

Our Building Learning Plan 2018-2019

Our faculty and staff share a collective commitment to ensuring that all students experience a tremendous amount of academic, social, and emotional growth. We work hard to achieve this audacious goal by providing a nurturing environment for each student's growth while engaged in our own perpetual growth as a faculty. We support one another in our efforts to meet the diverse needs that students present, challenge one another to be our best selves, and ultimately grow together as a collaborative team of professionals as a result. In the past few years, we have learned valuable lessons from one another about social/emotional intelligence (Goleman), growth mindset (Dweck), and locus of control (Rotter). As a team, we hold one another accountable for not only teaching these valuable lessons, but also for modeling them through our everyday actions and reinforcing these attributes when students exemplify them on a daily basis.

Our district Mission statement cites our commitment to "excellence and continuous improvement." One of the primary ways that we hold ourselves accountable for continuous improvement is through the collaborative development and implementation of a Building Learning Plan. This plan articulates a continuous process used to ensure that all students are achieving at high levels by developing a focused set of goals and objectives and a plan for achieving them. The plan includes three sections:

- **Section 1** of our plan includes our Achievement Imperative Goal. This section of the plan calls for our building data team to identify individual students who are struggling to demonstrate adequate progress. As a team, we make data-informed recommendations about how best to program for and support individual students. This section will not be made public due to privacy concerns as we seek to respect the privacy rights of individual students.
- **Section 2** of our plan includes our District Teaching and Learning Goals. This section of the plan is comprised of goals that were developed by our Lower Merion School District Curriculum Team. Our middle school content area departments consider these goals alongside local data as they seek to brainstorm systematic responses. Ultimately, each collaborative team develops action plans that describe how we will personalize the goals and respond.
- **Section 3** of our plan includes Action Plans to address problems of practice. In this section, our school leadership team and content area departments collaboratively develop their own goals based on learning challenges that are consistent through the middle school experience. As you will observe in each of the collaborative action plans, they begin with a problem, share supporting data and suspected causation, and conclude with an action plan. These action plans are fluid; if we notice we are headed down the wrong path, we allow for flexibility to learn more and to potentially pivot in a different direction.

As you review our collaborative action plans in section 3, you will see a variety of goals. Some of these goals are aligned to schoolwide strategies to ensure social-emotional learning growth and wellness (SEL). These goals were derived from a variety of data points and insights gleaned from the Stanford Challenge Success Student Survey which was administered in Winter 2018. This online survey for middle and high school students measured perceptions of their academic engagement, connection to the school community, physical health and well-being, technology use, and how they use their time outside of school. Other goals align to curricular aims. These goals are aligned to state standards, district curriculum and our Strategic Plan.

We hope that as you review our plan, you recognize a comprehensive set of aligned efforts that are representative of our commitment to ensuring student learning through a collaborative approach to continuous professional learning. We thank you for your interest in our plan and invite you to continue to partner with us in support of the growth of our students.

Learning Plans 2018 - 2019



Overview

Section 1: Achievement Imperative Goal

This section is reserved for individual students who are not meeting expected achievement goals.

Section 2: Districtwide Teaching and Learning Goals

Goals determined by the Curriculum Team, along with systematic Districtwide responses. Building-based teams are expected to consider these goals and systematic responses, compare local data to district-wide needs, then develop action plans for how they will personalize the goal and respond.

Section 3: Action Plans

Action Plans are created. Suspected causation and actionable solutions are detailed that will address the identified issues.

Learning Plans

Section 2: Districtwide Teaching and Learning Goals

Analysis of assessment data at the District level will help determine topics that are difficult to learn for students across the District. The curriculum team will identify these areas of focus and determine some system-wide actions and explorations that will be taken. Building-level teams will examine their data in relation to district trends to determine if anomalies exist.

	Area of Focus
	<p><i>What is the districtwide teaching and learning priority? What skill(s) is/are identified as a districtwide need? To be provided by the Curriculum Team.</i></p> <p><i>Initial noticings of the data in the area of Mathematics include...</i> Geometry, which continues to be challenging across the district. We show a significant drop in demonstrated understanding from 4th to 8th grade and Statistics and Probability where we see a negative trend from 6th to 8th grade.</p> <p><i>Initial noticings in the area of ELA include...</i> Text Dependent Analysis (TDA) continues to have a small percentage of students earning more than half of the</p> <p><i>Math:</i> The structure of our Middle School math curriculum and sequencing focuses on success in Algebra and does not currently offer a course dedicated to the 8th grade math standards where Geometry and Statistics are critical components. This can lead to gaps in understanding in future math courses.</p> <p><i>English/Language Arts (ELA):</i> Success in analyzing text (TDA) is a key skill to be applied across disciplines and grades. It requires students to understand and</p>
2.1.2.	Baseline Data on Area of Focus
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geometry: In 4th grade over 50% of students scored in the top $\frac{1}{3}$ of the state, while in 8th grade approximately 50% of students scored in the bottom $\frac{1}{3}$

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistics and Probability: In 6th grade, roughly 40% of students scored in the top 1/3 of the state, while in 8th grade almost 50% of students scored in the bottom 1/3 of the state when compared to grade-level peers in this category. <p>ELA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade 6 TDA – 21% of students earned more than an 8 out of a possible 16 points on the TDA on the PSSA. Grade 7 TDA – 35% of students earned more than an 8 out of a possible 16 points on the TDA on the PSSA. Grade 8 TDA – 31% of students earned more than an 8 out of a possible 16 points on the TDA on the PSSA.
2	<p>Math: 24.3% of 6th grade WVMS students scored in the low range for the Geometry category of the PSSA; 37.6% of 7th graders; 54.3% of 8th graders</p> <p>ELA: 80.2% of 6th grade WVMS students scored in the high range for the TDA category of the PSSA; 31.2% of 7th graders; 25.8% of 8th graders</p>
2.1.3.	Actions to be taken at the District Level
	<p><i>What will be more deeply explored and what actions will be taken by the curriculum team as a result of these initial noticings? What questions are raised by these initial noticings?</i></p> <p>Math:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shift the Geometry and Statistics units to be earlier in the year and embed those Geometry and Statistics skills and practices into other units throughout the year where appropriate. Emphasize the topics that are included as part of the PA Math 8 Standards. Add a Math 8 course to our current course offerings and allow students time to mature mathematically before placing them into an Algebra 1 course. Continue to explore an Integrated Math curriculum for courses beyond Math 8. <p>ELA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the work started last year related to the systematic embedding of evidence-based analysis and close reading throughout classroom experiences. Emphasize that analyzing text is an essential embedded part of ELA and not an “event.” Continue the work started last year with Andy Fishman to develop and revise TDA prompts to align with the expectations presented to students. Administer two common TDA prompts this year at each grade level. PLCs administer, collaboratively score, and analyze these items.

Section 3: Action Plan

List in this section the plan for reporting on addressing topics that may or may not be related to the Districtwide curricular goals.

3.1.1. Problem Statement					
Students learn at different rates. When students struggle to keep pace with the class, teachers struggle to identify sufficient time during the core instructional period to provide intervention and enrichment to individual students and small groups. If this goes insufficiently addressed, achievement gaps are very likely to widen.					
3.1.2. Data					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75.6% of 6th grade students scored Proficient or Advanced on the Math PSSA; 73% of 7th grade students; 54.8% of 8th grade students 89.6% of 6th grade students scored Proficient or Advanced on the ELA PSSA; 83.4% of 7th grade students; 83.7% of 8th grade students 75.8% of 8th grade students scored Proficient or Advanced on the Science PSSA 					
3.1.3. Suspected Cause/s					
Teachers of math, ELA, science and social studies do not have a regularly scheduled time to provide targeted intervention or enrichment to students at a time when no-new instruction is taking place. During the Learn advisory period (intervention/enrichment period) teachers of math, ELA, science and social studies are assigned an advisory group.					
3.1.4. Action Plan					
	Action Steps	Person/s Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcomes	Results <i>To be completed at end of implementation.</i>
1	Implement a “Rotating Drop Period” system to provide Period 9 coverage to teachers of Math/ELA/Science/Social Studies/World Languages/Reading/Personal so that teachers can systematically provide targeted intervention to students 1x per week during the Learn Period (see weekly schedule attached).	Admin. Team & Content Leaders	2018-19 school year	More frequent, timely and targeted small group/individual remediation and enrichment	TBD

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2	Communicate about expectations for logistics and best practices for use of the Learn period.				
3	Monitor progress and adjust implementation.				

3.2.1. Problem Statement

There are a significant number of students who are underperforming relative to their potential in ELA, particularly with respect to the writing standards.

3.2.2. Data

20.5% of all 6th graders tested scored Below Basic on the Text Dependent Analysis writing section of the PSSA (24.1% of 7th graders scored below basic and 25.5 % of 8th graders scored below basic).

3.2.3. Suspected Causes

While remedial reading and math courses exist at the middle level, there are no remedial writing courses to support students in need of additional support with writing skills.

3.2.4. Action Plan

	Action Steps	Person/s Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcomes	Results <i>To be completed at end of implementation.</i>
1	Create a 6th grade Writing Center, a 7th Grade Writing Center, and an 8th grade Writing Center during the Learn Period (Pd. 9) that meets daily for each grade level (see schedule attached) so that students can systematically be provided w/targeted intervention or enrichment focused on writing skills.	Admin. Team & Content Leaders	2018-19 school year	More frequent, timely and targeted small group/individual writing instruction and feedback.	TBD

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2	Develop an online sign-up system.				
3	Communicate about expectations for logistics and process for referring students/monitoring progress.				
4	Monitor progress and adjust implementation.				

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3.3.1. Problem Statement					
There are a significant number of students who struggle to access the grade level math course content as evidenced by PSSA and LMSD math benchmark data.					
3.3.2. Data					
48.7% of 8 th graders scored Proficient or Advanced on the 8 th grade Math PSSA (73% of 7 th graders; 76% of 6 th graders)					
3.3.3. Suspected Cause/s					
A significant number are in need of additional time and direct instruction (individual or small group) to aid their efforts to access the math course content at grade level.					
3.3.4. Action Plan					
	Action Steps	Person/s Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcomes	Results <i>To be completed at end of implementation.</i>
1	Create a 6th grade Math Center, a 7th grade Math Center and an 8th grade Math Center during the Learn Period (Pd. 9) that meets every day (see schedule attached) so that students can systematically be provided w/targeted math intervention or enrichment. Develop an online sign-up system.	Admin. Team & Content Leaders	2018-19 school year	More frequent, timely and targeted small group/individual math intervention/enrichment.	TBD
2	Recruit volunteer tutors from the Villanova University graduate teacher education program.				

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3	Communicate about expectations for logistics and process for referring students/monitoring progress.				
4	Monitor progress and adjust implementation.				

3.4.1. Problem Statement

There are a significant number of students who have the prerequisite academic skills to access the curriculum, but have yet to develop the will, executive functioning and/or study skills necessary to ensure their success in school.

3.4.2. Data

24 students carried an “F” grade in at least one course on our last weekly grade report of the 2017-18 school year.

3.4.3. Suspected Cause/s

Our current student-teacher ratio does not afford a sufficiently high level of individualized study skills instruction/support for the population of students who require it in order to be successful.

3.4.4. Action Plan

	Action Steps	Person/s Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcomes	Results <i>To be completed at end of implementation.</i>
1	Implement a Study Skills Tutorial during the Learn Period (Pd. 10) that meets daily. Students who demonstrate a pervasive pattern of neglecting to complete homework/classwork are referred to this program on a week-to-week basis so that they can be held accountable for completing assignments and for developing the	Admin. Team & Content Leaders	2018-19 school year	Small group and individualized study skills instruction and support for each student’s application of these skills across the content area classes.	TBD

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	independent learning habits they need to be successful.				
2	Review/revise criteria for program entrance/exit, student contract, teacher feedback form, and student self-evaluation.				
3	Monitor and adjust implementation as needed.				

3.5.1. Problem Statement
Some students fall short of meeting daily expectations for behavior, student responsibilities and many of these same students lack a sense of belonging within our school community. In accordance with the District’s commitment to ensure that all students have a sense of belonging and an expected level of accountability for one’s behavior, we have committed to the development of a school-wide approach that will provide all students with access to opportunities for social and emotional growth to enhance their sense of belonging and improve overall student behavior.
3.5.2. Data
There were over 550 office referrals for the 2017-18 school year with over 70 in-school or out-of-school suspensions (discipline). Over 350 of the discipline referrals resulted in some level of restorative conferencing with the Coordinator of School Culture. The Stanford Student Survey data will continue to be reviewed/discussed to identify specific areas of focus related to student engagement.
3.5.3. Suspected Cause/s

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Some students lack the intrinsic motivation to meet minimum behavior and lack the desire to be an active participant in our school community. Other students lack a clear understanding of expectations and/or need to be taught the expectations. The marked increase in student enrollment also impacts a student's sense of accountability and belonging.

3.5.4. Action Plan

	Action Steps	Person/s Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcomes	Results
1	Develop a DRAGON PRIDE point system to incentivize positive student behavior while reducing negative behavior. Staff will reinforce/recognize student engagement within the school community (quarterly themes)	Admin. Team & Content Leaders	2018-19 school year	Small group and individualized study skills instruction and support for each student's application of these skills across the content area classes.	TBD
2	Continue to convene the "Culture Club" (teacher leaders) to reflect and revise school wide expectations and implementation of initiatives in order to maintain a clear understanding of student responsibilities.				
3	Develop grade level specific social/emotional learning lessons to increase students' sense of belonging and model appropriate behaviors and norms for middle school. (Assemblies, FORUM Lessons with quarterly themes).				
4	Monitor implementation and evaluate effectiveness through new district developed Sharepoint reporting system.				

3.6.1. Problem Statement

LMSD middle school students struggle to develop text-dependent analysis.

3.6.2. Data

In 2018 25% of our 5th graders scored Proficient or Advanced on the Text Dependent Analysis standard of the Spring 2018 PSSA.

3.6.3. Suspected Cause/s

Some students struggle to independently apply higher order critical reading skills when confronted with a cold read informational text. Struggling to analyze the text deeply can prevent students from being able to generate high quality analysis (content) on text dependent analysis (TDA) prompts.

3.6.4. Action Plan

	Action Steps	Person/s Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcomes	Results
1	The 6th grade ELA PLC will develop reading comprehension assessments using high interest informational texts from the Newsela resource (cold reads).	6 th Grade ELA PLC	2018-19 school year	Improved student performance on the TDA anchor standard (E06.E.1)	TBD
2	Teachers will provide explicit instruction on reading comprehension strategies at an instructional reading level and provide students with opportunities to apply strategies with texts at their independent reading level.				
3	Administration of assessments and analysis of student work to identify trends. Teachers will share teaching best practices.				
4	6 th grade ELA teachers will provide targeted intervention or enrichment as needed in-class (whole group/small group/individual re-teaching, targeted warm ups, targeted homework), during the Learn Rotating Drop period, and/or through referral to the Writing Center (Pd. 9).				

3.7.1. Problem Statement

LMSD middle school students struggle to develop text-dependent analysis.

3.7.2. Data

21% of 6th graders scored Proficient or Advanced on the Text Dependent Analysis standard/anchors of the 2017-18 PSSA.

3.7.3. Suspected Cause/s

Some students struggle when confronted with a TDA prompt, to break the question down into chunks and then attack each component part comprehensively. Further, students predicted to score ↑ on PSSA (based on in-class writing assessments) underperformed and students who scored highest were students who demonstrated in class that they had a greater propensity to respond as directed to multi-step prompts. This suggests that more instruction/practice on responding to multi-step prompts like TDA may be necessary.

3.7.4. Action Plan

	Action Steps	Person/s Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcomes	Results <i>To be completed at end of implementation.</i>
1	The 7 th grade ELA PLC will develop 2 multi-step reading/writing prompt assessments (TDA).	7 th Grade ELA PLC	2018-19 school year	Improved student performance on the TDA anchor standard (E07.E.1)	TBD
2	Teachers will provide explicit instruction on how to comprehensively respond to a multi-step prompt.				
3	Administration of assessments and analysis of student work to identify trends. Teachers will share teaching best practices.				
4	7 th grade ELA teachers will provide targeted intervention or enrichment as needed in-class (whole group/small group/individual re-teaching, targeted warm ups, targeted homework), during the Learn				

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Rotating Drop period, and/or through referral to the Writing Center (Pd. 9).				
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3.8.1. Problem Statement

LMSD middle school students struggle to develop text-dependent analysis.

3.8.2. Data

31% of 7th graders scored Proficient or Advanced on the Text Dependent Analysis standard/anchors of the 2017-18 PSSA. 26.7% of our 8th graders scored Proficient or Advanced on the Text Dependent Analysis standard/anchors on PSSA.

3.8.3 Suspected Cause/s

Some students struggle when confronted with a TDA prompt, to break the question down into chunks and then attack each component part comprehensively. Further, students predicted to score ↑ on PSSA (based on in-class writing assessments) underperformed and students who scored highest were students who demonstrated in class that they had a greater propensity to respond as directed to multi-step prompts. This suggests that more instruction/practice on responding to multi-step prompts like TDA may be necessary.

3.8.4. Action Plan

	Action Steps	Person/s Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcomes	Results <i>To be completed at end of implementation.</i>
1	The 8 th grade ELA PLC will develop 2 multi-step reading/writing prompt assessments (TDA).	8 th Grade ELA PLC	2018-19 school year	Improved student performance on the TDA anchor standard (E08.E.1)	TBD
2	Explicit instruction on how to comprehensively respond to a multi-step prompt.				

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3	Administration of assessments and analysis of student work to identify trends. Share teaching best practices.				
4	8 th grade ELA teachers will provide targeted intervention or enrichment as needed in-class (whole group/small group/individual re-teaching, targeted warm ups, targeted homework), during the Learn Rotating Drop period, and/or through referral to the Writing Center (Pd. 9).				

3.9.1. Problem Statement					
Student performance in the area of Expressions and Equations in 17-18 showed a drop from the previous year. The specific standards needing improvement is M06.B-E.3 Expressions and Equations – Represent and analyze quantitative relationships between dependent and independent variables.					
3.9.2. Data					
76.1 % of 6 th grade students scored Proficient or Advanced on the Math PSSA. Furthermore, 30% of our 6 th grade students scored in the Low performance range in Category 5 Expressions and Equations as measured by the Math Strength Profiles Report.					
3.9.3. Suspected Cause					
There are sub skills that contribute to the complexity of these types of problems. Those sub skills include identifying independent and dependent variables and developing an equation based on real-world word problems.					
3.9.4. Action Plan					
	Action Steps	Person/s Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcomes	Results <i>To be completed at end of implementation.</i>

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1	The 6th grade Math PLC will develop/administer the following common assessments on identifying/analyzing independent and dependent variables: A. Pre-Assessment B. Classroom Formative Assessments A. Classroom Summative Assessment	6 th grade Math PLC	2018-19 school year	Improved student learning as evidenced by increased student performance related to standard <i>M06.B-E.3</i>	TBD
2	Teachers will provide direct instruction aligned to above skills/content. Teachers will also Spiral/distribute practice of these concepts throughout the year (warm ups/HW)				
3	Administration of assessments and analysis of student work to identify trends. Share teaching best practices.				
4	6 th grade Math teachers will provide targeted intervention or enrichment as needed in-class (whole group/small group/individual re-teaching, targeted warm ups, targeted homework), during the Learn Rotating Drop period (Pd. 9), or refer students to Math Supplement or the Math Center (Pd. 9).				

3.10.1. Problem Statement
Student performance in the area of Expressions and Equations in 17-18 showed a drop from the previous year. The specific standards needing improvement is M07.B-E.2.2 Expressions and Equations – Use variables to represent quantities in a real-world or mathematical problem and construct simple equations and inequalities to solve problems.
3.10.2. Data
72.6 % of 7 th grade students scored Proficient or Advanced on the Math PSSA. Furthermore, 30% of our 7 th grade students scored in the Low performance range in Category 5 Expressions and Equations as measured by the Math Strength Profiles Report.

3.10.3. Suspected Cause/s					
Understanding and applying algebraic equation concepts is critical in helping students make sense of current content and is a foundational skill for more advanced algebraic concepts.					
3.10.4. Action Plan					
	Action Steps	Person/s Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcomes	Results
1	The 7th grade Math PLC will develop/administer the following common assessments on Solving and Constructing Equations and Inequalities. A. Pre-Assessment B. Classroom Formative Assessments C. Classroom Summative Assessment	7 th Grade Math PLC	2018-19 school year	Improved student learning as evidenced by increased student performance related to standard <i>M07.B-E.2.2</i>	TBD
2	Teachers will provide direct instruction aligned to above skills/content. Teachers will also Spiral/distribute practice of these concepts throughout the year (warm ups/HW)				
3	Administration of assessments and analysis of student work to identify trends. Share teaching best practices.				
4	7 th grade Math teachers will provide targeted intervention or enrichment as needed in-class (whole group/small group/individual re-teaching, targeted warm ups, targeted homework), during the Learn Rotating Drop period (Pd. 9), or refer students to Math Supplement or the Math Center (Pd. 9).				

3.11.1. Problem Statement
Student performance in the area of Expressions and Equations in 17-18 showed a drop from the previous year. The specific standards needing improvement is M07.B-E.3.1 Expressions and Equations – Write, solve, graph, and interpret linear equations in one or two variables, using various methods.
3.11.2. Data

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48.7 % of 8th grade students scored Proficient or Advanced on the Math PSSA. Furthermore, 51% of our 8th grade students scored in the Low performance range in Category 5 Expressions and Equations as measured by the Math Strength Profiles Report.

3.11.3. Suspected Cause/s

Understanding and applying algebraic equation concepts is critical in helping students make sense of current content and is a foundational skill for more advanced algebraic concepts found later in Algebra 1 and in future math courses. It is also applicable to other subject-areas, such as science, as well.

3.11.4. Action Plan

	Action Steps	Person/s Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcomes	Results <i>To be completed at end of implementation.</i>
1	The 8th grade Math PLC will develop/administer the following common assessments on One and Two Variable Equations. A. Pre-Assessment B. Classroom Formative Assessments C. Classroom Summative Assessment	8 th grade Math PLC	2018-19 school year	Improved student learning as evidenced by increased student performance related to standard <i>M08.B-E.3.1</i>	TBD
2	Teachers will provide direct instruction aligned to above skills/content. Teachers will also Spiral/distribute practice of these concepts throughout the year (warm ups/HW).				
3	Administration of assessments and analysis of student work to identify trends. Share teaching best practices.				
4	8 th grade Math teachers will provide targeted intervention or enrichment as needed in-class (whole group/small group/individual re-teaching, targeted warm ups, targeted homework), during the Learn Rotating Drop period (Pd. 9), or refer students to Math Supplement or the Math Center (Pd. 9).				

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3.12.1. Problem Statement					
LMSD middle school students struggle to use text features to aid comprehension of non-fiction, content area (science) texts.					
3.12.2. Data					
74.3% of 8 th graders scored Proficient or Advanced on the Reasoning and Analysis standard/anchors of the Spring 2018 PSSA (S8.A.1-3).					
3.12.3. Suspected Cause/s					
An analysis of the average proficiency level of the PSSA 8th grade science standards and the 5th grade ELA PSSA shows that those which pertain directly to making connections between text features and text content have been an area of weakness. We hypothesize that if we provide more direct instruction on these skills, students will demonstrate increased levels of competency with applying these skills independently.					
3.12.4. Action Plan					
	Action Steps	Person/s Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcomes	Results <i>To be completed at end of implementation.</i>
1	The 6th grade Science PLC will develop common assessments that require students to interpret text features (graphs, charts, headings, etc.) and make connections between and among texts: A. Scientific Story with Graph B. Graph Interpretation—Variable Unit C. Earth’s Structure—Science Notebook D. Earthquakes & Volcanoes—Science Notebook	6 th grade Science PLC	2018-19 school year	Improved student learning as evidenced by increased student performance related to standard <i>E05.E.1</i>	TBD
2	Teachers will provide direct instruction on how to comprehensively respond to a multi-step prompt (RACES).				
3	Administration of assessments and analysis of student work to identify trends. Share teaching best practices.				

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4	6 th grade Science teachers will provide targeted intervention or enrichment as needed in-class (whole group/small group/individual re-teaching, targeted warm ups, targeted homework), during the Learn Rotating Drop period, and/or through referral to the Writing Center (Pd. 9).				
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3.13.1. Problem Statement					
Students have struggled to demonstrate consistent mastery of the biology/life science standards assessed in 8 th grade.					
3.13.2. Data					
59% of 8 th graders scored Proficient or Advanced on the Ecological Behavior and Systems standard of the Science PSSA; 62.5% of 8 th graders scored Proficient or Advanced on Continuity of Life standard of the Science PSSA; 71.1% of 8 th graders scored Proficient or Advanced on the Characteristics of Living Things standard of the Science PSSA.					
3.13.3. Suspected Cause/s					
An analysis of PSSA Item and Scoring Samplers from the past three years bears out that while knowledge of biology surely is fundamental to students' performance, many questions can be answered with prior knowledge. More specifically, the reading passages on the assessment typically contain information that can be used in open-ended and multiple choice questions that appear later on the test. Therefore, we hypothesize that by providing students instruction on reading non-fiction articles connecting to the life science curriculum, students would be better prepared to comprehend PSSA aligned science prompts independently.					
3.13.4. Action Plan					
	Action Steps	Person/s Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcomes	Results

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1	The 7th grade Science PLC will develop at least 4 non-fiction, content area (science) reading assessments with standards/assessment-aligned question prompts. The content area readings will focus on high interest, current events articles that connect with the life science curriculum. These science reading assessments will be administered quarterly.	7 th grade Science PLC	2018-19 school year	Improved student learning as evidenced by increased student performance related to standard <i>E07.E.1</i>	TBD
2	Teachers will provide direct instruction on how to apply active reading strategies to comprehend the non-fiction, content area reading text.				
3	Administration of assessments (quarterly) and analysis of student work to identify trends. Share teaching best practices.				
4	7 th grade Science teachers will provide targeted intervention or enrichment as needed in-class (whole group/small group/individual re-teaching, targeted warm ups, targeted homework) and/or during the Learn Rotating Drop period.				

3.14.1. Problem Statement
LMSD middle school students struggle to use reasoning and analysis skills to use evidence to explain, interpret, and apply scientific knowledge in a variety of formats.
3.14.2. Data
74.3% of 8 th graders scored Proficient or Advanced on the Reasoning and Analysis standard/anchors of the Spring 2018 PSSA (S8.A.1-3).
3.14.3 Suspected Cause/s
Students struggle with the application of scientific reasoning and analysis skills because of a lack of transparent articulation of these skills, instruction aligned to these skills and feedback related to these skills. In a recent district in-service, in an effort to address this, the science department identified Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) that naturally align to the content of each middle school grade and can be emphasized throughout the various units in the year. For the 8th grade

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physical science content, the NGSS practices identified were analyzing data, using mathematics and communicating information. These match up nicely with the “Scientific Thinking and Conclusion Rubric” we piloted during the 2017-2018 school year as our SMART goal.

3.14.4. Action Plan

	Action Steps	Person/s Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcomes	Results
1	The 8th grade Science PLC will revise/modify the Scientific Thinking and Conclusion Rubric which was piloted during the 2017-18 school year.	8 th grade Science PLC	2018-19 school year	Improved student learning as evidenced by classroom assessments (labs, projects, tests/quizzes) and standardized assessments.	TBD
2	Teachers will use the language and categories of the rubric to both drive learning expectations during classroom activities, labs and project-based learning. The rubric will be used to assess student performance on the following projects: Inquiry & Physical Properties Lab, Physics Car Crash Engineering Challenge Project, Alternative Energy Project and the Physics Rocket Inquiry & Engineering Project.				
3	At natural checkpoints during the year (after major units), teachers and students will reassess where students are in the continuum and identify specific ways they can improve. Students will identify areas of weakness and provide support throughout the year to document their progress.				
4	8 th grade Science teachers will provide targeted intervention or enrichment as needed in-class (whole group/small group/individual re-teaching, targeted warm ups, targeted homework), during the Learn Rotating Drop period, and/or through referral to the Writing Center (Pd. 9).				

3.15.1. Problem Statement

LMSD middle school students struggle to effectively introduce, develop and support a topic with relevant facts, details, quotations and examples in their writing.

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3.15.2. Data					
21% of 6 th graders scored Proficient or Advanced on the Text Dependent Analysis standard/anchors of the 2017-18 PSSA.					
3.15.3 Suspected Cause/s					
Some students struggle to independently apply higher order critical reading skills when confronted with a cold read informational text. Struggling to analyze the text deeply can prevent students from being able to generate high quality analysis (content) on text dependent analysis (TDA) prompts.					
3.15.4. Action Plan					
	Action Steps	Person/s Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcomes	Results
1	The 6 th grade Social Studies PLC will administer common reading comprehension assessments using high interest content area social studies texts from the Newsela resource (cold reads).	6 th Grade Social Studies PLC	2018-19 school year	Improved student learning as evidenced by classroom assessments (labs, projects, tests/quizzes) and standardized assessments.	TBD
2	Teachers will provide explicit instruction on reading comprehension strategies at an instructional reading level and provide students with opportunities to apply strategies with texts at their independent reading level.				
3	Administration of assessments and analysis of student work to identify trends. Teachers will share teaching best practices.				
4	6 th grade Social Studies teachers will provide targeted intervention or enrichment as needed in-class (whole group/small group/individual re-teaching, targeted warm ups, targeted homework), during the Learn Rotating Drop period, and/or through referral to the Writing Center (Pd. 9).				

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3.161. Problem Statement					
LMSD middle school students struggle to effectively introduce, develop and support a topic with relevant facts, details, quotations and examples in their writing.					
3.16.2. Data					
21% of 6 th graders scored Proficient or Advanced on the Text Dependent Analysis standard/anchors of the 2017-18 PSSA. 31% of 7 th graders scored Proficient or Advanced on the Text Dependent Analysis standard/anchors of the 2017-18 PSSA.					
3.16.3 Suspected Cause/s					
Students would benefit from explicit instruction and consistent opportunities to apply these skills to their critical reading of a variety of non-fiction texts.					
3.16.4. Action Plan					
	Action Steps	Person/s Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcomes	Results
1	The 7th grade Social Studies PLC will develop and administer 4 quarterly common assessments that call for students to make and support claims in their writing in response to non-fiction texts using evidence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Early Colonies 2. Independence/Revolution 3. Early Government 4. Westward Expansion 	7 th Grade Social Studies PLC	2018-19 school year	Improved student learning as evidenced by increased performance on the TDA standard.	TBD
2	Teachers will provide direct instruction and model these skills in practice using social studies content area texts and higher order thinking prompts.				
3	Analyze student work and provide feedback. Identify trends. Share teaching best practices.				
4	7 th grade Social Studies teachers will provide targeted intervention or enrichment as needed in-class (whole group/small group/individual re-				

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teaching, targeted warm ups, targeted homework), during the Learn Rotating Drop period, and/or through referral to the Writing Center (Pd. 9).				
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3.17.1. Problem Statement					
LMSD middle school students struggle to develop text-dependent analysis.					
3.17.2. Data					
31% of 7 th graders scored Proficient or Advanced on the Text Dependent Analysis standard/anchors of the 2017-18 PSSA. 26.7% of our 8th graders scored Proficient or Advanced on the Text Dependent Analysis standard/anchors on PSSA.					
3.17.3 Suspected Cause/s					
Some students struggle when confronted with a TDA prompt, to break the question down into chunks and then attack each component part comprehensively. Further, students predicted to score ↑ on PSSA (based on in-class writing assessments) underperformed and students who scored highest were students who demonstrated in class that they had a greater propensity to respond as directed to multi-step prompts. This suggests that more instruction/practice on responding to multi-step prompts like TDA may be necessary.					
3.17.4. Action Plan					
	Action Steps	Person/s Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcomes	Results <i>To be completed at end of implementation.</i>
1	The 8 th grade Social Studies PLC will develop 4 multi-step reading/writing prompt assessments (TDA).	8 th Grade Social Studies PLC	2018-19 school year	Improved student performance on the TDA anchor standard	TBD
2	Explicit instruction on how to comprehensively respond to a multi-step prompt.				

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3	Administration of assessments and analysis of student work to identify trends. Share teaching best practices.				
4	8 th grade Social Studies teachers will provide targeted intervention or enrichment as needed in-class (whole group/small group/individual re-teaching, targeted warm ups, targeted homework), and through the Learn Rotating Drop period.				

Appendix A

“Focused Support” Student Search Protocol

Purpose: To systematically identify students for whom we need to redesign our supports to be more personalized and student-centered.

Participants: Building-based teams

Overview: Teams of educators work together to complete the student search process to develop a list of students that, based on pre-determined criteria, are candidates for focused support. Teams will determine which students are designated as high-priority cases and develop a “Focused Support Plan” for each identified student.

Procedures:

1. Open the Focused Support Student Search Tool and save the file locally,
2. Using the established criteria, examine each dataset of interest and identify students who meet each criterion. Add their name to the search list and enter the data with which they qualified for the list.
3. After all datasets have been scanned and the names and associated data of students have been entered, examine the tallies and determine the level of support needed by each student on the list (intensive, medium, limited).
4. Examine the list and determine if there are any patterns that could be incorporated into the Building Level Plan in Section 3: Problems of Practice.
5. Develop a Focused Support Plan for each of the students listed for whom the team has designated as needing intensive support.
6. Complete Section 1 of the Building Learning Plan.
7. Review progress on the Focused Support Plans periodically and adjust as necessary.
8. At the end of the year, reflect on the outcome of the Focused Support Plans for each student, and document the outcomes on the Building Level Plans and individual Focus Support Plans.
9. Determine what supports could be recommended for the summer and fall of the next academic year.