

Allen County District Review Report



03/11/2007 - 03/16/2007



District Review Executive Summary

Allen County School District

3/11/2007 - 3/16/2007

Larry Williams, Superintendent

Introduction

The Kentucky Department of Education conducted a review of Allen County School District during the period of 3/11/2007 - 3/16/2007. This district's last combined accountability index was 76.7 and its classification was Non-Classified. Here are the most relevant facts and next step recommendations from the review.

District Deficiencies and Next Steps in Supporting its Low-Performing Schools

1. Deficiency	The district does not have a fully functioning curriculum aligned to Kentucky Combined Curriculum Documents.
Next Steps	District leadership should continue to collaborate with school leadership to facilitate the curriculum alignment process to provide for a rigorous common academic core, especially in the areas of reading and math.
District Action Steps to Overcoming Obstacles	
Timeline/Person Responsible	
2. Deficiency	District leadership does not effectively collaborate with school leadership and teachers to design or review authentic classroom assessments and rubrics.
Next Steps	District leadership should provide assistance to teachers and school leadership in designing authentic classroom assessments and accompanying rubrics. Kentucky's Student Performance Standards should be used to make clear to students what is expected of them. District and school leadership should monitor assessments for rigor and frequency and provide additional assistance as needed.
District Action Steps to Overcoming Obstacles	
Timeline/Person Responsible	
3. Deficiency	District leadership has not effectively established a systematic process to assess and determine specific strategies to reduce or eliminate barriers to learning.

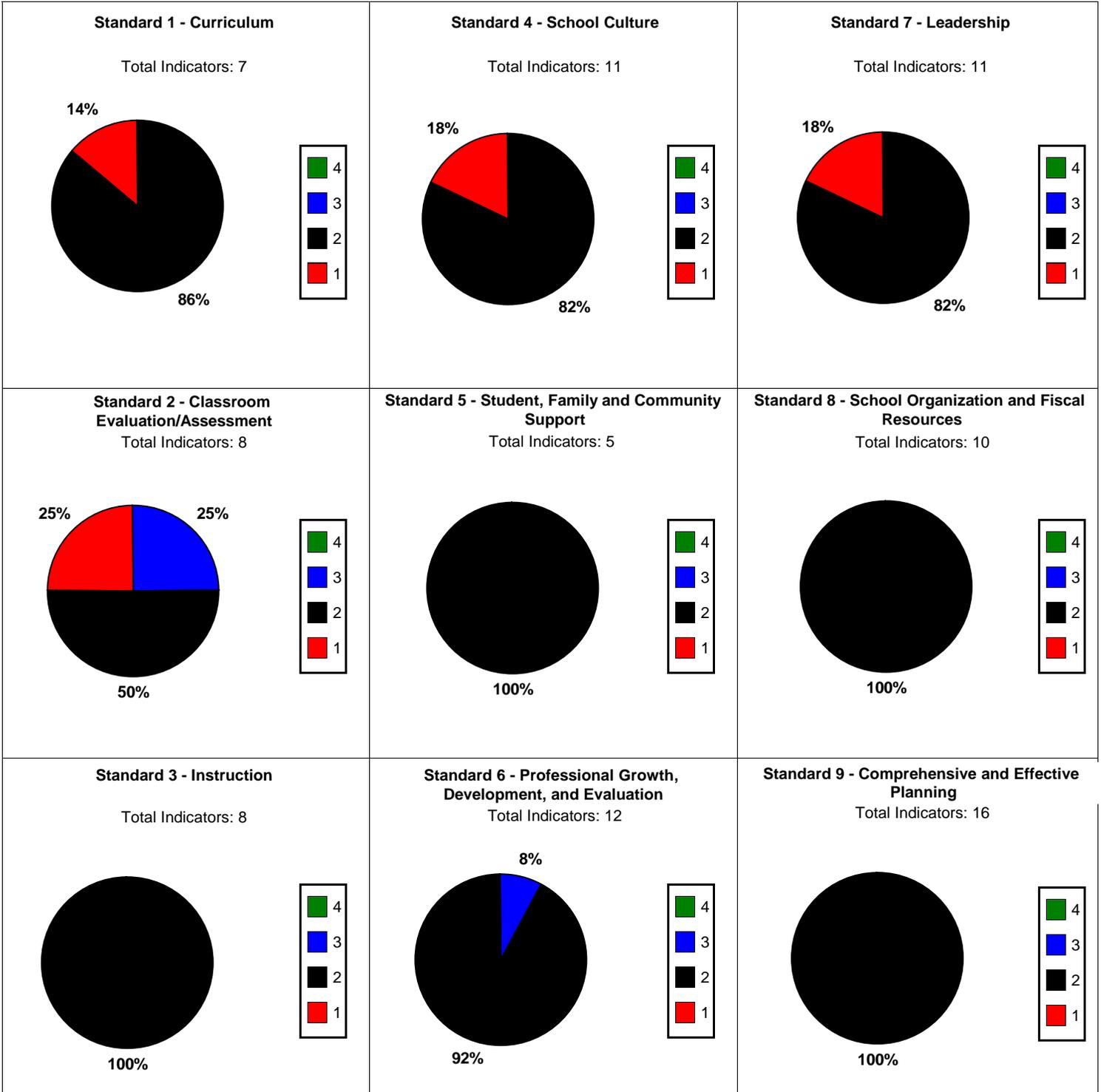
Next Steps	District leadership should intentionally work to establish strategies to reduce achievement gaps. District leadership should consider the establishment of interventions such as student assistance teams within each school to serve as a means to reduce barriers to learning. District and school leadership should facilitate regular communication concerning not only the academic and behavior needs of students but also coordination of school and community support services to address student and family needs.
District Action Steps to Overcoming Obstacles	
Timeline/Person Responsible	
4. Deficiency	District leadership neither collaborates with school councils in order to maximize staff assignments nor involves teaching and non-teaching staff in the decision-making process.
Next Steps	District leadership should intentionally involve school councils and teaching and non-teaching staff in significant ways when making decisions affecting students. District leadership should annually meet with each school council to review their current and projected staff needs and to discuss ways to optimize the use of personnel and facilities to achieve the greatest impact on student learning. Current student achievement data from classroom and other assessments should be collaboratively reviewed to identify any changes in staff assignments that might be necessary to achieve proficiency for all students.
District Action Steps to Overcoming Obstacles	
Timeline/Person Responsible	
5. Deficiency	District leadership has not led stakeholders in the development of a vision statement that defines a 21st century purpose and direction for the district.
Next Steps	District leadership should bring together representatives from all stakeholder groups to engage in a collaborative process to develop statements of beliefs and vision unique to the district. The purpose of the vision should be to inspire, energize and motivate staff, students and stakeholders to achieve what is possible for the district.
District Action Steps to Overcoming Obstacles	
Timeline/Person Responsible	

6. Deficiency	District leadership has not effectively created an environment to support productive change and continuous improvement of educational practices. The district has not kept pace with emerging best practices research and is not successfully meeting state and national student achievement accountability requirements.
Next Steps	District leadership should develop policy and procedures to support school personnel in their efforts to improve academic performance for all students. District leadership should examine its practice of allocating discretionary resources based on average daily attendance and consider the unique needs of students when allocating resources. District leadership should establish and sustain an environment of mutual respect among all employees. Communications within and between both district and school settings should focus on the goal of providing a common infrastructure on which to build and sustain continuous improvement for both staff and students.
District Action Steps to Overcoming Obstacles	
Timeline/Person Responsible	

Allen County
 KDE 2007 District Review Report
 At-a-Glance

The charts below indicate the percentage of indicators in each standard for the following four performance levels:

- 4- Exemplary level of development and implementation
- 3- Fully functional and operational level of development and implementation
- 2- Limited development or partial implementation
- 1- Little or no development and implementation



9 STANDARDS AND 88 INDICATORS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT - Allen County

<p>Standard - 1 - Academic Performance</p> <p>Curriculum</p> <p>1.1a Curriculum is aligned. Academic Expectations, Core Content for Assessment, Transformations</p> <p>1.1b District initiates, facilitates discussions among schools regarding curriculum standards</p> <p>1.1c District initiates, facilitates discussions to eliminate unnecessary overlaps</p> <p>1.1d Evidence of vertical communication, intentional focus on key curriculum transition points</p> <p>1.1e School curriculum provides specific links to continuing education</p> <p>1.1f Systematic process for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing curriculum</p> <p>1.1g Curriculum provides access to a common academic core</p>	<p>Standard - 4 - Learning Environment</p> <p>School Culture</p> <p>4.1a Leadership support for a safe, orderly and equitable learning environment</p> <p>4.1b Leadership creates experiences that all children can learn</p> <p>4.1c Teachers hold high expectations for all students</p> <p>4.1d Teachers, staff involved in decision-making processes regarding teaching and learning</p> <p>4.1e Teachers accept their role in student success</p> <p>4.1f School assigns staff...opportunities for ALL students</p> <p>4.1g Teachers communicate regularly with families</p> <p>4.1h Evidence that the teachers and staff care</p> <p>4.1i Multiple communication strategies...to all stakeholders</p> <p>4.1j Evidence that student achievement is highly valued</p> <p>4.1k The school/district provides support...needs of all students</p>	<p>Standard - 7 - Efficiency</p> <p>Leadership</p> <p>7.1a Leadership has developed and sustained a shared vision</p> <p>7.1b Leadership decisions focused on student academic data</p> <p>7.1c All administrators have a growth plan</p> <p>7.1d Evidence that the leadership team disaggregates data</p> <p>7.1e Leadership ensures all instructional staff...access to curriculum related materials</p> <p>7.1f Leadership ensures that time is protected...instructional issues</p> <p>7.1g Leadership plans and allocates resources</p> <p>7.1h School/district leadership provides policy and resource infrastructure</p> <p>7.1i Process for the development and the implementation of council policy</p> <p>7.1j SBDM council has an intentional focus on student academic performance</p> <p>7.1k Principal demonstrates leadership skills in academic performance, learning environment, efficiency</p>
<p>Standard - 2 - Academic Performance</p> <p>Classroom Evaluation/Assessment</p> <p>2.1a Classroom assessments frequent, rigorous, aligned with Kentucky's core content</p> <p>2.1b Teachers collaborate in the design of authentic assessment</p> <p>2.1c Students can articulate what is required to be proficient</p> <p>2.1d Test scores are used to identify curriculum gaps</p> <p>2.1e Assessments designed to provide feedback on student learning for instructional purposes</p> <p>2.1f Performance standards communicated, evident in classrooms, observable in student work</p> <p>2.1g Assessment and Accountability Program is coordinated by school and district leadership</p> <p>2.1h Samples of student work are analyzed</p>	<p>Standard - 5 - Learning Environment</p> <p>Student, Family and Community Support</p> <p>5.1a Families and the community are active partners</p> <p>5.1b All students have access to all the curriculum</p> <p>5.1c Reduce barriers to learning</p> <p>5.1d Students are provided opportunities to receive additional assistance</p> <p>5.1e School maintains an accurate student record system</p>	<p>Standard - 8 - Efficiency - School Organization and Fiscal Resources</p> <p>Organization of the School</p> <p>8.1a School is organized...use of all available resources</p> <p>8.1b All students have access to all the curriculum</p> <p>8.1c Staff are allocated based upon the learning needs of all students</p> <p>8.1d Staff makes efficient use of instructional time</p> <p>8.1e Staff...planning vertically and horizontally across content areas</p> <p>8.1f Schedule aligned with the school's mission</p> <p>Resource Allocation and Integration</p> <p>8.2a Clearly defined process (in accordance with the school council allocation formula)</p> <p>8.2b Budget reflects decisions directed by an assessment of need</p> <p>8.2c Councils, school boards analyze funding and other resource requests</p> <p>8.2d Resources are allocated and integrated to address student needs</p>
<p>Standard - 3 - Academic Performance</p> <p>Instruction</p> <p>3.1a Evidence that effective and varied instructional strategies are used in all classrooms</p> <p>3.1b Instructional strategies and learning activities are aligned</p> <p>3.1c Instructional strategies/activities are consistently monitored...diverse student population</p> <p>3.1d Teachers demonstrate content knowledge</p> <p>3.1e Evidence teachers incorporate the use of technology</p> <p>3.1f Instructional resources are sufficient to deliver the curriculum</p> <p>3.1g Teachers examine and discuss student work</p> <p>3.1h Homework is frequent and monitored, tied to instructional practice</p>	<p>Standard - 6 - Learning Environment - Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation</p> <p>Professional Development</p> <p>6.1a Support for the long-term professional growth of the individual staff members</p> <p>6.1b The school has an intentional plan for building instructional capacity</p> <p>6.1c Staff development priorities..alignment..goals for student performance</p> <p>6.1d Plans for school improvement directly connect goals for student learning</p> <p>6.1e Professional development is on-going and job-embedded</p> <p>6.1f Professional development planning connect student achievement data</p> <p>Professional Growth and Evaluation</p> <p>6.2a Clearly defined evaluation process</p> <p>6.2b Leadership provides the fiscal resources for the appropriate professional growth</p> <p>6.2c Employee evaluation and the individual professional growth plan to improve staff proficiency</p> <p>6.2d A process of personnel evaluation which meets or exceeds standards set in statute</p> <p>6.2e The school/district improvement plan identifies specific instructional needs</p> <p>6.2f Evaluation process to provide teachers..change behavior and instructional practice</p>	<p>Standard - 9 - Efficiency - Comprehensive and Effective Planning</p> <p>Defining the School Vision, Mission, Beliefs</p> <p>9.1a Collaborative process used to develop the vision, beliefs, mission</p> <p>Development of the Profile</p> <p>9.2a Planning process involves collecting, managing and analyzing data</p> <p>9.2b Use data for school improvement planning</p> <p>Defining Desired Results for Student Learning</p> <p>9.3a School and district plans reflect learning research, expectations for student learning</p> <p>9.3b Analyze their students' unique learning needs</p> <p>9.3c Results for student learning are defined</p> <p>Analyzing Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness</p> <p>9.4a Strengths and limitations are identified</p> <p>9.4b Goals for building, strengthening capacity</p> <p>Development of the Improvement Plan</p> <p>9.5a Steps for school improvement aligned with improvement goals</p> <p>9.5b Plan identifies resources, timelines</p> <p>9.5c Evaluating the effectiveness of improvement plan</p> <p>9.5d Improvement plan is aligned with the school's profile, beliefs, mission, desired results</p> <p>Implementation and Documentation</p> <p>9.6a Plan is implemented as developed</p> <p>9.6b School evaluates the degree to which it achieves the goals and objectives for student learning</p> <p>9.6c The school evaluates the degree to which it achieves the expected impact</p> <p>9.6d Evidence of attempts to sustain the commitment to continuous improvement</p>

Legend

- Green 4- Exemplary level of development and implementation
- Blue 3- Fully functional and operational level of development and implementation
- Black 2- Limited development or partial implementation
- Red 1- Little or no development and implementation

Focus on Student Academic Performance

The district review report contains many important findings district leadership should consider. It will be the task of district leadership to read and prioritize the results from this report to plan for improving student performance.

- Carefully read the district review report for each school. Consider the implications of the report for each school's work and policies.
- Build greater understanding of new approaches to professional development and address the ways that stakeholders will have to work differently to improve instruction.
- Identify the implications of this report for stakeholders.
- Acknowledge and address the fact that current practice does not provide adequate opportunity for teachers and principals to carry out the demands of their work to ensure student success.

District Review Summary Report

Allen County

School District

3/11/2007 - 3/16/2007

Introduction

The Kentucky Department of Education conducted a review of Allen County School District during the period of 3/11/2007 - 3/16/2007. This district's last combined accountability index was 76.7 and its classification was Non-Classified.

The district review team activities included a review of the documents collected for the district portfolio and profile as well as classroom observations {256}, formal interviews and informal discussions with teachers (56), students (33), parents (13), central office certified staff members (20), central office support staff members (5), board members{5}, school principals{6}, assistant principals{5}, school council members{7}, school classified staff {19}, community members {5} and the superintendent.

The Standards and Indicators for School Improvement rubric was the primary assessment instrument used during the visit. All collected data were considered in the development of this report.

The district review team report was based upon examination of the documents provided in the district portfolio, interviews and on-site experiences and observations of the review team. The specific findings and recommendations are organized under the headings of Academic Performance, Learning Environment and Efficiency. Each of the nine standards for success in Kentucky schools and districts is addressed in the following pages.

The chairperson of the team was Jack B. Musgrave - Building Administrator. The other team members were: Gayle Musgrave - Teacher; Margaret Cleveland - Parent; Carol Wheat - Parent; Pearl Jean Hughes - District Administrator; Aubery Pennington - Highly Skilled Educator; Carolyn M Falin - Higher Education Representative; Betty Bond - Building Administrator; Donna Tackett - District Administrator.

Academic Performance

The following Academic Performance Standards address curriculum, classroom evaluation/assessment and instruction.

- Standard 1:** The school develops and implements a curriculum that is rigorous, intentional, and aligned to state and local standards.
- Standard 2:** The school utilizes multiple evaluation and assessment strategies to continuously monitor and modify instruction to meet student needs and support proficient student work.
- Standard 3:** The school's instructional program actively engages all students by using effective, varied, and research-based practices to improve student performance.

Learning Environment

The following Learning Environment Standards address school culture; student, family, and community support; and professional growth, development and evaluation.

- Standard 4:** The school/district functions as an effective learning community and supports a climate conducive to performance excellence.
- Standard 5:** The school/district works with families and community groups to remove barriers to learning in an effort to meet the intellectual, social, career, and development needs of students.
- Standard 6:** The school/district provides research-based, results driven professional development opportunities for staff and implements performance evaluation procedures in order to improve teaching and learning.

Efficiency

The following Efficiency Standards address leadership, school structure and resources, and comprehensive and effective planning.

Standard 7: School/district instructional decisions focus on support for teaching and learning, organizational direction, high performance expectations, creating a learning culture, and developing leadership capacity.

Standard 8: The organization of the school/district maximizes use of time, all available space and other resources to maximize teaching and learning and support high student and staff performance.

Standard 9: The school/district develops, implements and evaluates a comprehensive school improvement plan that communicates a clear purpose, direction and action plan focused on teaching and learning.

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 1 Curriculum

Based on interviews conducted by the District Review Team members and their inspections of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that in Standard 1 there was 1 indicator (14%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 1," 6 indicators (86%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 2," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 3," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 4." A brief description of the evaluation of the indicators follows.

Performance Rating 2

- 1.1b The district initiates and facilitates discussions among schools regarding curriculum standards to ensure they are clearly articulated across all levels (P-12).

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of curriculum meeting minutes, curriculum meeting sign in sheets and curriculum documents
- Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and teachers

District leadership has facilitated monthly meetings for teachers grades P-12 to lead discussions between feeder/receiver schools to assist with vertical articulation among content areas. Horizontal articulation meetings have not occurred at all schools.

- 1.1c The district initiates and facilitates discussions between schools in the district in order to eliminate unnecessary overlaps and close gaps.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, memos and transition meeting minutes
- Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and teachers

District leadership has developed a process to eliminate overlaps and gaps in the curriculum. The process has not been fully implemented. Some schools have not begun the process of horizontal alignment

- 1.1d There is evidence of vertical communication with an intentional focus on key curriculum transition points within grade configurations (e.g., from primary to middle and middle to high).

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, memos and transition meeting minutes
- Interviews with district leadership and school leadership
- Observations of

District leadership has begun a process of initiating discussions among staff concerning key curriculum transition points. This process is defined in the

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 1 **Curriculum**

Performance Rating 2

comprehensive district improvement plan and will include two meetings per semester.

- 1.1e The school curriculum provides specific links to continuing education, life and career options.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of records
- Interviews with school leadership, teachers and students

District leadership has begun the process of developing a curriculum which includes connections to post-secondary options for students, provides for application of skills, and knowledge which will allow students to become self-sufficient adults. District leadership has not monitored the development of Individual Learning Plans. However, appropriate personnel have received training necessary for the initial development and implementation of the plans at the 6th-grade level.

- 1.1f There is in place a systematic process for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the curriculum.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of school board policies and school council policy
- Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and school council members

The school board has adopted a curriculum policy, but district leadership has not reviewed school councils' policies to ensure that a curriculum policy has been adopted and fully implemented at the school level. District leadership is conducting ongoing collaborative meetings with representatives from each school to discuss curriculum issues.

- 1.1g The curriculum provides access to a common academic core for all students.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of student handbooks and master schedules
- Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership, teachers, parents and students

District leadership expects a common academic core to be offered to all students. District leadership is not certain if all students enroll in a rigorous common core.

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 1 **Curriculum**

Performance Rating **1**

1.1a There is evidence that the curriculum is aligned with the Academic Expectations, Core Content for Assessment, Transformations and the Program of Studies.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of curriculum documents and curriculum meeting minutes
Interviews with district leadership and teachers

District leadership is currently facilitating the development of curriculum documents in primary through grade 12. Most documents are aligned to the Kentucky Combined Curriculum Documents. Content areas in some schools are still working on content mapping and updating to Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment 4.1.

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Summary of recommendations in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 1 **Curriculum**

All students should have access to a common and rigorous core curriculum.

The school board should revisit funding for the curriculum coaching positions approved in the comprehensive district improvement plan. These persons should act as academic performance coaches with a broad scope of responsibility within curriculum, assessment and instruction at the school level.

District leadership should continue to facilitate vertical and horizontal discussions to complete the curriculum alignment to Kentucky Combined Curriculum Documents. The district should monitor to ensure that horizontal discussions are occurring at all schools as required. District leadership need to work collaboratively with teachers and staff to prepare a rigorous P-12 curriculum for adoption by the school councils and school board.

Resources:

Kentucky's Combined Curriculum Documents

Checklist for District or School Curriculum Alignment Work

Succeeding with Standards: Linking Curriculum, Assessment and Action Planning, Carr, Judy F. & Douglas E. Harris. ASCD Alexandria, VA ISBN 0-87120-509-2.

Professional Learning Communities at Work, Best Practices for Enhancing Student Achievement, Richard DuFour and Robert E.Eaker. National Educational Service. Jan 1998.

From Standards to Success, Mark R. O'Shea, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) 2005.

The New Basics, Education and the Future of Work in the Telematic Age David Thornburg, ASCD, 2002

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 2 **Classroom Evaluation/Assessment**

Based on interviews conducted by the District Review Team members and their inspections of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that in Standard 2 there were 2 indicators (25%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 1," 4 indicators (50%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 2," 2 indicators (25%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 3," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 4." A brief description of the evaluation of the indicators follows.

Performance Rating 3

2.1d Test scores are used to identify curriculum gaps.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans and professional development records
- Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and teachers

District and school leadership analyze multiple forms of data, including state and national assessments, to determine gaps in the curriculum.

2.1g Implementation of the state-required Assessment and Accountability Program is coordinated by school and district leadership.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of school board policy
- Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and teachers

Personnel are trained at the school level on the administrative and ethical procedures for the state assessment programs. The school board has an assessment policy. Ethics training for the 2006-07 school year has not yet occurred.

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 2 **Classroom Evaluation/Assessment**

Performance Rating 2

2.1a Classroom assessments of student learning are frequent, rigorous and aligned with Kentucky's core content.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of eWalk data

Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and teachers

District leadership has facilitated several vertical alignment meetings with the additional request that teachers bring student assessment samples to the meetings. These samples were discussed and used as examples of appropriate assessment. The main topic in these meetings was curriculum alignment. During the regular district leadership meetings, school leadership brings samples of student work as requested. District leadership has provided training on the development of open response assessments but does not have a plan or procedure to ensure building level competence in the design and use of rigorous open response questions. District leadership does not determine if school councils have an assessment policy.

2.1c Students can articulate the academic expectations in each class and know what is required to be proficient.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of eWalk data, administrative staff meeting agendas and minutes

Interviews with school leadership, teachers and students

District leadership rarely interacts with students to determine if they can articulate what is required to be proficient in all content areas. Principals are required to report at district leadership meetings regarding students' ability to articulate the expectations for proficiency in all content areas.

2.1e Multiple assessments are specifically designed to provide meaningful feedback on student learning for instructional purposes.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of eWalk data and district leadership meeting minutes

Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and teachers

The expectation that teachers analyze data to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction is communicated by district leadership. District leadership monitors the use of multiple forms of classroom assessments to guide instruction by reports given at the administrative staff meetings.

2.1h Samples of student work are analyzed to inform instruction, revise curriculum and pedagogy, and obtain information on student progress.

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 2 **Classroom Evaluation/Assessment**

Performance Rating 2

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of school board policy and professional development records

Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and teachers

District leadership has communicated to principals an expectation that student work should be analyzed. The school board has not adopted policies or procedures to ensure that all teachers from each school analyze student work to improve instruction and to inform curricular decisions. School leadership is expected to monitor and guide teachers in the analysis of student work. Not all staff members have been trained in a common protocol for analyzing student work.

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 2 **Classroom Evaluation/Assessment**

Performance Rating 1

2.1b Teachers collaborate in the design of authentic assessment tasks aligned with core content subject matter.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of eWalk data and classroom assessments
- Interviews with school leadership and teachers

District leadership rarely collaborates with teachers to design or review authentic classroom assessments.

2.1f Performance standards are clearly communicated, evident in classrooms and observable in student work.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of district leadership meeting minutes, examples of student work and rubrics
- Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and teachers
- Observations of common areas and classrooms

The use of student performance standards is sometimes discussed with school leadership but district leadership does not monitor to ensure performance standards are clearly communicated to students in all classrooms.

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Summary of recommendations in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 2 **Classroom Evaluation/Assessment**

District leadership should become actively involved with teachers P-12 in facilitating and monitoring the collaborative development of rigorous, authentic classroom assessments. The assessments should be monitored for frequency and correlate to the aligned curriculum document.

Performance standards required of students at key transition points and at the end of classes should be developed with teachers working with grades P-12. These exit criteria should be clearly communicated in classroom settings and observable in student work.

Teams from the district office and school leadership should conduct walkthroughs in each school quarterly to monitor curriculum, assessment and instruction. A walkthrough instrument should be collaboratively developed with representatives from all schools and programs. Members on the district walkthrough teams should be identified. A schedule for quarterly walkthroughs in each school should be developed. Immediate and meaningful feedback to teachers should be a part of the walkthrough process.

Resources:

Results, Analyzing Student Work through ongoing Formative Assessment, Mike Schmoker

Analyzing Student Work Toolkit, Open Response vs. Essay

Classroom Assessment and Grading that Work, Robert Marzano

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 3 **Instruction**

Based on interviews conducted by the District Review Team members and their inspections of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that in Standard 3 there were 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 1," 8 indicators (100%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 2," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 3," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 4." A brief description of the evaluation of the indicators follows.

Performance Rating 2

- 3.1a There is evidence that effective and varied instructional strategies are used in all classrooms.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of lesson plans, school walkthrough form and student work samples
- Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership, teachers and parents
- Observations of classrooms and student work displays

The district has developed a walkthrough instrument for the purpose of monitoring instructional practices in all schools. Some instructional practices such as those from Reading First and Thoughtful Education materials are being monitored on a regular basis in some schools. School principals are expected to monitor the implementation of differentiated learning strategies in all classrooms in their buildings.

- 3.1b Instructional strategies and learning activities are aligned with the district, school and state learning goals and assessment expectations for student learning.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of eWalk data, lesson plans, state and district curriculum documents
- Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership and teachers
- Observations of classrooms and displays of student work

The district leadership team meets weekly with school principals and assistant principals to provide resources and opportunities to help them align curriculum, design assessments and implement varied instructional strategies in the schools. District leadership provides weekly training for some principals in the effective implementation of Thoughtful Education and Reading First strategies. It is expected that principals will then lead their staff in a process to ensure the use of these strategies in all classrooms. In some schools, teachers express a need for more assistance and direction from the district leadership. District leadership does not have a systematic process for monitoring the implementation and impact of these initiatives on individual student achievement in all subject areas.

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 3 **Instruction**

Performance Rating 2

- 3.1c Instructional strategies/activities are consistently monitored and aligned with the changing needs of a diverse student population to ensure various learning approaches and learning styles are addressed.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of eWalk data, lesson plans, school curriculum documents,
walkthrough instrument
Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and teachers
Observations of classrooms

A team of district staff conducts walkthroughs in some schools using a checklist, but there is no follow up to use data from those classroom visits to effectively assist teachers in planning and modifying instructional strategies. Principals are expected to monitor lesson plans to ensure all instruction meets the needs of the diverse learning styles of students. There is some common planning time for some teachers in the schools and staff members have recently been directed to meet together to align curriculum, develop common assessments, analyze student work and review their instructional practices. Principals are expected to monitor the use of this time, but there is no process for the district to collect data regarding the effectiveness of those meetings.

- 3.1d Teachers demonstrate the content knowledge necessary to challenge and motivate students to high levels of learning.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of eWalk data and professional development offerings
Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and teachers
Observations of classrooms

The district does not have a recruitment and retention plan to ensure the hiring and retaining a diverse and highly-qualified staff. Most staff members are certified to teach in their assigned areas or grade levels. The district supports teachers who want to pursue National Board Certification or participate in professional development outside the district, but incentives are limited. A variety of professional development opportunities are provided by the district. There is no systematic plan to ensure that all teachers participate in sustained, classroom focused and job-embedded professional development that will assist teachers to challenge and motivate students to learn at higher levels.

- 3.1e There is evidence that teachers incorporate the use of technology in their classrooms.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 3 **Instruction**

Performance Rating 2

Review of state and district curriculum documents, board policies and procedures, school council policies, lesson plans and professional development records

Interviews with district and school leadership, parents and students

Observations of classrooms and technology labs

District leadership expects schools to utilize a wide variety of technology resources. All schools have ACTIVboards and teachers are being trained in their use to improve staff and student performance. Teachers and students use multiple forms of technology to expand classroom learning. District leadership provides some monitoring of technology use through occasional walkthroughs, but does not ensure that all school councils develop policies and principals implement procedures for evaluating the effective use of technology for classroom instruction.

3.1f Instructional resources (textbook, supplemental reading, technology) are sufficient to effectively deliver the curriculum.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of perception survey and instructional materials, unit plan templates, curriculum alignment documents, eWalk data and district and school financial records

Interviews with district leadership, school board members, school leadership, teachers and parents

Observations of classrooms

The district allocates instructional resources to schools in sufficient quantities to support student needs. There are some grants through educational cooperatives and other sources to supplement existing programs or materials. There is no district plan to provide schools with the resources to sustain those programs beyond the grant period. There is no clearly defined process to ensure all available resources are identified, connected to delivery of the curriculum and equitably distributed according to the needs specified in the comprehensive school improvement plans.

3.1g Teachers examine and discuss student work collaboratively and use this information to inform their practice.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of eWalk data, professional development records, lesson plans and assessment samples

Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and teachers

Observations of classrooms

The district expects school leadership to lead their staff in the analysis of

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 3 **Instruction**

Performance Rating 2

student work. Limited time is provided for teachers to collaboratively analyze student work. In some schools, leadership staff models, trains and monitors the implementation of student work analysis. The district does not have procedures in place to collect feedback from teachers in all schools regarding what they need in order to successfully begin analyzing individual student work for the purpose of improving instructional practices.

3.1h There is evidence that homework is frequent and monitored and tied to instructional practice.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of Review of school board policies, perception survey results, lesson plans, classroom assessments, school council policies and student handbooks
- Interviews with the district leadership, school leadership, teachers, students and parents
- Observations of classrooms

The school board has adopted a homework policy. The district expects that school leadership and teachers will establish homework procedures. Homework is inconsistent between schools and there is no district process to ensure homework is developmentally appropriate, equitable and a meaningful extension of learning for all students. The district has not established a process to review school council policies for the inclusion of a homework policy.

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Summary of recommendations in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 3 **Instruction**

The district should continue monitoring instructional practices in all classrooms to ensure effective and varied instructional strategies are used in all subject areas. The process should include immediate and meaningful feedback to teachers so they may use it to refine their instructional practices. The monitoring should be ongoing and data collected at regular intervals to measure impact of the instructional practices on individual student learning.

District leadership should collaborate with school leadership to assist all teachers in the integration of the instructional technology resources that will have the greatest potential for immediately impacting student achievement. The district should monitor the training and the implementation in all classrooms.

District leadership should continue to work with school leadership to provide resources of time and staff to assist teachers in the process of collaboratively analyzing student work for the purpose of using the information to improve instructional practices. District leadership should collaborate with school leadership to monitor all classrooms for rigorous, clearly articulated rubrics and performance standards, and for sustained improvement in student proficiency. The school board and district leadership should consider designating academic performance coaches in each school to train staff and guide the implementation of all the district's academic improvement initiatives.

Improving literacy and math skills for all students should continue to be an ongoing focus. A writing plan should be developed that integrates writing opportunities in all classes, including electives. Writing experiences should be research-based and process-oriented. Teachers in every school should implement reading, math and writing activities that link across all disciplines. Teachers should provide classroom experiences that excite students and spark their enthusiasm for school attendance and life long learning.

District leadership should develop a plan to collaborate with school leadership to monitor the implementation of the collaborative model of instruction in all schools. The district should provide support for all staff members in transitioning to this model. Intensive and job-embedded training and an adequate number of teachers and assistants should be provided to ensure the unique academic and behavioral needs of all students are met. Planned, frequent and regular communication between case managers, content area teachers, collaborative teachers and instructional assistants should be a part of all district and school improvement efforts to meet the needs of all students.

RESOURCES:

The Kids Left Behind, Catching up the Underachieving Children of Poverty by Robert Barr and William Parrett

A Framework for Understanding Poverty, Ruby Payne

Classroom Instruction That Works, Robert Marzano and Debra Pickering

The Differentiated Classroom, Carol Ann Tomlinson

So Each May Learn, Harvey Silver and Richard Strong

Best Practice by Steven Zemelman, Arthur Hyde and Harvey Daniels

Engaging Every Learner, Blankstein, Cole, Houston

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 4 School Culture

Based on interviews conducted by the District Review Team members and their inspections of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that in Standard 4 there were 2 indicators (18%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 1," 9 indicators (82%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 2," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 3," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 4." A brief description of the evaluation of the indicators follows.

Performance Rating 2

- 4.1a There is leadership support for a safe, orderly and equitable learning environment (e.g., culture audits/school opinion surveys).

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of district safety plans, student handbooks, emergency drill plans, comprehensive district improvement plan and school discipline reports
- Interviews with: superintendent, board members, district leadership and staff, schools' leadership and staff, students, parents and community members
- Observations of: classrooms, common areas and campus

School board policies and procedures for grievances and appeals are publicized in student and teacher handbooks. The district developed a crisis management plan in conjunction with 10 other districts through a Green River Regional Educational Cooperative grant. User-friendly handbooks and flip charts were provided through the grant. However, the publications do not include school specific information (e.g., names, phone numbers). Bus evacuation drills and other emergency drills have occurred this year. The district has implemented random drug testing of staff and students. The comprehensive district improvement plan includes periodic walkthroughs to ensure clean and orderly facilities. These walkthroughs have yet to impact all buildings. The district's facilities vary in safety features. The Allen County Intermediate Center is the only building secured with a buzzer entry system. The high school has 100 doors to monitor, old interior paint and exposed wiring at the top of an old stairway.

- 4.1b Leadership creates experiences that foster the belief that all children can learn at high levels in order to motivate staff to produce continuous improvement in student learning.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of district safety plans, student handbooks, emergency drill plans, comprehensive district improvement plan, faculty meeting agendas, lesson/unit plans and district and school mission statements
- Interviews with superintendent, school board members, district leadership and staff, schools' leadership and staff, students, parents and community members
- Observations of classrooms, common areas and campus

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 4 **School Culture**

Performance Rating 2

District leadership expresses high expectations for students; however, it is not always reflected in practice. District leadership is implementing the collaboration model for instructing exceptional children in all schools. District opportunities for teachers to focus on curriculum, instruction and assessment needs are confined mostly to planned professional development activities. Teachers and students successes are recognized occasionally at school board meetings. Teamwork and mutual support is occurring at the school level but has not developed between schools or between district office and schools.

4.1c Teachers hold high expectations for all students academically and behaviorally and this is evidenced in their practice.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of student handbooks, district code of conduct, comprehensive district improvement plan, lesson/unit plans, classroom management plans, master schedules, and individual professional growth plans
Interviews with superintendent, school board members, district leadership and staff, schools' leadership and staff, students, parents and community members
Observations of classrooms, common areas and campus

District leadership expects school leadership to hold high expectations for all students. Some monitoring of classroom management and academic expectations by the district occurs through building walkthroughs. However, building walkthroughs by district personnel is not occurring in all schools.

4.1e Teachers recognize and accept their professional role in student success and failure.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, professional development records and lesson/unit plans
Interviews with superintendent, school board members, district leadership and staff and schools' leadership and staff
Observations of classrooms, common areas and campus

District leadership expects teachers to recognize their professional roles in student success and failure. This is communicated at the district level to the principals. Teachers are provided professional development in Thoughtful Education with opportunities for implementation. District leadership provides limited follow up and monitoring of the impact of professional development on instructional practices and student achievement. District leadership recognizes the connection between instructional practices and student successes.

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 4 **School Culture**

Performance Rating 2

- 4.1f The school intentionally assigns staff to maximize opportunities for ALL students to have access to the staff's instructional strengths.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of master schedules, student schedules, daily schedules, lesson/unit plans, school and district report cards and class offerings
Interviews with superintendent, board members, district leadership and staff, schools' leadership and staff, parents and students.
Observations of classrooms, common areas and campus

District leadership staff occasionally provides guidance to principals in assigning staff to meet student needs. The district does not consistently monitor school council policies.

- 4.1g Teachers communicate regularly with families about individual student progress (e.g., engage through conversation).

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of school board policies, meeting agendas and minutes, written communications, district Web site and student progress reports
Interviews with school board members, district leadership and staff, schools' leadership and staff, parents and students.
Observations of classrooms, common areas and campus

The school board has adopted policy and procedures for communicating student progress to families. The policy and procedures are limited to the intervals for reporting grades and a requirement for primary teachers to include a narrative report.

- 4.1i Multiple communication strategies and contexts are used for the dissemination of information to all stakeholders.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of district and school Web sites, newsletters, newspaper articles and pamphlets.
Interviews with superintendent, school board members, district leadership and staff, schools' leadership and staff, parents and students
Observations of classrooms, common areas, marquees and campus

Information is communicated to families through multiple forms (e.g., building radio stations, weekly email newsletters, emails, marquees). Most communication is one way. Communication to business and community groups is limited to local radio and newspaper reports

- 4.1j There is evidence that student achievement is highly valued and publicly celebrated (e.g., displays of student work, assemblies).

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 4 **School Culture**

Performance Rating 2

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, media documentation, yearbooks and school board meeting agendas and minutes
- Interviews with superintendent, school board members, district leadership and staff, schools' leadership and staff, parents and students
- Observations of classrooms, common areas and campus

District leadership recognizes student achievement at monthly school board meetings. The district does not have an established plan to celebrate student achievement or ensure that student achievements are communicated.

- 4.1k The school/district provides support for the physical, cultural, socio-economic, and intellectual needs of all students, which reflects a commitment to equity and an appreciation of diversity.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of school board policies and procedures, school board meeting agendas and minutes, technology inventory and suspension/expulsion/ attendance records, Kentucky Department of Education perception survey results
- Interviews with superintendent, school board members, district leadership and staff, schools' leadership and staff, parents and students
- Observations of classrooms, common areas and campus

District leadership provides some assistance to schools in meeting the socio-economic, physical and intellectual needs of students through such programs as Extended School Services, Title I and Family Resource/Youth Service Centers. All schools do not have equitable technology resources. Few efforts have been made by the district to identify diverse populations (e.g., gender, economic, learning styles) and to foster an appreciation for multicultural differences.

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 4 **School Culture**

Performance Rating **1**

4.1d Teachers and non-teaching staff are involved in both formal and informal decision-making processes regarding teaching and learning.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, school board meeting agendas and minutes, teacher handbooks and committee rosters
- Interviews with superintendent, board members, district leadership and staff and schools' leadership and staff
- Observations of classrooms, common areas and campus

Teaching and non-teaching staff have limited participation in school board meetings and in the development of the comprehensive district improvement plan. Teaching and non-teaching staff have few opportunities for input in decision making at the district level.

4.1h There is evidence that the teachers and staff care about students and inspire their best efforts.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Interviews with school board members, district leadership and staff, schools' leadership and staff, parents and students.
- Observations of classrooms, common areas and campus

Teachers, parents and students could not recall any perception surveys administered by the district. School staffs have independently developed caring, nurturing relationships among staff, students and parents.

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Summary of recommendations in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 4 **School Culture**

District and school crisis management plans should be made school specific including identified persons and phone numbers. Maintenance and safety issues at the schools should be equitable.

District leadership should meet annually with each school council to review their current and projected staff needs and to discuss ways to optimize the use of personnel and facilities to achieve the greatest impact on student learning. Current student achievement data from classroom and other assessments should be collaboratively reviewed by school leadership to identify any changes in staff assignments that might be necessary to achieve proficiency for all students.

District leadership should create a learning environment for students in which all teachers are held accountable for their professional role in student success. Teachers should be valued and their successes publicly celebrated within the community and at school board meetings.

District leadership should develop an intentional, well communicated plan to recognize student achievement and teacher successes in all areas on a regular basis using multiple forms to reach all stakeholders.

District leadership should intentionally involve both teaching and non-teaching staff in significant ways in decision making. Regular inclusion of teaching and non-teaching staff on standing and ad hoc committees at the district level should become standard practice.

Resources

Kentucky Department of Education SISI TOOL KIT

Partnership for Kentucky Schools

Kentucky Association of School Councils

Kentucky School Boards Association

Green River Regional Educational Cooperative

Kentucky Center for School Safety

So Each May Learn, Harvey Silver and Richard Strong

A Framework for Understanding Poverty, Ruby Payne

Family Resource Youth Services Center Guidelines. Kentucky Department of Education

What Works in Schools: Translating Research into Action. Robert Marzano

Whatever It Takes, How Professional Learning Communities Respond When Kids Don't Learn by Richard and Rebecca DuFour

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 5 **Student, Family and Community Support**

Based on interviews conducted by the District Review Team members and their inspections of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that in Standard 5 there were 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 1," 5 indicators (100%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 2," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 3," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 4." A brief description of the evaluation of the indicators follows.

Performance Rating 2

- 5.1a Families and the community are active partners in the educational process and work together with the school district staff to promote programs and services for all students.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans and school board meeting minutes
Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership, teachers, parents and community members

District leadership, in collaboration with school leadership, promotes programs and services for students based on their specific school needs. Social services, mental health services, the local court system and city and county government collaborate with district leadership in providing services to students such as crisis management planning exercises. The Community Center offers a variety of educational and recreational programs and activities for students and families. The Cal Turner Foundation provides opportunities for some partnerships between the schools and community through funding of special programs and services for students. However, parents and community members are rarely involved in major decision-making processes involving district planning.

- 5.1b Structures are in place to ensure that all students have access to all the curriculum (e.g., school guidance, Family Resource/Youth Service Centers, Extended School Services).

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans and school board meeting minutes
Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership, teachers, parents and community members

Family Resource/Youth Service Centers exist in each school and personnel to implement the programs are shared among schools. Additional student support services are also available through Extended School Services, Title I, technology programs and school guidance programs. District leadership monitors the implementation of programs funded from federal and state

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 5 **Student, Family and Community Support**

Performance Rating 2

grants to ensure that guidelines and regulations are met but does not effectively monitor the impact on student learning. The school board does not have a policy to ensure all students have equal access to the entire common academic core.

5.1c The school/district provides organizational structures and supports instructional practices to reduce barriers to learning.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans and school board policies
Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership, teachers, school nurse, parents and community members

District budgets provide funding for a variety of instructional materials and technology resources. Some professional development training is offered to support instructional practices and reduce barriers to learning. Health requirements and referral procedures are communicated to parents with some services, such as vision and hearing screenings, provided by school nurses. District leadership and school leadership do not effectively collaborate to confirm that student assignments are based on identified student needs.

5.1d Students are provided with a variety of opportunities to receive additional assistance to support their learning, beyond the initial classroom instruction.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans, school board policies, district program brochures and extended school services daytime waiver request documents
Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership, teachers, school nurse, parents and community members

All schools have Extended School Services. Some schools use daytime waivers and have initiated Extended School Services to address individual student learning needs during the regular school day. Some schools provide Extended School Services learning opportunities after school and during summer school. District leadership encourages but does not facilitate a means of communication and coordination among support programs or services to eliminate unnecessary overlaps in the delivery of services that support student achievement (e.g., Title I, Extended School Services, Family Resource/Youth Service Centers, school guidance programs, school health services).

5.1e The school maintains an accurate student record system that provides timely

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 5 **Student, Family and Community Support**

Performance Rating 2

information pertinent to the student's academic and educational development.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans, school board policies, student cumulative records and Software Technology, Incorporated student records
- Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership, counselor, teachers and parents
- Observations of classrooms and records rooms

District leadership provides technical support for the maintenance of student academic and development records. Appropriate school personnel have been trained in the initial development and implementation process of Individual Learning Plans. Permanent student records are stored in the basement of the central office building. The caged area in which they are maintained is not locked. The school board does not have a policy governing the maintenance, security and quality of the district student record system.

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Summary of recommendations in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 5 **Student, Family and Community Support**

District leadership should consider lead the schools in establishing student assistance teams. These teams should be defined, planned and implemented for the purpose of addressing and assessing individual student needs and determining specific strategies to reduce or eliminate barriers to learning.

District leadership should establish a process that brings together support programs for the purpose of determining gaps and overlaps in services for individual schools and their students.

District leadership should regularly and systematically involve parents and community members in the decision making process. Efforts should be made to increase parent and community representation on district and school planning committees. Effective, two-way communication should occur between the district leadership and stakeholders.

Resources

Improving Your School: A Parent and Community Guide to No Child Left Behind
URL:WWW.EDTRUST.ORG/NR/RDONLYRES/12E942C4-B544-438A-B4E4-9FCD97B86921/0/USERGUIDEBW1.PDF

Culturally Responsive Parental Involvement

Url:[HTTP://WWW.AACTE.ORG/PUBLICATIONS/KINGGOODWIN.PDF](http://WWW.AACTE.ORG/PUBLICATIONS/KINGGOODWIN.PDF)

Beyond the Building

Url:[HTTP://WWW.SEDL.ORG/PUBS/CATALOG/ITEMS/FAM40.HTML](http://WWW.SEDL.ORG/PUBS/CATALOG/ITEMS/FAM40.HTML)

Importance of Parent Involvement for No Child Left Behind (Webcast)
DVD, Provider: National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL)

Engaging Families at the Secondary Level: What Schools Can Do to Support Family Involvement

Url:[HTTP://WWW.SEDL.ORG/CONNECTIONS/RESOURCES/RB/RB3-SECONDARY.PDF](http://WWW.SEDL.ORG/CONNECTIONS/RESOURCES/RB/RB3-SECONDARY.PDF)

Blue Ribbon Schools. U.S. Department of Education

What Works in Schools: translating Research into Action. Robert Marzano

National Study of School Evaluation: School Improvement: Focusing on Student Performance. K.C. Fitzpatrick, Project Director 1997

Kentucky Center for School Safety

Partnership for Kentucky Schools

The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 6

Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation

Based on interviews conducted by the District Review Team members and their inspections of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that in Standard 6 there were 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 1," 11 indicators (92%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 2," 1 indicator (8%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 3," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 4." A brief description of the evaluation of the indicators follows.

Performance Rating 3

6.2a The school/district provides a clearly defined evaluation process.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of school board policies, district evaluation of personnel plan and individual professional growth plans
- Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership and teachers

The school board has adopted an evaluation of personnel plan (board policy 3.18) that meets state requirements. District leadership assists school leadership in carrying out this plan but only on a limited basis. The plan was reviewed and revised in June 2005. Policies and evaluation forms were updated but do not reflect current language. The term consolidated plan is used instead of comprehensive district improvement plan.

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 6 **Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation**

Performance Rating 2

- 6.1a There is evidence of support for the long-term professional growth needs of the individual staff members. This includes both instructional and leadership growth.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of district comprehensive improvement plan, school comprehensive improvement plans, professional development offerings, district/school actually attended professional development forms, individual professional growth plans and school board policies
Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership, teachers and classified staff

District leadership perceives high-quality, research-based professional development as an integral part of the school and district improvement process. Some professional development activities such as Thoughtful Education are intended to create and sustain long-term changes, but they are either not focused or not monitored consistently measure the impact on student achievement. District and school personnel have access to many professional development offerings sponsored by the district, school, Green River Regional Educational Cooperative or independent vendors. There is no systematic process to intentionally focus on individual needs of both certified and classified staff at the district or school level. District leadership expects school leadership to send in professional development requests based on needs determined from student achievement data, but this practice is not monitored to ensure this expectation is honored. The district mission is not a factor in determining long-term instructional leadership growth.

- 6.1b The school has an intentional plan for building instructional capacity through on-going professional development.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of district comprehensive improvement plan, school comprehensive improvement plans, professional development offerings, district/school actually attended professional development forms, individual professional growth plans and school board policies
Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership, teachers and classified staff

There is no formal process to identify individual needs of staff related to the planning and provision of professional development. The identified professional growth needs are not always reflected in the schoolwide or district wide professional development plans. District leadership requires school leadership to submit professional development plans, but there is no system in place to ensure consistency across the district. Many professional

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 6 **Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation**

Performance Rating 2

development activities are planned at the district level but intentional efforts to build instructional or leadership capacity is compromised by the many professional development offerings. Although the activities are perceived as valuable, there is a lack of guidance or focus from the district level. Currently professional development is planned on a year-to-year basis. District leadership indicates that professional development planning beginning in 2007 will be multi-year dimensional.

6.1c Staff development priorities are set in alignment with goals for student performance and the individual professional growth plans of staff.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of district comprehensive improvement plan, school comprehensive improvement plans, professional development offerings, district/school actually attended professional development forms, individual professional growth plans and school board policies

Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership, teachers and classified staff

Professional development priorities are seldom determined through the personnel evaluation process and do not focus on the most critical needs of the district and school staff members. There is no balance between individual, school and district needs. School leadership is asked by district leadership to base professional development on student achievement data and individual professional growth plans, but there is no follow through from the district to ensure these identified needs are based on both criteria. District administrators were unable to produce copies of or articulate the growth areas addressed in their current individual professional growth plans.

6.1d Plans for school improvement directly connect goals for student learning and the priorities set for the school and district staff development activities.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of district comprehensive improvement plan, school comprehensive improvement plans, professional development offerings, district/school actually attended professional development forms, individual professional growth plans and school board policies

Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership, teachers and classified staff

District leadership sometimes attempts to collaborate with school leadership to align professional development with student learning goals as determined through analysis of data from the state assessments. Data beyond the state assessment do not appear to affect the plan. The district encourages schools to give common assessments, pre and post tests and end of course

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 6 **Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation**

Performance Rating 2

assessments to be included in student data but this practice has not become a reality in all schools at all levels. Many professional development activities are research-based but not every staff member who attends has determined that the activity addresses their identified areas of need.

6.1e Professional development is on-going and job-embedded.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of district comprehensive improvement plan, school comprehensive improvement plans, professional development offerings, district/school actually attended professional development forms, individual professional growth plans and school board policies
Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership, teachers and classified staff

Few professional development activities have follow-up built in to provide support for implementation of the practice. There are some job-embedded professional development such as Thoughtful Education but most activities do not have coaching or mentoring on a regular basis. Impact or measures for successful implementation are not present. District leadership has plans for a professional development cohort Four Grid model that will track professional development and measure impact. District leadership expressed a need for and the school board has received a request to hire district curriculum coaches to provide coaching and mentoring as follow-up for professional development across the district.

6.1f Professional development planning shows a direct connection to an analysis of student achievement data.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of district comprehensive improvement plan, school comprehensive improvement plans, list of professional development offerings, district/school actually attended professional development forms, individual professional growth plans and school board policies
Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership and teachers

District leadership mandated two professional development days in 2006-07 for the purpose of analyzing student performance data. Plans for using results to revise the comprehensive district and comprehensive school improvement plans have not been addressed. District leadership and school leadership collaborate on a limited basis to develop plans to include immediate and prolonged needs of students with specific barriers to learning. The professional development activities identified in the comprehensive district improvement plan do not directly address the elimination of learning

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 6 **Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation**

Performance Rating 2

gaps. Some math professional development activities are listed in the district and school comprehensive improvement plans for the purpose of addressing some subpopulation gaps.

6.2b Leadership provides the fiscal resources for the appropriate professional growth and development of certified staff based on identified needs.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of school board policies, district evaluation of personnel plan and individual professional growth plans
- Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership and teachers

District leadership provides resources to schools to support professional growth of staff. The district provides a leadership consultant to work directly with school leadership to promote and enhance the development of effective leadership skills. There is no formal process to ensure professional development activities are inclusive and meet the needs of individual staff members. District leadership reviews professional development expenses at a district level. Some additional monies may be given to schools that can show a need. The impact these additional funds have on student achievement is not effectively measured.

6.2c The school/district effectively uses the employee evaluation and the individual professional growth plan to improve staff proficiency.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of school board policies, district evaluation of personnel plan and individual professional growth plans
- Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership and teachers

District leadership communicates to school leadership the expectation that teachers collaborate with their principals to develop individual professional growth plans. These growth plans are designed to address the individual needs of staff but do not always accomplish this goal. The district does not define teacher or administrator effectiveness as it relates to evaluations. There is no formal monitoring system in place that ensures collaboration occurs as a regular practice across the district. School leadership gives copies of teacher summative reports to district leadership but does not include copies of teacher individual professional growth plans. District leadership evaluations are not up to date and district staff does not have individual professional growth plans outlining growth areas with activities to address the needs.

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 6 **Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation**

Performance Rating 2

6.2d Leadership provides and implements a process of personnel evaluation which meets or exceeds standards set in statute and regulation.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of school board policies, district evaluation of personnel plan and individual professional growth plans
Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership and teachers

District leadership developed and the school board adopted an evaluation process with provisions for support for the implementation. This plan meets all state guidelines and regulations. The district objective is to provide quality instruction to all students for the purpose of promoting and supporting academic success. Although district leadership encourages school leadership to use the evaluation process as a tool for total school improvement, this is not modeled at the district level. Feedback and coaching are not provided as a consistent part of the evaluation process.

6.2e The school/district improvement plan identifies specific instructional needs, has strategies to address them, and uses the effective instructional leadership act requirements as a resource to accomplish these goals.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of school board policies, district evaluation of personnel plan and individual professional growth plans
Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership and teachers

The comprehensive district improvement plan addresses few leadership needs. Many district and school administrators have participated in activities based on the Effective Instructional Leadership Act, but most are in their area of specialization. Many activities may not be determined to be a district or individual need. Most principals participate in district-led professional development such as book studies (Beyond Basketball and Results Now), but there is no follow up to determine if these studies have a positive impact on student learning. There is limited ongoing or job-embedded professional development for leadership at the district or school levels.

6.2f Leadership uses the evaluation process to provide teachers with the follow-up and support to change behavior and instructional practice.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of school board policies, district evaluation of personnel plan and individual professional growth plans

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 6 **Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation**

Performance Rating 2

Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership and teachers

District leadership provides school leadership with a formal evaluation process with support, but no monitoring system exists to ensure the plan is implemented effectively. The measure of impact on student achievement is done mostly through an informal method such as conversations with school leadership.

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Summary of recommendations in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 6 **Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation**

District leadership should develop and implement a formal process for identifying individual and district wide needs in terms of high-quality, research-based professional development. This process should reflect a collaborative effort between district and school leadership in providing staff with essential training that will have the most positive impact on teaching and learning. Professional development concepts and strategies should become a part of the administrative evaluation process. Results of the implementation and impact of these professional development activities on student achievement should be communicated to the superintendent, school board, school councils and staff.

District leadership should develop and implement a formal process for monitoring the effectiveness of personnel evaluation at the school and district levels. This process should clearly define teacher and administrator effectiveness as it relates to student achievement. High expectations for staff performance at all levels should be a focus of the evaluation process, and this should be incorporated into each aspect of the district and school culture and should be an integral part of all administrative meetings. The district administrative evaluation instrument should become a powerful tool for improving the performance of all staff at both district and school level.

Individual professional growth plans of all administrators should reflect individual and district wide needs. District leadership should incorporate the personnel evaluation process, district needs assessments and identified district priorities in the individual professional growth plan of each district administrator.

Resources:

Evaluating Professional Development, Tom Guskey

Assessing Impact: Evaluating Staff Development, Joellen Killion

Results-Based Staff Development, Joellen Killion

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 7 Leadership

Based on interviews conducted by the District Review Team members and their inspections of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that in Standard 7 there were 2 indicators (18%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 1," 9 indicators (82%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 2," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 3," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 4." A brief description of the evaluation of the indicators follows.

Performance Rating 2

- 7.1b Leadership decisions are focused on student academic performance and are data-driven and collaborative.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of Kentucky Performance Report, comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans, school board meeting minutes and Kentucky Department of Education perception survey results
- Interviews with school board members, district leadership and school leadership

District leadership is leading the school board toward data-driven decision-making. This is a recent initiative of the district office. District leadership provides student achievement data from all schools to the school board on an annual basis as state and national assessment results are received in the district. School councils make periodic reports on academic progress at board meetings; however, these reports are usually considered informational in nature rather than a basis for decision-making. The school board most often consults only with district office staff when making decisions concerning student performance. District leadership does not always confer with school leadership prior to making decisions that may affect them.

- 7.1c There is evidence that all administrators have a growth plan focused on the development of effective leadership skills.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans, district evaluation plan and administrative individual professional growth plans
- Interviews with district leadership and school leadership

District administrators do not have up-to-date individual professional growth plans. Principals have developed and are implementing individual professional growth plans in collaboration with the designated evaluator from the district office. Most principals' individual professional growth plans address instructional leadership skills which will enhance the school-based administrator's effectiveness in the areas of academic performance, learning environment and efficiency.

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 7 **Leadership**

Performance Rating 2

7.1d There is evidence that the school/district leadership team disaggregates data for use in meeting the needs of a diverse population, communicates the information to school staff and incorporates the data systematically into school's plan.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of comprehensive district improvement plans and comprehensive school improvement plans, Kentucky Performance Report, No Child Left Behind report and Kentucky Department of Education perception survey results
Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and teachers

The district planning team analyzes student assessment data and uses the results in the comprehensive planning process. School data is analyzed at the school level and is used to identify improvement strategies in each school's comprehensive plan. Achievement data is disaggregated to identify achievement gaps among the student population subgroups; however, the closing of these gaps is not always addressed by an improvement strategy in the comprehensive district or school improvement plans. An analysis of student achievement data is most often an annual event on the district level; however, some schools regularly analyze data from common assessments and use the data to adjust instruction.

7.1e Leadership ensures all instructional staff have access to curriculum related materials and the training necessary to use curriculum and data resources relating to the learning goals for Kentucky public schools.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of comprehensive district improvement plans and comprehensive school improvement plans, curriculum templates, Kentucky Department of Education perception survey results, professional development offerings and lesson plans
Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and teachers
Observations of classrooms

District leadership has made available to the instructional staff resources necessary to access a district wide curriculum template aligned with Kentucky Combined Curriculum Documents. Each grade level and content area is expected to complete the curriculum alignment process by identifying resources and assessments. Progress toward completion of this curriculum alignment activity varies among schools. Not all school's staff have access to technology resources necessary to fully realize the potential impact of the ACTIVboard-based curriculum. Training to support teacher's efforts to develop and implement the new curriculum has not been ongoing as teachers work through the process.

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 7 **Leadership**

Performance Rating 2

7.1f Leadership ensures that time is protected and allocated to focus on curricular and instructional issues.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of school board policies
- Interviews with district leadership and school leadership
- Observations of classrooms and common areas

District leadership encourages school councils to adopt policies and procedures to ensure instructional time is protected for its intended purpose. Most councils have adopted and school leadership is implementing policies and procedures that limit the use of intercoms and limits access to instructional areas during the school day. The school board has not adopted policy to address the protection of instructional time.

7.1h The school/district leadership provides the organizational policy and resource infrastructure necessary for the implementation and maintenance of a safe and effective learning environment.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of school board policies, Kentucky Department of Education perception survey results, district facilities plan, Integrated Pest Control Management documentation and school and district safety plans
- Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and teachers
- Observations of district facilities, classrooms and school common areas

School leadership and staff in most school centers accept the responsibility to ensure the maintenance of a safe, healthy, orderly and equitable learning and working environment for students and staff. The board of education has not adopted policy to address the orderly, equitable and effective learning environment. Some safety issues exist due to unsecured entrances at some centers. The district has assisted school centers in developing safety plans and procedures, and monitors the implementation of the plans through records of emergency procedure drills at the school level. Environmental health issues are monitored by district buildings and grounds personnel.

7.1i Leadership provides a process for the development and the implementation of council policy based on anticipated needs.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of professional development offerings
- Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership and school council members

District leadership shows some interest in school council activity by requiring

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 7 **Leadership**

Performance Rating 2

that minutes of monthly meetings be forwarded to the district office. District leadership does not review council policies to ensure that all required policies have been adopted. There is little face-to-face contact between school councils and district leadership. School council member training is listed as a professional development activity and is provided by an outside source.

7.1j There is evidence that the SBDM council has an intentional focus on student academic performance.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of school council documents, Kentucky Department of Education perception survey results and school board meeting minutes
- Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership and school council members

Few district personnel attend school council meetings unless issues of particular interest to district staff are to be discussed. The district has not developed plans or procedures to assist councils in maintaining a focus on student academic performance.

7.1k There is evidence that the principal demonstrates leadership skills in the areas of academic performance, learning environment and efficiency.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, professional development offerings, district personnel evaluation plan, school administrator growth plans, Effective Instructional Leadership Act documentation, Kentucky Department of Education perception survey results and district leadership survey results
- Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership, school council members and teachers

The superintendent holds principals accountable for student achievement in their school centers and communicates this expectation at meetings and in correspondence with principals. In support of the development of principal leaders within the district, the school board created the position of leadership consultant to whom the superintendent has delegated the responsibilities for principal professional growth and evaluation. District leadership has developed a professional performance evaluation plan which meets state regulations; however, district leadership does not always follow the plan and its defined procedures in the evaluation process. The corrective action documentation forms prescribed in the performance evaluation plan are not always used to document the actions needed to correct leadership weaknesses. District leadership provides limited guidance to principals in the selection of training activities to fulfill professional development and Effective

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Standard 7 **Leadership**

Performance Rating 2

Instructional Leadership Act requirements. District leadership has made limited effort to provide training focusing on leadership for low performing schools. Few activities in the comprehensive district improvement plan address leadership skills.

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 7 **Leadership**

Performance Rating **1**

7.1a Leadership has developed and sustained a shared vision.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan and Kentucky Department of Education perception survey results
- Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and teachers
- Observations of district facilities and school common areas

The Allen County School district includes a mission statement on most district publications. The statement was developed three or four years ago using a collaborative process involving school personnel and some parents with school council involvement. There have been no updates to the mission statement since its initial development. Individual district leaders can verbally articulate their vision for the district from their position within the organization. These vision statements are not always reflective of the mission statement or consistent among school leaders. There has been no effort to develop a vision statement to guide the district's education agenda and be shared by all stakeholder groups. Some schools display their statements of beliefs, vision and mission within their facilities; however, there is little awareness of a vision statement for the district.

7.1g Leadership plans and allocates resources, monitors progress, provides the organizational infrastructure, and removes barriers in order to sustain continuous school improvement.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans, Kentucky Department of Education perception survey results and financial documents
- Interviews with district leadership, school leadership, teachers and classified staff

District leadership usually allocates resources on a traditional formula based on average daily attendance at each school center. This method of distribution does not allow for equity based on the unique needs of individual school populations. Equitable allocations of resources have not been recognized as a vital ingredient in establishing and sustaining continuous school improvement. District leadership has not developed a process for determining the impact of resource allocation on improvement initiatives. District leadership is making some efforts to establish a culture of continuous improvement; however, improvement initiatives and the support needed for their implementation are often fragmented and not adequate to provide a common infrastructure on which to build and sustain long-term district wide improvement.

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Summary of recommendations in: **Efficiency**

Standard 7 Leadership

District leadership should bring together representatives from all stakeholder groups to engage in a collaborative process to develop a vision statement unique to the district. The vision development process should engage the school community in an in-depth analysis of the district's priorities for the expenditure of resources. The vision statement should serve as the catalyst for implementing a district wide continuous improvement process under which the district may focus all improvement initiatives.

District leadership should develop policy and procedures to support schools in their efforts to improve academic performance for all students. District leadership should examine its practice of allocating most resources based on average daily attendance and consider the unique needs of students when allocating resources. Procedures for monitoring the impact of allocated resources on student achievement should be developed. Initiatives showing little positive impact on staff and student performance should be abandoned.

District leadership should implement a district wide, research-based improvement process under which all resources and processes are intentionally aligned in support of developing and sustaining a culture of continuous improvement.

Resources

commonsense.com, real answers for real educators from an unlikely source, Thomas Houlihan, and Judy S. Phillips The Watercress Press,

Leading Every Day, 124 Actions for Effective Leadership, Joyce Kaser, et.al. Corwin Press, 2006.

Leadership Capacity for Lasting School Improvement, Linda Lambert, ASCD, 2003.

School Leadership that Works, From Research to Results, Robert J. Marzano, Timothy Waters and Brian A. McNulty, ASCD, 2005.

The Learning Leader, How to Focus School Improvement for Better Results, Douglas B. Reeves, ASCD, 2006.

Rethinking Leadership, A Collection of Articles, Thomas J Sergiovanni, Corwin Press, 2007.

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 8 **School Organization and Fiscal Resources**

Based on interviews conducted by the District Review Team members and their inspections of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that in Standard 8 there were 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 1," 10 indicators (100%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 2," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 3," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 4." A brief description of the evaluation of the indicators follows.

Performance Rating 2

- 8.1a There is evidence that the school is organized to maximize use of all available resources to support high student and staff performance.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans, district and school financial records, school master schedules, district and staff meeting minutes and district facilities plan
- Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and teachers

Organization of the schools and implementation of the curriculum are considered to be the responsibility of the principals and school councils. District leadership accounts for expenditures and use of instructional resources but does not analyze the impact of these resources on student achievement.

- 8.1b The master class schedule reflects all students have access to all the curriculum.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of School council policies, school master schedules and school board minutes
- Interviews with district leadership, school leadership, teachers, parents and students

District leadership and school leadership do not formally collaborate to design master schedules in all schools to ensure a common academic core is provided for all students. District leadership will provide technical assistance when requested, but school leadership is expected to include sufficient core curriculum courses that meet local, state and federal standards. Final master schedules are submitted to the district leadership and the school board for review to ensure that the district is meeting the required daily minutes of instruction.

- 8.1c The instructional and non-instructional staff are allocated and organized based upon the learning needs of all students.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of school board policies and meeting minutes, comprehensive

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Standard 8 **School Organization and Fiscal Resources**

Performance Rating 2

district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans, school master schedules, district and school financial records
Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and teachers

District staffing policies meet the minimum state requirements for student/teacher ratios. Most staffing allocations are based on schools' average daily attendance data, and some staff are allocated based on state and federal goals and regulations of categorical programs. District leadership provides some technical assistance when requested, but school councils are expected to make staffing placement decisions. The school board does not always approve additional priority staffing positions identified in the comprehensive district and school improvement plans.

8.1d There is evidence that the staff makes efficient use of instructional time to maximize student learning.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans, curriculum documents, school master schedules, and eWalk data
Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and teachers
Observations of classrooms

District leadership does not review policies of all school councils to ensure that procedures are in place to protect instructional time. Informal walkthroughs are conducted in some schools, but the scope is limited and little corrective feedback is presented to the teachers. District leadership provides professional development activities to enhance classroom management and instructional practices, but there is limited follow up to determine if the activities maximize student learning.

8.1e Staff promotes team planning vertically and horizontally across content areas and grade configurations that is focused on the goals, objectives and strategies in the improvement plan (e.g., common planning time for content area teachers; emphasis on learning time and not seat time; and integrated units).

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans, curriculum documents, school master schedules and administrative staff meeting minutes
Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and teachers
Observations of classroom

District leadership has initiated some opportunities for teachers to collaborate

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 8 **School Organization and Fiscal Resources**

Performance Rating 2

vertically and horizontally to align the curriculum across grade levels, content areas and transition points. District leadership assumes school leadership will provide appropriate planning opportunities within the school schedules to continue these activities. Most teachers are expected to attend after school meetings for participation in curriculum alignment, designing classroom instruction and assessments and analyzing data. Most schools have some common planning time, and some schools include special needs teachers in the common planning block. Some technology resource teachers conduct mini-sessions in new technology initiatives during planning time. District leadership does not review school master schedules for inclusion of common planning time.

- 8.1f The schedule is intentionally aligned with the school's mission and designed to ensure that all staff provide quality instructional time (e.g., flex time, organization based on developmental needs of students, interdisciplinary units, etc.).

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans, curriculum documents, master schedules and district and school mission statements
- Interviews with district leadership, school leadership, teachers and students
- Observations of classrooms and common areas

District and school leadership do not collaborate to organize schools to reflect mission, vision, belief statements and core value statements that drive educational decisions. District leadership will provide assistance when requested, but there is no process in place to ensure a seamless integrated vision for kindergarten through 12th-grade. District leadership expects school leadership to adopt policies that protect instructional time and that guide quality instruction in all classrooms.

- 8.2a The school/district provides a clearly defined process (in accordance with the school council allocation formula) to provide equitable and consistent use of fiscal resources.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans, district and school financial records and school council meeting minutes
- Interviews with district leadership and school leadership

District leadership allocates resources based on the school council allocation formula and state and federal grant regulations. A formula using average

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Standard 8 **School Organization and Fiscal Resources**

Performance Rating 2

daily attendance and/or full time equivalent enrollments guides the allocation of most resources. District leadership has not established clear, equitable procedures for allocating resources on a school-by-school basis that ensure resources are directly connected to the comprehensive district and school improvement plans. District leadership collaborates with some school councils in the use of resources and budgeting, but this is not a district wide practice.

- 8.2b The school/district budget reflects decisions made about discretionary funds and resources are directed by an assessment of need or a required plan, all of which consider appropriate data.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of school board meeting minutes and district and school financial records
- Interviews with district leadership and school leadership

District leadership uses a formula based on average daily attendance to allocate discretionary funds. Schools submit "wish lists" based on identified needs. The allocation process does not rank district wide priority needs in order to assist schools struggling to meet state and federal goals. There are no formal procedures for monitoring the use of discretionary funds and for measuring the impact on classroom instruction, student achievement and closing achievement gaps.

- 8.2c School councils and school boards analyze funding and other resource requests to ensure the requests are tied to the school's plan and identified priority needs.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of school board meeting minutes, school board member notebooks and district and school financial records
- Interviews with school board members, district leadership and school leadership.

The school board occasionally has conversations about connections of resource allocations and student achievement. The school board accepts assurances from district leadership that resource requests are analyzed and are tied to district and schools' priority needs.

- 8.2d State and Federal Program Resources are allocated and integrated (Safe Schools, Title 1, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Family Resource/Youth Service Centers, Extended School Services) to address student needs identified by the school/district.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 8 **School Organization and Fiscal Resources**

Performance Rating 2

Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans and district and school financial records
Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and teachers

District allocation of categorical funds and grants are based on formulas using average daily attendance data or student enrollments. Categorical funds and state/federal grants are appropriately integrated and reflected in the comprehensive district and school improvement plans. The school board has adopted a policy (08.5 Curriculum and Instruction) that requires evaluation of all educational programs, but the policy is not fully implemented. District leadership has not implemented a formal process for measuring the impact of expenditures from categorical funds and grants on student achievement and instructional practices.

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Summary of recommendations in: **Efficiency**

Standard 8 **School Organization and Fiscal Resources**

District leadership should implement budgeting procedures to include a clearly defined process that requires budgeting decisions be directly connected to comprehensive district and school improvement plans. The budgeting procedures should ensure that all resources are allocated equitably and focus on the unique individual needs of the schools.

In accordance with school board policy 08.5, district leadership should implement formal procedures for monitoring and analyzing the impact of all available resources, including state and federal grants, on instructional practices and student achievement.

RESOURCES

Kentucky School Boards Association www.ksba.org

Resource Allocation: Managing Money and People, M. Scott Norton, and Larry K. Kelly

School Finance & Teacher Quality: Exploring the Connections, Margaret L. Plecki and David H. Monk

School Leadership That Works: From Research To Results, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Robert J. Marzano, Timothy Waters, Brian A. McNulty

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

Based on interviews conducted by the District Review Team members and their inspections of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that in Standard 9 there were 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 1," 16 indicators (100%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 2," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 3," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 4." A brief description of the evaluation of the indicators follows.

Performance Rating 2

- 9.1a There is evidence that a collaborative process was used to develop the vision, beliefs, mission and goals that engage the school community as a community of learners.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of the comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans, district mission statement and Kentucky Department of Education perception survey results
- Interviews with superintendent, school board members, district leadership, school leadership, teachers, parents and community members.

The Allen County comprehensive district improvement plan has a mission statement and goals that were developed collaboratively between the Allen County District Team and representatives of a variety of stakeholder groups. The statements were presented to the general public for review prior to final adoption by the school board. Vision and belief statements were not developed and included in the comprehensive district improvement plan. The current comprehensive district improvement plan is a result of revisions which occurred in the fall, 2006.

- 9.2a There is evidence the school/district planning process involves collecting, managing and analyzing data.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans and district Web site
- Interviews with superintendent, school board members, district leadership, school leadership, teachers, parents and community members.

The Allen County District Team collaborated with school leadership to analyze data from the Kentucky Performance Report, Commonwealth Accountability Testing System data, No Child Left Behind report and district assessments. Comprehensive school improvement plans were reviewed and public input was solicited in order to determine the goals and strategies for the comprehensive district improvement plan. A comprehensive analysis of classroom assessments and individual student work was not used to establish goals, objectives, priorities and action steps of the comprehensive district

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

Performance Rating 2

improvement plan

9.2b The school/district uses data for school improvement planning.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, district Web site, Kentucky Performance Report, No Child Left Behind report, and Kentucky Department of Education perception survey results
Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership and teachers

District leadership led an analysis of disaggregated state and federal student achievement data and used the results as the basis for the comprehensive district planning process. The district did not include data from classroom assessments and analysis of individual student work to design goals, objectives, priorities and activities of the current comprehensive district improvement plan

9.3a School and district plans reflect learning research and current local, state and national expectations for student learning and are viewed by the planning team.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of comprehensive district improvement plan and comprehensive school improvement plans
Interviews with district improvement planning team members

Educational research is not the foundation or effective guide for determination of the needs of the district. in terms of trends in student achievement data. Some school plans reflect research-based strategies, but these strategies are not effectively included in the comprehensive district improvement plan

9.3b The school/district analyzes their students' unique learning needs.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of comprehensive district improvement plan and comprehensive school improvement plans
Interviews with district improvement planning team members

The district relies on the Kentucky Performance Report and No Child Left Behind report to set goals and plan activities for addressing student needs. Data results relating to gaps in math scores for free and reduced lunch, special needs and gifted and talented students are identified. Strategies to ensure these needs are addressed and met are vague.

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Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

Performance Rating 2

9.3c The desired results for student learning are defined.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of comprehensive district improvement plan and school improvement plans

Interviews with district leadership and school leadership

The district plan states the desired learning results for some activities, but these are only defined in measurable terms for Exceptional Child Education.

9.4a Perceived strengths and limitations of the school/district instructional and organizational effectiveness are identified using the collected data.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans and Kentucky Department of Education perception survey results

Interviews with superintendent and leadership consultant

District leadership collects data in the areas of student achievement, finance, teacher retention and turnover, student drop-out rates and successful student transition in order to identify the strengths and limitations of its instructional and organizational effectiveness. The impact of this data is not reflected in the priority needs or improvement goal statements. Actions taken as a result of this data collection are not identified in the comprehensive district improvement plan. Opportunities are provided for district personnel and principals to visit other districts in order to identify more effective instructional and organizational structures.

9.4b The school/district goals for building and strengthening the capacity of the school/district instructional and organizational effectiveness are defined.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans and Kentucky Department of Education perception survey results

Interviews with superintendent, leadership consultant and principals

The collection and analysis of multiple sources of data in the area of instructional and organizational effectiveness is not clearly reflected in the goals of the comprehensive district improvement plan. Most goals identified in the plan address academic performance and the learning environment. The achievement of some of the goals may positively impact instructional and organizational effectiveness; however, few of these goals are stated in clear, concise and measurable terms. The district provides limited assistance to

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

Performance Rating 2

schools in setting goals focusing on building capacity to sustain instructional and organizational effectiveness.

9.5a The action steps for school improvement are aligned with the school improvement goals and objectives.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans and Kentucky Department of Education perception survey results
- Interviews with district leadership and school leadership

The action components of the comprehensive district improvement plan were determined by a review of all comprehensive school improvement plans. Some action components of the comprehensive district and school improvement plans may result in decreasing some achievement gaps; however, this is not indicated as an expected result of the activity.

9.5b The plan identifies the resources, timelines, and persons responsible for carrying out each activity.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of school board minutes, comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans and administrative staff meeting minutes
- Interviews with district leadership and school leadership

The comprehensive district improvement plan identifies responsible persons, some by name and others by role group. A specific component manager is not identified in the area of academic performance and learning environment. Timelines are established and are realistic. Expected impact is not described in measurable terms to address the impact on student achievement and instructional practice. Activities are measured for completion. Adequate resources are identified for meeting priority needs of the plan. District leadership has integrated fund sources to address student needs.

9.5c The means for evaluating the effectiveness of the improvement plan are established.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans and administrative staff meeting minutes
- Interviews with district leadership and school leadership

All objectives of the comprehensive school improvement plan are not stated

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

Performance Rating 2

in measurable terms and do not specifically address student achievement and instructional practices. Standards and benchmarks are not defined for all goals. The district uses implementation and impact checks to monitor and evaluate the action plans. One implementation and impact check was submitted from each school and the district February 19, 2007.

- 9.5d The improvement plan is aligned with the school's profile, beliefs, mission, desired results for student learning and analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan and comprehensive school improvement plans

- Interviews with district leadership and school leadership

At least one school has developed vision and belief statements for student learning. The district has not developed vision and belief statements to accompany the district mission statement. Some activities within the action components of the comprehensive district improvement plan are aligned with the mission statements of the schools.

- 9.6a The plan is implemented as developed.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan and school board meeting minutes

- Interviews with district leadership and school leadership

District leadership provides limited direction and support for implementation of comprehensive district and school improvement plans. District staff is aware of most of the district comprehensive improvement plan and some are involved with the implementation.

- 9.6b The school evaluates the degree to which it achieves the goals and objectives for student learning set by the plan.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan and school board meeting minutes

- Interviews with district leadership and school leadership

The district completed the first Implementation and Impact Check on February 19, 2007. The emphasis was on completion of activities rather than impact on student achievement.

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

Performance Rating 2

9.6c The school evaluates the degree to which it achieves the expected impact on classroom practice and student performance specified in the plan.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of school board meeting minutes, comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school improvement plans and Implementation and Impact Checks

Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and teachers

The comprehensive district improvement plan does not include a process for evaluating the plan's impact on instructional practices and student achievement. The district has completed Implementation and Impact Checks, but these do not include data regarding impact on classroom practice and student performance.

9.6d There is evidence of attempts to sustain the commitment to continuous improvement.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of comprehensive district improvement plan and school board meeting minutes

Interviews with district leadership, school leadership, teachers and parents

There are some efforts to review and evaluate the comprehensive district and school improvements plans for annual modification. District personnel expresses an urgency for school improvement; however, there is not a clearly defined, shared vision that focuses on areas of greatest need for improving student achievement and closing achievement gaps within sub-populations.

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Summary of recommendations in: **Efficiency**

Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

The district should use a consensus-building process involving all stakeholders in the development of vision and belief statements to guide the district in defining district wide goals. The district's mission statement should be reviewed and revised continuously to define how the district will achieve its vision.

District leadership should revisit the comprehensive district improvement plan to ensure that all goal statements are written in clear, concise and measurable terms. The district planning team should establish incremental timelines for implementing all district improvement strategies and complete implementation and impact checks on a regular basis. Activities which result in little or no impact on staff and student performances should be deleted and new strategies should be added, based on the most recent performance data.

District leadership should consider the comprehensive district improvement plan a living and binding document and should lead the school board to an understanding of the purpose of the plan as a justification for resource allocation. The comprehensive district improvement plan should be made available to school staffs to show alignment with the comprehensive school improvement plan.

The district planning team should analyze a variety of classroom assessment data and student work as part of the needs assessment when revising the comprehensive district improvement plan.

Resources

Failure Is Not An Option, Alan M. Blankstein

On Common Ground, Richard DuFour, Robert Eaker, Rebecca DuFour

Professional Learning Communities At Work, Best Practices for Enhancing Student Achievement, Richard DuFour, Robert Eaker

Enhancing Student Achievement, A Framework for School Improvement.
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

Journal of Staff Development, Official publication of the National Staff Development Council

Standards and Indicators for School Improvement Toolkit

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Summary of Next Steps:

District leadership should continue to collaborate with school leadership to facilitate the curriculum alignment process to provide for a rigorous common academic core, especially in the areas of reading and math.

District leadership should provide assistance to teachers and school leadership in designing authentic classroom assessments and accompanying rubrics.

Kentucky's Student Performance Standards should be used to make clear to students what is expected of them. District and school leadership should monitor assessments for rigor and frequency and provide additional assistance as needed.

District leadership should intentionally work to establish strategies to reduce achievement gaps. District leadership should consider the establishment of interventions such as student assistance teams within each school to serve as a means to reduce barriers to learning. District and school leadership should facilitate regular communication concerning not only the academic and behavior needs of students but also coordination of school and community support services to address student and family needs.

District leadership should intentionally involve school councils and teaching and non-teaching staff in significant ways when making decisions affecting students. District leadership should annually meet with each school council to review their current and projected staff needs and to discuss ways to optimize the use of personnel and facilities to achieve the greatest impact on student learning. Current student achievement data from classroom and other assessments should be collaboratively reviewed to identify any changes in staff assignments that might be necessary to achieve proficiency for all students.

District leadership should bring together representatives from all stakeholder groups to engage in a collaborative process to develop statements of beliefs and vision unique to the district. The purpose of the vision should be to inspire, energize and motivate staff, students and stakeholders to achieve what is possible for the district.

District leadership should develop policy and procedures to support school personnel in their efforts to improve academic performance for all students. District leadership should examine its practice of allocating discretionary resources based on average daily attendance and consider the unique needs of students when allocating resources. District leadership should establish and sustain an environment of mutual respect among all employees. Communications within and between both district and school settings should focus on the goal of providing a common infrastructure on which to build and sustain continuous improvement for both staff and students.

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In Conclusion:

The district scholastic review team would like to thank the superintendent of the Allen County Schools, the school board members, the district and school staffs and the community for their gracious welcome and open interactions during our visit. Everyone was extremely helpful and cooperative in assisting our team with our task. We hope this report will provide direction to the district in its effort to engage all stakeholders in conversations regarding the road map to proficiency for all learners. To guide the dialogue that will result following the delivery of this report, we would like you to consider the following questions:

What would this district look like if all district and school staff members had high expectations for all students and shared in a common vision of moving them to proficiency?

What steps must we take to ensure all students have access to a rigorous, challenging curriculum that motivates them to become lifelong learners and responsible citizens?

Do we model daily the behaviors and attitudes that we expect from schools' staff and students?

What commitment will each staff member make in order for our district to achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as defined by the No Child Left Behind Act?

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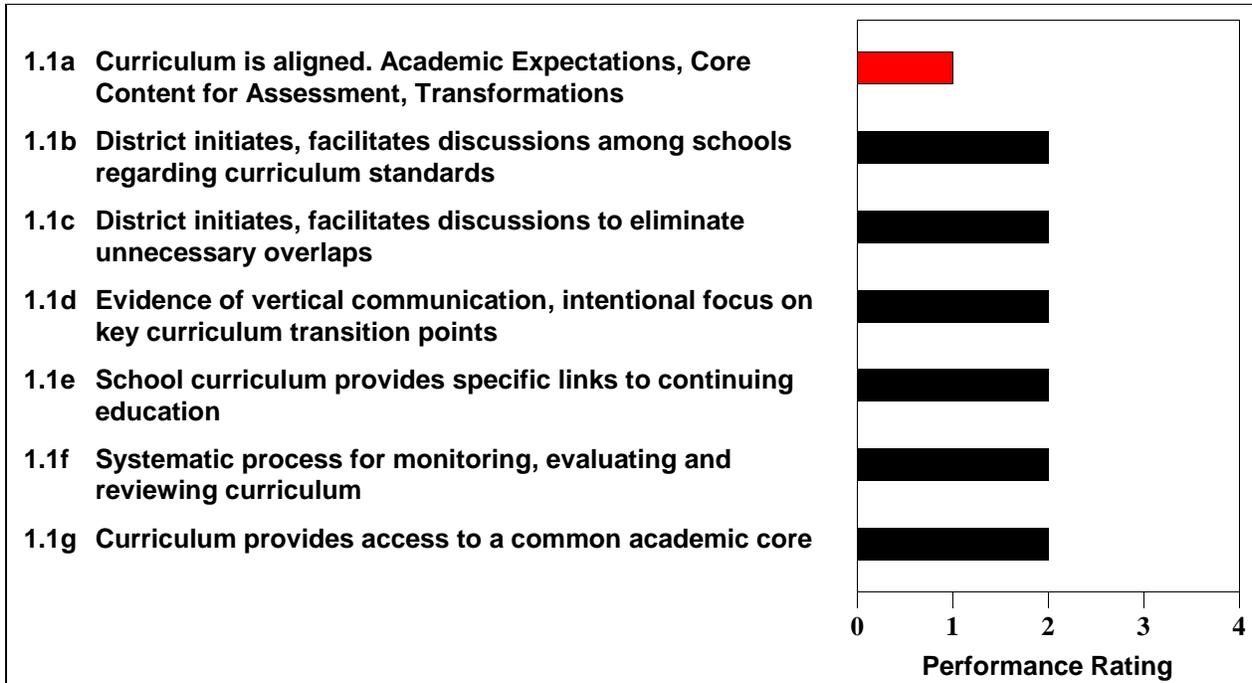
Allen County

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1.1 Curriculum

Academic Performance



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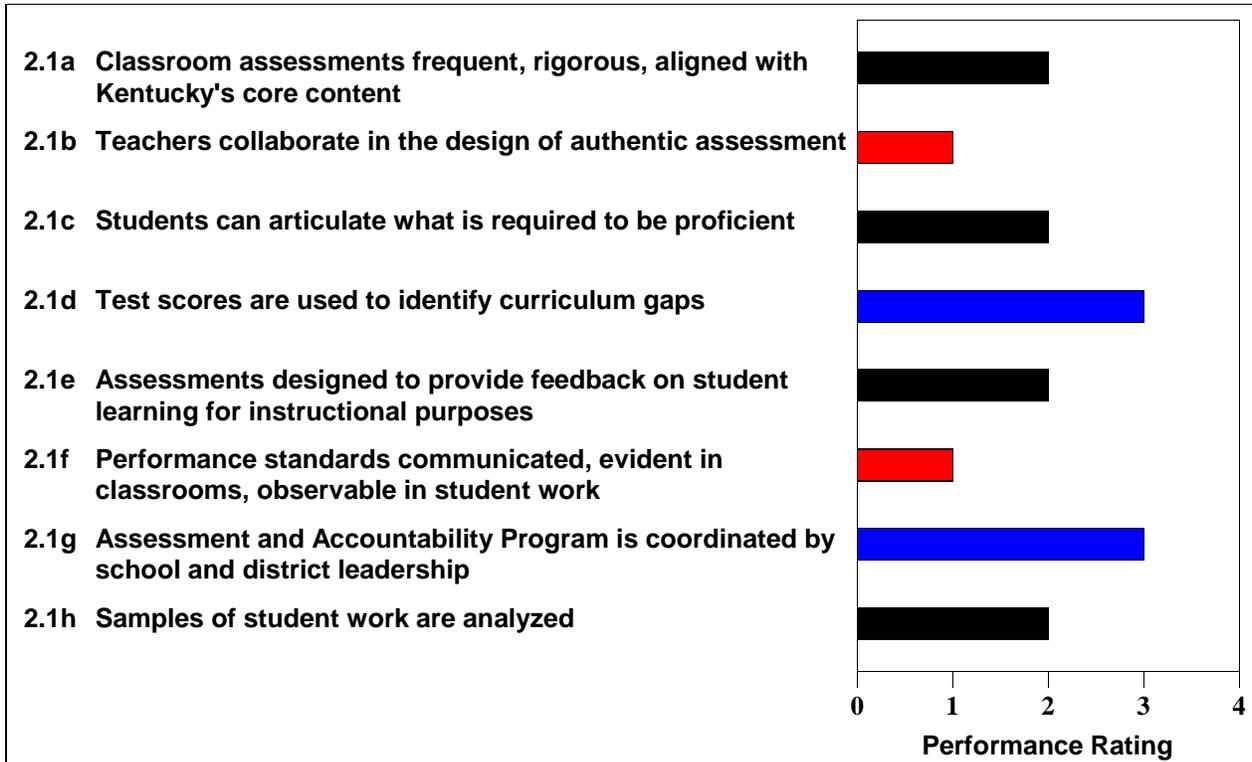
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2.1 Classroom Evaluation/Assessment

Academic Performance



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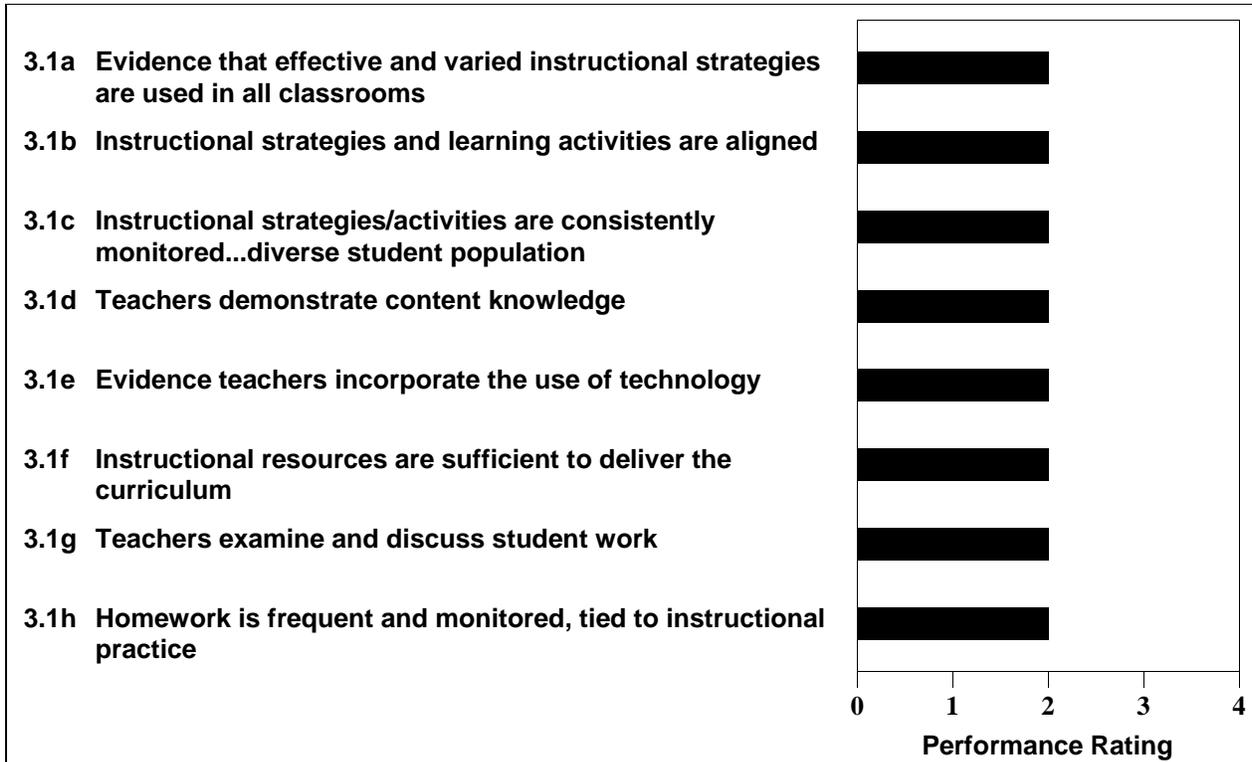
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3.1 Instruction

Academic Performance



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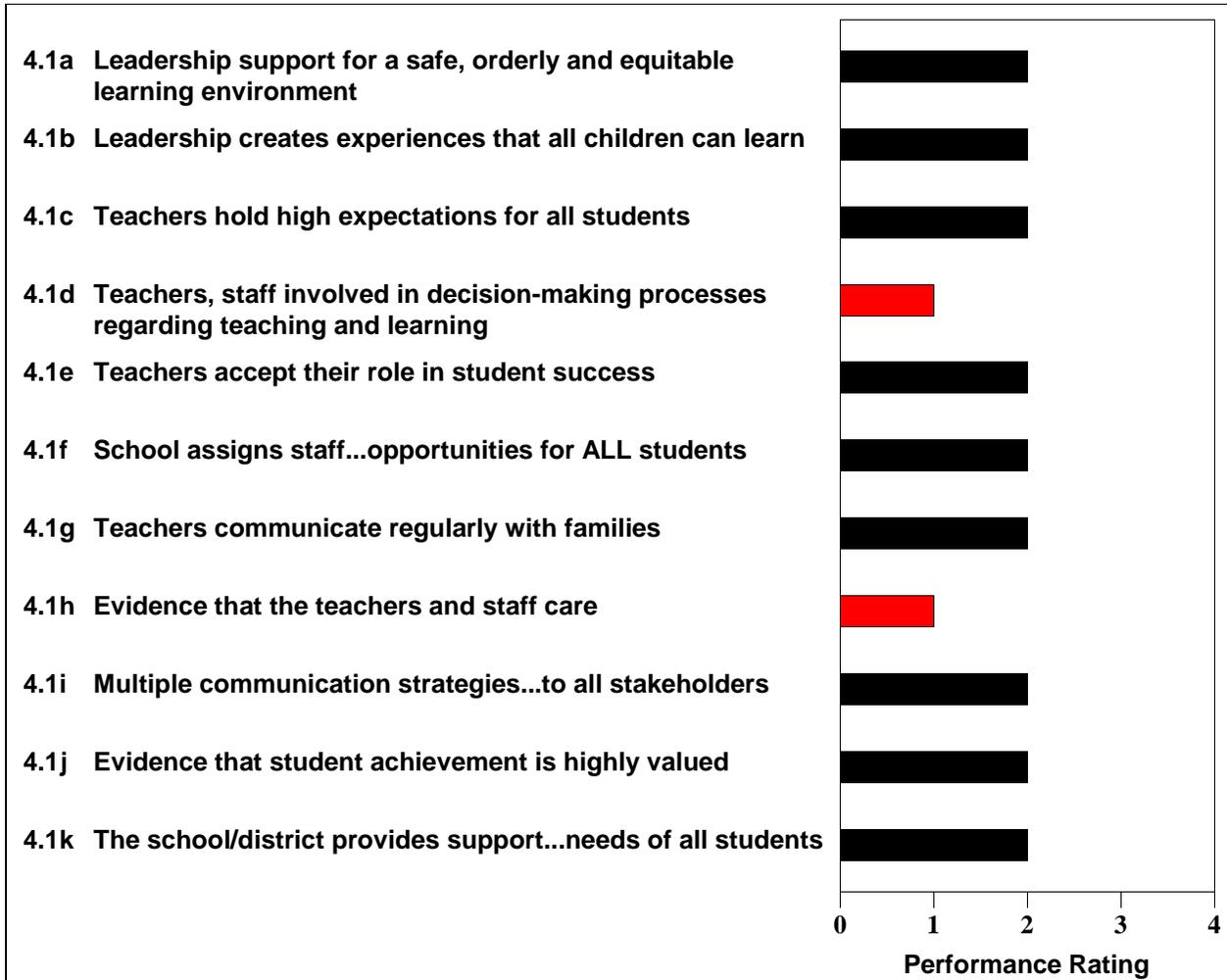
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4.1 School Culture

Learning Environment



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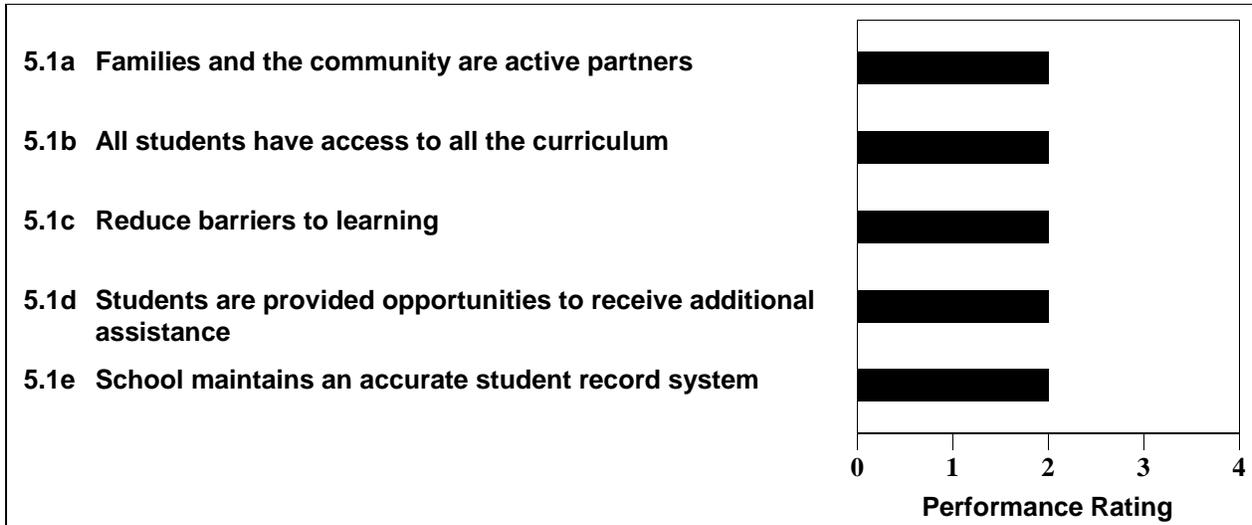
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5.1 Student, Family and Community Support

Learning Environment



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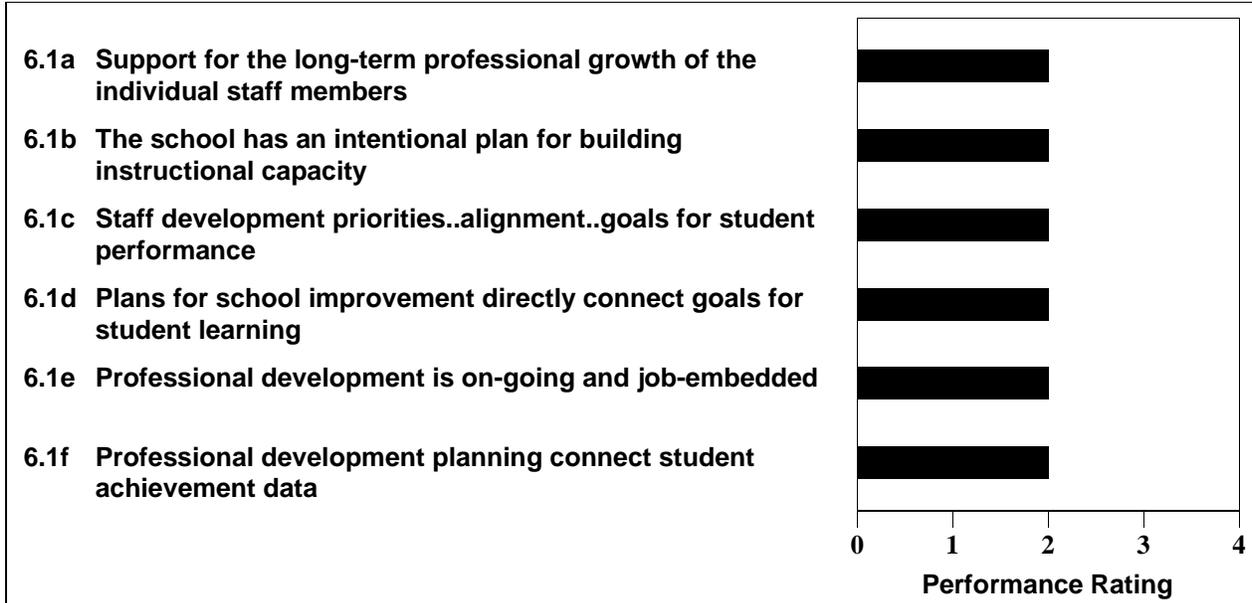
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6.1 Professional Development

Learning Environment



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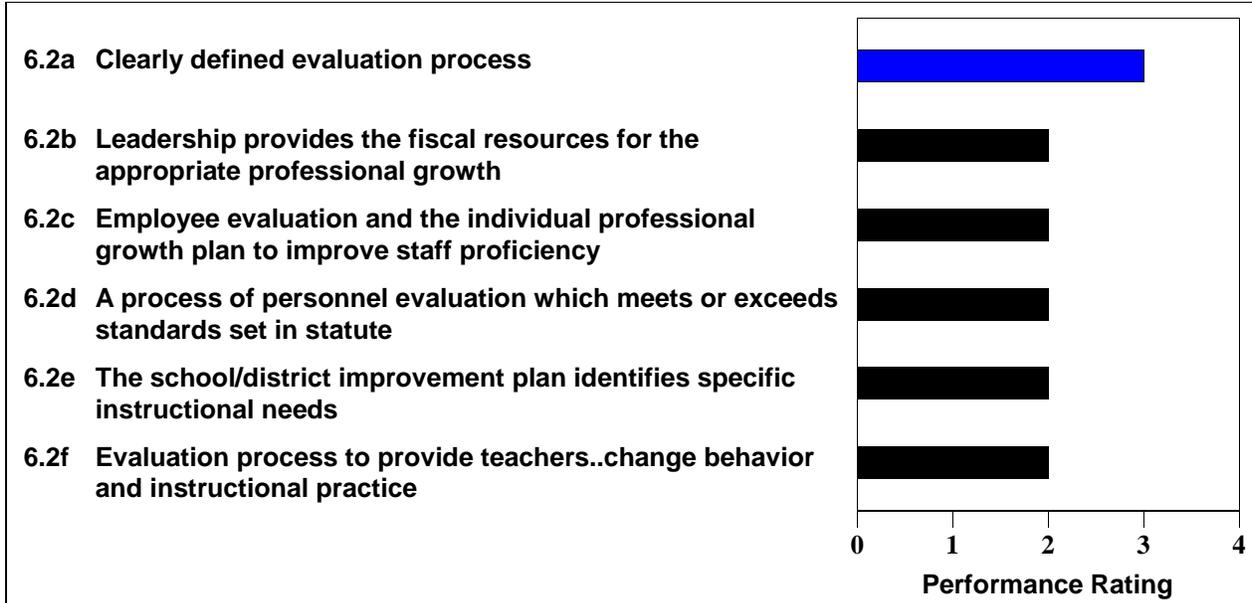
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6.2 Professional Growth and Evaluation

Learning Environment



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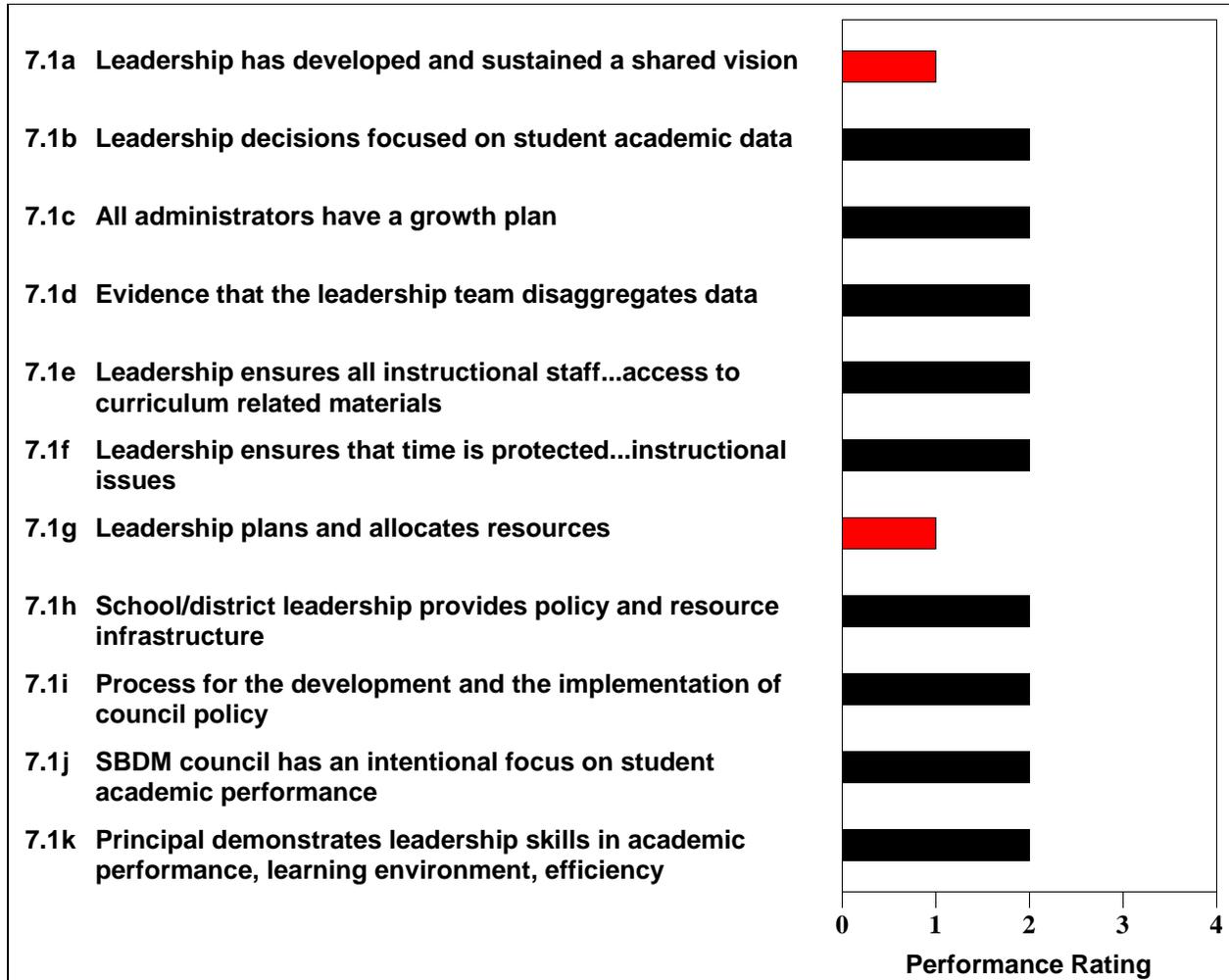
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7.1 Leadership

Efficiency



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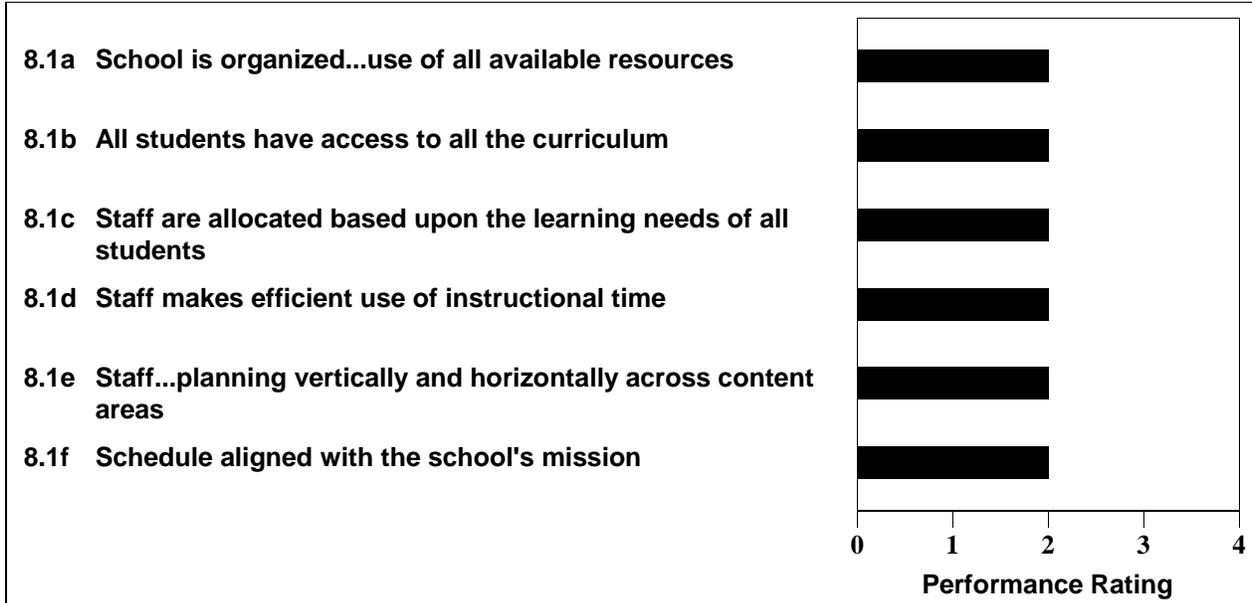
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8.1 Organization of the School

Efficiency



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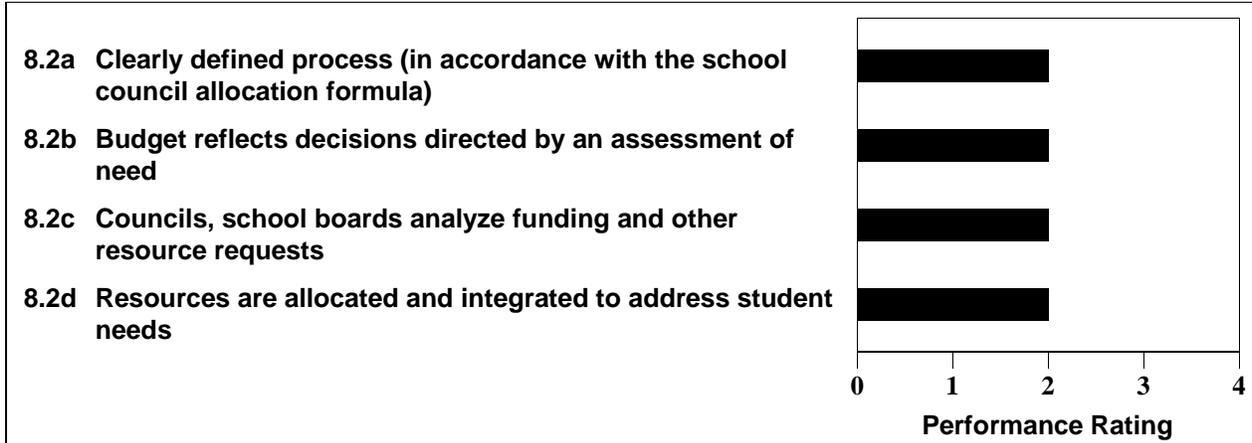
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8.2 Resource Allocation and Integration

Efficiency



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9.1 Defining the School Vision, Mission, Beliefs

Efficiency

9.1a Collaborative process used to develop the vision, beliefs, mission



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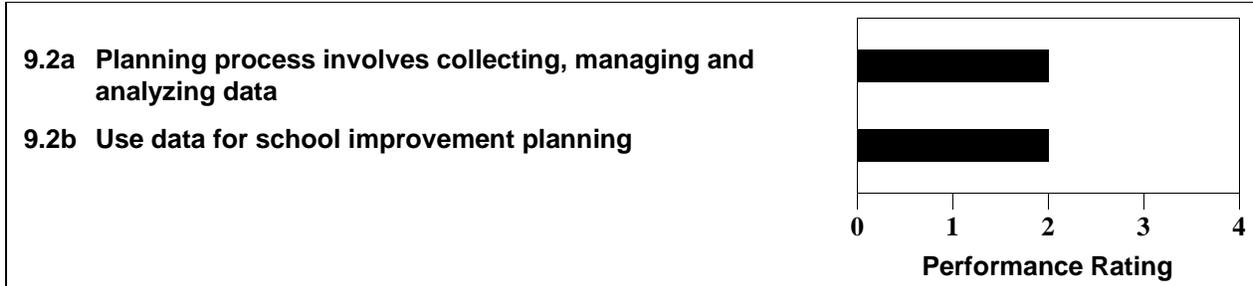
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9.2 Development of the Profile

Efficiency



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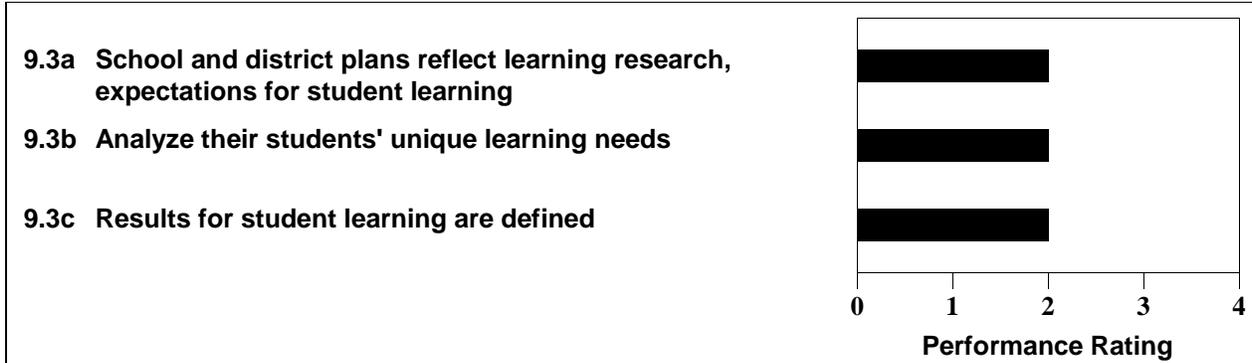
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9.3 Defining Desired Results for Student Learning

Efficiency



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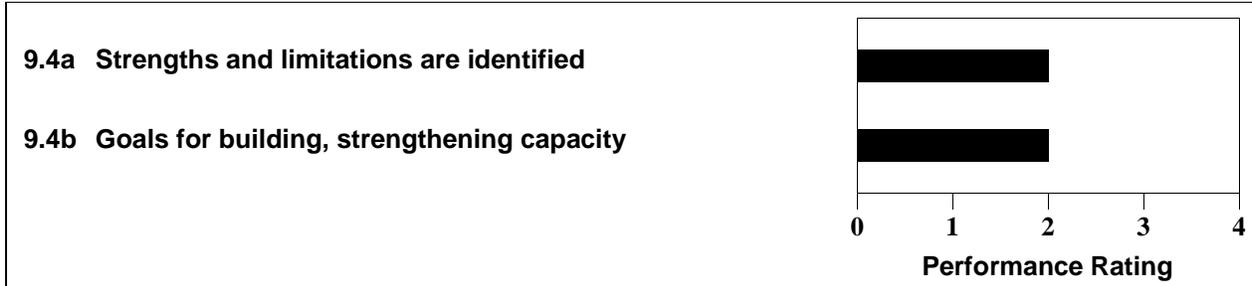
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9.4 Analyzing Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness

Efficiency



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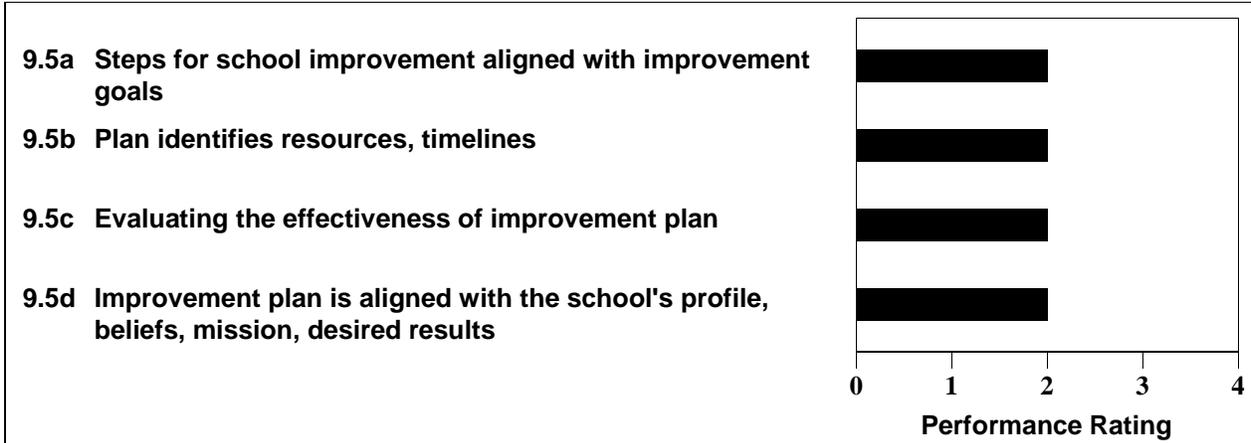
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9.5 Development of the Improvement Plan

Efficiency



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9.6 Implementation and Documentation

Efficiency

