction is addressing grade level standards.</p> <p>Refocus student engagement work on high leverage practices that encourage critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication.</p>	<p>Ensure that increased support staff is being utilized as effectively as possible by providing training in supporting programs and ensuring that support schedule aligns with curricular needs.</p> <p>Investigate programs and resources for helping students further develop foundational math skills and expand upon foundational reading skills.</p>	<p>Identify and implement ways to support families and students in improving school attendance and reducing chronic absenteeism.</p> <p>Identify and implement ways to increase two-way communication with stakeholders to keep them informed of student progress.</p>

School Data Profile

iReady Assessments, Fountas and Pinnell Assessment, Kindergarten Literacy Assessment, DIBELS, Interactive Read Aloud/Writing About Reading Rubrics, Math Module Tests, Report Card Grades, Attendance Data, WIDA Access Testing, DESSA, MCAS, PALS, ST Math, Green Program

Reflection on Current Practices

1. What are your current efforts in targeting school improvement? How can you leverage these efforts when determining school priorities?

LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS – Quality IMPROVEMENT PLAN - 2023-2024
Elementary ❖ Middle ❖ K-8 ❖ HS ❖ Programs

Our current efforts in targeting school improvement as identified during the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) work we have been doing in Leadership Academy, with our Instructional Leadership Team, and during School Site Council Meetings are to close the achievement gap between our general education students and those that belong to our Special Education and English Learners subgroups.

Some of the ways that we have targeted this goal are to add additional staff to work with students in those subgroups, realigned our schedule to allow for more skill-based supports rather than grade level supports for students, implementation of new foundational skills programs especially for phonics and phonemic awareness, and creating more targeted opportunities for families of students in those subgroups to become more involved with the school.

The data that we use to measure our progress is iReady Data. By comparing the gap between our general education students and subgroup students during each assessment period, we hope to see that gap shrink. After comparing our initial and mid-year assessments, we are seeing the gaps between the subgroups becoming smaller, especially with our English Learner population. The average gap narrowed by 1.5 points for our students with IEPs and by 10 points for our English Learners.

2. What progress is your school making towards academic goals? What is data saying the priorities should be? Where there is not desired progress, what is holding up momentum that should be addressed?

Our data is showing that our school is making progress toward its academic goals but that more can be done to make even more progress in the following areas:

Effective Use of Supports: Over the last three years, the school has seen an addition of 2 English Learner Teachers, 2 Paraprofessionals, a Reading Intervention Teacher, a Social Worker, and 5 Tutors. We have also realigned our schedule. Something that came up during our Needs Assessment and Instructional Rounds was ensuring that those supports were in the classrooms during the most effective times.

Chronic Absenteeism: Our Chronic Absenteeism rate at the end of Quarter 2 was 35%. While that is higher than the district average, it is 22% lower than last year at the same time when we sat at 57%.

Foundational Math Skills: As we are seeing progress in the development of foundational skills in ELA, students struggling with mathematical foundational skills are on the rise which is keeping them from accessing grade level content. While there are less students reported on iReady as lacking those skills, the rate of improvement in the Math iReady Assessment is much less than that in Reading for the beginning and mid-year assessments.

Alignment of ELA Curriculum and Assessments: With the introduction of new Phonics and Phonemic Awareness curriculum, ensuring that skills being taught from the different curriculums are in alignment with each other, curriculum map, and the assessment calendars.

3. Where are students making the greatest academic gains and why? The least academic gains and why?

Areas of strength according to the HALS Dashboard include School Culture especially Relationships, Students Sense of Belonging and Emotional Safety. There was also an increase in students feeling challenged at school and valuing their learning. Leadership was another area of strength and the School Leadership subsection was an area in the survey that scored in the Ideal section.

The implementation of Heggerty for Phonemic Awareness and LetterLand for phonics continue to show great improvement for our students. Our students started off higher this year than they did last year on the first assessment and continued to make gains going into the second round of iReady assessments. For example last year, 29% of students were considered on grade level at the beginning of the year while 47% were two or more below grade level in Phonics. During the 2nd set of assessments, 45% were on or above grade level (+15%) and 30% (-17%) were two or more levels below grade level. This year, 34% of students started out at or above grade level while 38% were 2 or more levels below grade level during the initial iReady Assessment. During the mid-year assessment, 53% (+19%) of students are now at or above grade level while 27% (-3%) are two or more levels below grade level.

Other areas of strength included Numbers and Operations and Algebraic Thinking on the Math iReady Assessment and High Frequency words on the ELA Assessment.

Areas where students are making the least academic gains are in our Special Education subgroup as seen in an only 1.5% closing of the achievement gap between the 1st and 2nd set of iReady assessments. We are also seeing less gains in Geometry and Measurement for Mathematics. With 2nd grade readjusting their schedule to move this closer to the beginning of the year, other grade levels are going to explore that as an option to expose students to the content more purposely.. In Reading, Vocabulary and Nonfiction Text Comprehension are historically areas that students make the least academic gains. As we have now implemented more foundational skill curricula in Pre-K through 2nd Grade, we will be examining how to build those skills into vocabulary development for our students in the later grades..

Problem of Practice

With the increasing numbers of subgroup students, varying experiences of students during the pandemic, and continued high rate of chronic absenteeism, the gaps in overall student achievement continue to widen creating the need to continue to identify those gaps and provide students at all levels with the support

LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS – Quality IMPROVEMENT PLAN - 2023-2024
Elementary ❖ Middle ❖ K-8 ❖ HS ❖ Programs

that they need to achieve grade level standards.

CLSP Goal
Increase participation of all McAuliffe families including those in historically underrepresented subgroups in school meetings, events, and decisions about their students’ education.

Monitoring Progress - Process Benchmarks <i>What will be done, when, and by whom</i>					
<u>Leadership, Shared Responsibility, and Professional Collaboration</u>	Person Responsible	Aug 2023	Dec 2023	June 2024	Status
In order to gauge interest in committee facilitation roles, compile a list of responsibilities and expectations of the committees and introduce those expectations to staff during opening Professional Development	Administration	X			
All committees will set goals for the school year and set-up a regular meeting schedule to move forward and will report progress toward achievement	Administration & Committee members	X			
Create and set a calendar for Family Circle events and curate a list of topics from families about what they would like to see discussed at meetings	ELs Committee & Administration	X			
Hold at least quarterly Family Circle events based on the topics that families have expressed interest in	ELs Committee & Administration	X	X	X	
<u>Intentional Practices for Improving Instruction – Engaged Learning</u>	Person Responsible	Aug 2023	Dec 2023	June 2024	Status
Revisit data collected during Instructional Rounds looking at indicators 9 & 11	ILT	X			
Create opportunities for teacher choice in professional development, including time to collaborate on successes, challenges, and best practices with a focus on student engagement	Administration and ILT	X	X	X	
Commit to ongoing grade level conversations that focus on aligning curriculum to best meet all student needs across grade levels	Grade level teams	X	X	X	
Create a system and schedule for reimplementing instructional rounds	Teachers, Administration	X			
Carry out a minimum of 3 school based instructional rounds focusing on standards 9 & 11	Teachers, Administration		X	X	
<u>Student-Specific Supports and Instruction to All Students</u>	Person Responsible	Aug 2023	Dec 2023	June 2024	Status
Expansion of LetterLand training and materials to 3rd Grade to complete the succession from Pre-K to Grade 3	Literacy Coach & Administration	X			
Provide specific training for paraprofessional and support staff related to effective ways to support curricular programs	Coaches & Administration	X	X	X	
Through ongoing conversations, ensure that support-schedule effectively aligns with the times that benefit students most	All Staff	X	X	X	
Explore resources related to Mathematical foundational skills and vocabulary acquisition	ILT	X	X	X	
<u>School Climate and Culture</u>	Person Responsible	Aug 2023	Dec 2023	June 2024	Status

LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS – Quality IMPROVEMENT PLAN - 2023-2024
Elementary ❖ Middle ❖ K-8 ❖ HS ❖ Programs

Attendance team meets regularly to ensure district attendance policy is being followed and all steps are being taken to support families to ensure regular school attendance before levels of chronic absenteeism are reached	Attendance Team	X	X	X	
Explore expansion of positive incentives for students exhibiting good attendance	Attendance Team	X	X	X	
Conduct a school wide inventory to investigate which two-way communication apps are being used in each classroom	ILT	X			
Examine Family Conference schedule and consider additional opportunities to share student progress.	Teacher Teams		X		

Measuring Impact
Changes in practice, attitude, or behavior when the initiative is having its desired impact. Desired Targets.

<u>Leadership, Shared Responsibility, and Professional Collaboration</u>	Person Responsible	Date	Status
With improved efforts to communicate with families in languages other than English, we will see increased parent/guardian participation in school-based meetings, family events, and opportunities to learn about their student’s progress	All School Staff, PTO, and School Site Council	June 2024	
As a result of more families participating in school-related conversations and decisions, parents/guardians will report improved collaboration with school staff	Administration, School Staff	June 2024	
Staff will have opportunities to share their ideas for improvement during monthly committee meetings thus resulting in shared opportunities for leadership and improved school culture	Committee members	June 2024	
<u>Intentional Practices for Improving Instruction – Engaged Learning</u>	Person Responsible	Date	Status
Utilize Common Planning Time meetings to ensure alignment of curricula programs with curriculum maps and assessments	Grade level teams & Coaches	Ongoing	
Utilizing Leadership Academy work around <i>Shifting the Balance</i> , incorporate the six shifts into ELA blocks at each grade level	Grade level teams & Literacy Specialist	Ongoing	
Carry out a minimum of 3 school based instructional rounds focusing on student engagement and Standards 9 & 11	Administration and Teachers	Ongoing	
Focus Professional Development opportunities on introducing and implementing student engagement strategies into all areas of the curriculum	Administration	Ongoing	
<u>Student-Specific Supports and Instruction to All Students</u>	Person Responsible	Date	Status
Examine master schedule to determine most effective placement of staff supports and make adjustments to schedules as needed	Administration & Coaches	Ongoing	
During monthly Special Education and ELs team meetings, student success and progress will be discussed and instructional groupings adjusted based on student need and goals.	SPED & EL Teams	Monthly	
Provide targeted professional development for paraprofessionals and support staff based on data gathered during needs assessment process	ILT	Ongoing	
With the extension of Letterland into third grade, students will have consistent programming focusing on further developing phonics and vocabulary skills in Reading	3rd Grade Team, Literacy Specialist, & Administration	August	
Explore and preview programs for further vocabulary development in fourth grade	4th Grade Team, Literacy Specialist & Administration	August - December	
Implement Eureka Squared curriculum and explore programs to close gaps in foundational Math skills	Grade Level Teams, Math Coach, & Administration	Ongoing	

LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS – Quality IMPROVEMENT PLAN - 2023-2024

Elementary ❖ Middle ❖ K-8 ❖ HS ❖ Programs

School Climate and Culture	Person Responsible	Date	Status
As a result of incentives for regular school attendance, with biweekly Attendance Team meetings, discuss necessary interventions to improve individual student attendance, the chronic absenteeism rate will decrease and more closely align to the state average	Administration	Ongoing	
Conduct an Inventory of two way communication applications being used in each classroom and provide training to families on how each application works. This will result in staff and families reporting improved levels of communication.	Administration Classroom Teachers	September	
Upon examination of the school conference schedule, identify at least one other way to invite families into school to learn about student progress.	Grade Level Teams & Administration	March	