



Vallejo City Unified School
District

Systemic Instructional Review

February 2020

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I. What is the Systemic Instructional Review?

A Systemic Instructional Review (SIR) is a Pre-K to 12 diagnostic of an organization's instructional programs, practices, and implementation of initiatives (academic, behavior, and social emotional). SIR is designed to guide sustainable practice that is grounded in a continuous improvement model and the Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework. ESSA defines MTSS as “a comprehensive continuum of evidence-based systematic practices to support a rapid response to students' needs, with regular observation to facilitate data-based instructional decision making” (Title IX). Previously known as RtI and PBIS, MTSS provides the umbrella under which both live. MTSS consists of six critical components - Leadership, Communication/Collaboration, Capacity/Infrastructure, Data-based Problem Solving, Three-Tiered Instruction/Intervention, and Data Evaluation. The foundational work of the SIR has MTSS at its core.

The purpose of the systemic instructional review is to help support a local educational agency (LEA) in the identification of strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities (SWOT) in the implementation of instructional initiatives and practices. Data are collected through focus group interviews, individual interviews, observations of all aspects of the instructional program, artifact reviews, and data analysis. Stakeholders at multiple levels (students, parents, teachers, school site staff and administration, governance members, and district office leadership) are involved throughout the data collection process. The review culminates in suggested actions designed to assist districts in creating coherence throughout the system by supporting a strong focus on instruction, developing collaborative cultures, enhancing deeper learning, and establishing accountability throughout the system. Actions are given with a specified 30 days, 60 days, 90 days, 120 days and beyond timeline, in which it is recommended the LEA is to have the action completed.

II. The California Collaborative for Educational Excellence

The California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) is a statewide agency that works to strengthen California's public school system so LEAs can build their capacity to improve student outcomes. The CCEE partners with the CDE, county offices and other stakeholders to support LEAs under the System of Support which is made up of a network of experts specializing in instructional practices targeting students with disabilities, English Learners, low-income students, and foster youth.

III. Project Inception

The CCEE and VCUSD began working together through a joint request made from the Solano County Office of Education (SCOE) and VCUSD at the end of 2018. The CCEE SIR team met with VCUSD and SCOE members in a joint agency meeting in April 2019 where the CCEE presented information as to what Systemic Instructional Review incorporates. The CCEE SIR team and VCUSD team met in

October 2019 to discuss the needs of the district and the overall timeline of Systemic Instructional Review.

IV. Data Collection

Data collection for this review began in early November 2019 and consisted of classroom observations, a comprehensive document review of instructional artifacts and policy documents, individual interviews, focus groups with multiple stakeholder groups, site principal interviews, and observation of recorded school board meetings. In this manner, CCEE staff were able to triangulate multiple data points in an effort to validate the collected data set and individual items.

Over the course of seven weeks, teams of CCEE staff members visited every VCUSD school and 150 classrooms, focusing on instruction in ELA and math in grades 1, 3, 5, and 6, as well as on math instruction in grades 9 and 11. In addition, special day classes were observed, and all alternative education programs were observed.

During the initial SIR planning meeting, the 6 instructional components were selected by VCUSD as focus components, in response, the CCEE collected items from VCUSD around these components and included in the document review.

Prior to site visits, CCEE staff reviewed all documents submitted by VCUSD to support instructional efforts. Additional documents were added and reviewed during the period of classroom visits. Site visits were conducted by CCEE teams working in pairs and visits typically began with a 20-30 minute interview of principals, during which they were provided an opportunity to give a general overview of their schools, and to present their site's areas of instructional focus.

Focus groups were conducted with all stakeholder groups including elementary students, middle school students, high school students, parents, teachers, and school administrators. In addition to principal interviews conducted during site visits, individual interviews were conducted with the Superintendent, board members, the Chief Academic Officer, all division directors, elementary and secondary instructional directors, district instructional personnel, and union members.

V. Report Features and Layout

The report is organized around the 12 CCEE instructional components and begins with a summary of the CCEE instructional component followed by the finding(s) based on the data collection and SWOT analysis; the discussion paragraph detailing evidence in reference to the instructional component being reviewed; the SWOT analysis of the component, and lastly the list of recommended actions. Vallejo City USD has selected six components on which to focus: Culture, Practice & Planning Processes, Curriculum Development and Support, Instructional Practice and Strategies, Social Emotional Learning and development Health, Administrative Coaching and

Leadership and District and Leadership Capacity. While there was a focus on these 6 components all, 12 components are covered in the report as they intersect with one another.

A recommendation when reviewing this report is to have the CCEE Systemic Instructional Review Components located in Appendix A in hand to see the full details of each component.

VI. Summary of Findings

Vallejo City Unified School District (VCUSD) is a thriving suburban school district that experiences many of the same issues as urban school districts. Even more, the district has been in fiscal distress with declining enrollment, teacher shortage, school closures and continual budget cuts. They have hired a Superintendent who is implementing initial change in culture through relationship building and restoring trust within the system. Under his leadership, the district has started to make positive changes in curriculum, instruction, and assessment that will support a change in culture within the system. With the many changes in leadership at all levels of the system, restoring trust and overcoming skepticism is of vital importance. The district's LCAP serves as the guiding document for the district's work and schools have crafted their Single Plan for Student Achievement to align with the district LCAP. The Superintendent has focused the district on three primary goals outlined in the current LCAP:

Vallejo City USD will:

1. Increase parent and community engagement in improving student outcomes,
2. Create a safe, supportive, and engaging learning environment for all students and staff, and
3. Increase the number of students graduating college and/or career ready.

With the recent release of the 2019 California Dashboard the reported CAASPP scores have remained relatively stagnant over the last three years. The most current ELA performance showing all students in orange (next to lowest performance and a drop from the prior year) and the math performance scores in orange which reflects the same results from the prior two years. Suspension rates are in red (lowest performance) with African American, Homeless youth, Foster youth, SED youth and Students with Disabilities have a higher rate of suspension. College and Career Ready and Graduation placement is in orange. Chronic absenteeism is at 24.1%, a decline from the year before (28.3%), for students and we were unable to attain an accurate staff absence rate.

The purpose of data collection, triangulation, and analysis is to support Vallejo City USD in creating coherence within the system. According to Fullan and Quinn (2016) creating sustained coherence requires a relentless focus, development of collaborative structures, deep learning opportunities, and internal and external accountability at all levels of the system. Vallejo City USD has been working on creating coherence by identifying a narrow focus in instruction, supporting the development of collaborative structures that allow for deeper learning, and aligning the accountability system for better results. This work is in various stages of implementation. The

actions identified in this report are designed to leverage and strengthen the work that has begun and is underway at Vallejo City USD.

As noted, the district has taken many positive steps to align the system. Yet, after a deep analysis of multiple data sources, four interrelated themes emerge that run through all the instructional review components identified as the district focus areas. They are:

1. The need for effective communication systems. The district has been working on improving communication systems and bringing in multiple stakeholders into decision making. As an example of this, the district has effectively communicated the expectation for SEL implementation throughout the system. All stakeholders were able to talk about the SEL initiatives in which they were involved. Yet, one of the major voices heard from all stakeholders was the need for more transparent communication at all levels of the system. Most communication within the district is informal, i.e., email, statements at meetings, text, etc. Many valuable instructional documents are developed and shared via Google Docs. While this may be a convenient method for sharing district tools, it is ineffective in ensuring a common message and expectation. There is no structured communication system with protocols and processes. Thus, it is hard to determine when something is expected or optional.
2. The need for a coherent continuous improvement framework, grounded in data analysis, to organize the work. A well-implemented Multi-tiered System of Support is anchored in the effective use and analysis of data to inform academic, behavioral, and social emotional practices at all levels of the system. MTSS recognizes that academics, behavior, and social emotional growth do not happen in isolation of one another but in tandem, one influencing the other. An effective implementation of MTSS encompasses the use of Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) and social emotional programs as well as academic support. Currently, the district has pieces of all three functioning in isolation of one another. In addition, a culture of using data effectively has not been fully established. The district should continue to build its data capacity so it can define its own narrative and engage in a continuous improvement model. The use of data to inform the entire system cannot be emphasized strongly enough. The district has several data sources to provide academic, social-emotional, and behavior data yet practices are unclear as to what and how to use the data. Schools are provided the data by the Ed Services division and have some opportunities to analyze the data with the expectation that they return to their sites to share with leadership teams and full staff. Evidence at some schools indicates this practice occurs however it is not systemic.
3. The need for a comprehensive multi-year professional learning plan grounded in the district's strategic vision. The district has worked to provide a narrow instructional focus grounded in the LCAP. Each school had clearly defined foci aligned with the district expectations. However, the expansion of the current professional learning plan to include

short and long term goals and the explicit alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment will provide coherence within the system. While work has been done to support this alignment, there remain concerns that the curriculum is not implemented with fidelity, the district key instructional practices are not clearly outlined, and the assessment at some grades is not aligned with instruction. Lack of alignment of these three components causes staff to function under a compliance mode instead of a committed mode.

4. Establishing a culture of accountability to achieving the stated goals and mission. The district has aligned its formal evaluation system with the accountabilities from the LCAP; still, there is a need for clear expectations stated through formal communications and accountability at all levels of the system. Fullan and Quinn (2016) discuss the need for internal and external accountability to be an effective system. Fullan contends that successful schools build collaborative cultures that combine individual responsibility and collective expectations. In addition, each department has a responsibility to ensure schools are provided with all the support needed to ensure success and should be held accountable for doing so.

Strengths:

- The district has some strong leaders at every level of the system, from the Governing Board to the school site. These leaders are supported by an energetic and focused superintendent.
- The Governing Board and the Superintendent are attempting to provide a laser-like focus on instruction through the use of the LCAP. This particularly evidenced in the area of social emotional and behavioral well-being of the child.
- In all levels of the system, there is strong pride in the community, as well as multiple instances of deep long-standing individual connections to the school district.

Weaknesses:

- Clearly articulated expectations for all stakeholders in the system were inconsistent, resulting in a lack of system coherence.
- Systemic continuous improvement practices are not generally utilized or developed within the system, creating an unreliable picture of the current impact of the work.
- Clearly articulated policies around curriculum, instruction, and assessment, including instruction for English learners and students with disabilities were not evident.

Threats:

- A culture of skepticism exists in the district's ability to shift beliefs around students' and staff's expectations, that is exacerbated by frequent turnover at all levels and by long-standing issues of mutual trust.

- There is a need for a comprehensive, long-term instructional plan grounded in effective use of data to support a unifying message around curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- Staffing challenges including unfilled positions, teacher absenteeism, reductions in force, etc. poses a significant threat to a coherent instructional program.

Opportunities:

- The Superintendent's relationship building with the unions provides an opportunity to reexamine the teachers' contract to explore increased options for teacher collaboration around the use of assessment data and professional learning opportunities.
- Engagement in the implementation of the MTSS framework, grounded in the continuous improvement cycle, frames the work in a way that naturally builds trust and accountability.
- The connectedness to the community provides a rich opportunity for district branding and messaging.

VII. Instructional Components, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threat Analysis, and Actions

1. Culture, Practice & Planning Process - Focus Component

(CCEE Instructional Component 1) The LEA contains culture and climate for all stakeholders, through the implementation of district-wide professional learning opportunities that teaches, promotes, and practices inclusivity and diversity. LEA members implement culturally reflective practices and policies designed around inclusive instructional mission and vision achieved through continuous improvement practices and processes.

Finding 1a

The District Superintendent is leading an effort to establish a culture of commitment to ensuring that all stakeholders hold high expectations for students to attain educational success. As a beginning step the administrative evaluation system has been aligned to the LCAP. However, the system lacks clear, consistent, and systemwide two-way communication to support a shift in culture and the establishment of high expectations for staff and students. The perception among many stakeholders interviewed is that communication is primarily one-way, a linear model in which information is delivered to inform, persuade, or command. Two-way communication requires an agreement among parties to work toward a solution and that the receiver provides feedback to ensure an accurate understanding of the communication.

Finding 1b

The system lacks a coherent process for holding all students to high standards. A Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) that addresses academics, behavior, and social emotional needs, should be implemented to support the attainment of the instructional mission and vision. Across the district, there is a recognized need to use data analysis to guide deep and focused implementation of all district goals and create a culture of continuous improvement. To be a culture of continuous improvement, all levels of the system should be engaged in the analysis of data for every student and in all areas. The district lacks an articulated and actionable data system that allows for alignment and viewing of common data reports and an articulated and actionable comprehensive learning plan that integrates the actions from the CCEIS plan and academic learning plans, to drive continuous improvement practices and processes. The district, in collaboration with the Solano County of Ed and CCEE, has developed a 3-year professional learning plan that provides a big picture of desirable goals.

Finding 1c

While there was substantial evidence of individual commitment to ensure all students attain educational success, continued work needs to be done to increase high expectations for adults and

students and to embed these beliefs into a shared mission, vision and practice, ultimately changing the culture.

Discussion

The district is moving forward in efforts to make cultural shifts by increasing transparency in decision-making, budgeting, communicating the vision and mission, and providing levels of site-based autonomy with some guardrails. As identified by various stakeholders, the Superintendent has begun to establish decision-making committees consisting of a variety of stakeholders to support instructional decisions and provide input to district and school based decisions. Transparency with these committees would be strengthened with a strong communication plan. While the committees are involved in making decisions, the understanding of this has not been communicated through the system. As indicated by some stakeholder groups, engagement in decision making is inconsistent. Stakeholders are not always aware of how to participate or what participation has occurred. Even though the district is moving toward a more collaborative decision-making process with the use of task groups, the perception remains that stakeholders are consulted and informed of the decisions instead of being part of a shared decision. This is not indicative of the practice but of the communication of the practice.

In November, 2017 the Governing Board recommended that the district should begin, “a process for a long-range vision for district programs and activities that focuses on the achievement and well-being of all students.” Various stakeholders have also identified the need for an updated vision and mission statement, as well as a plan that outlines short and long-term goals. An updated mission and vision statement should be the groundwork of this plan.

Some stakeholder groups reported a culture of widespread, but not universal, low expectations for students and staff and skepticism around the ability of the district as an entity to shift this culture. This may be a lingering perception from prior years, yet the stagnation of test scores and staff and student attendance rates continue to provide data to support this perception. The perception was especially noted in terms of systemwide cultural beliefs about the potential of minority, low income, and students with disabilities and the importance of consistent Integrated and Designated ELD instruction. Work has begun with principals and leadership teams to address these perceptions, but would be helped by an expanded strategic effort to support all adults in building their capacity to commit to and ensure all students attain educational success. Nevertheless, at some schools, particularly at the elementary level, the site-based leaders have been able to establish a culture of collective efficacy.

Across the district, there is a recognized need to use the analysis of data to guide deep and focused implementation of all initiatives. This is especially true at the site level where analysis of academic, behavioral, and social emotional data is used to validate the success of ongoing efforts and the validity of program expenditures. It is impossible to separate the urgent need for site leaders and teachers to engage in the analysis of data from the corresponding need that many educators have for support in developing their skills. District leaders reported a desire to engage educators in this

work by providing training in the use of specific data analysis protocols, much in the same way they have begun to do with site leaders. It is recommended that this be specifically called out in the district's professional learning plan.

Systemic evidence of the implementation of a Multi-tiered System of Support Framework was not evident. Implementation of an MTSS Framework provides guidance for how everything is working in a continuous improvement model. It is a structure for organizing the efforts the district is involved in and ensure that all are headed in the same direction. MTSS outlines a continuum of support in the academic, behavior, and social emotional realms for prevention, early intervention, and remediation that serves all students. The special education department has established a multi-tiered framework for mental health services that includes PBIS as a foundational piece. This could serve as a model for the implementation of a comprehensive MTSS framework district-wide.

The use of data analysis protocols by educators and leaders trained in their use will focus the work on actionable steps, in particular, to address district-identified goals of continuing to reduce suspensions and raise levels of engagement and rigor. This would result in increased attendance and a greater connection to schools on the part of students. Ultimately, this could also be impactful on creating learning environments that would attract families and students to consider choosing to enroll in the district or return to it.

SWOT on Culture Practice and Planning Process

- A. **Strengths:** The Superintendent continues to work on establishing a culture of inclusivity with all stakeholder groups. The establishment of collaborative decision-making groups, his visibility and availability, and the continued message focusing on continuous improvement practices were reported throughout the system.
- B. **Weaknesses:** Continuous improvement practices and processes are not consistently utilized or expected within the system to monitor progress toward the stated goals.
- C. **Threats:** Multiple leadership changes have eroded trust within the system due to a budget reduction of 15 million over the past two years. The culture of “wait and see” is evident hindering progress toward the stated goals. Previous decisions and administrations have resulted in a culture of uncertainty and distrust. A lack of a comprehensive learning plan intensifies this mistrust.
- D. **Opportunities:** Continued use of collaborative decision-making and common messaging throughout the system offers an opportunity to increase trust between stakeholders and district leadership.

| Actions: Culture Practice and Planning Process | | Timeline |
|---|---|--------------------------------|
| 1.1) | Develop a multi-pronged approach to create communication systems that promote an inclusive and equitable teaching culture that embodies a collective belief in high expectations. | 30 Days & Ongoing (March 2020) |
| 1.2) | Establish and communicate the expectation for continuous improvement practices. | 30 Days & Ongoing (March 2020) |
| 1.3) | Develop a common process and protocols for the analysis of data to inform decision-making for every layer of the system, including monitoring the health of core instruction. | 90 Days (May 2020) |
| 1.4) | Bring together a variety of stakeholders to review and revise the district vision, mission and develop a multi-year learning plan. | 90 Days (May 2020) |
| 1.5) | Using the current professional learning plan that integrates the work and support systems outlined in the LCAP and the CCEIS plan as a guide, develop action steps that include clear alignment to the district priorities, measurable goals, timelines, and responsible personnel. | 90 Days (May 2020) |
| 1.6) | Develop and implement a Multi-tiered System of Support Framework with a renewed focus on PBIS. | Beyond (August 2020) |

2. Curriculum Development and Support - Focus Component

(CCEE Instructional Component 2) All instructional materials and curriculum (general education, supplemental, special education, ELD, etc.) are standard aligned, available and implemented for all students and documented in the LEA's MTSS framework; including an aligned professional learning plan targeting the needs of all teaching staff and their students.

Finding 2a

While a coherent, standards-aligned curriculum and supplemental materials are in place, accountability for use is at differing implementation levels. Elementary schools demonstrated a higher level of fidelity to the core curriculum yet were only observed using the text in some classrooms. At the secondary level, few classrooms were observed using the district approved standards-aligned curriculum, many were observed using a district adopted supplemental online resource, Odysseyware.

Finding 2b

The system demonstrated an inconsistent use of data in a continuous improvement model. A systemic problem-solving process used regularly to progress monitor student growth to ensure that the curriculum and instruction efforts result in positive outcomes was inconsistently used.

Finding 2c

At the District level, there is limited evidence of an actionable comprehensive data-driven professional learning plan that is intentional and differentiated for the needs of the teaching and learning staff.

Discussion

Actively teaching the skills and strategies of literacy and numeracy across all years of schooling in a planned, deliberate, and explicit way is why the use of a coherent, standards-aligned curriculum that is culturally and linguistically responsive is important for student outcomes. Observations of school sites evidenced distinct differences between elementary and secondary schools in this category. At the elementary level, students were often engaged in reading and writing activities outside of the core text. For example, the adopted curriculum provides a Close Reader aligned to the anchor stories. Close reading is one of the district's primary strategies for improving reading comprehension yet the tool, the Close Reader provided in the series, was not consistently observed in use. In addition, the instructional minutes committed to literacy instruction varied greatly both within schools and between schools. Math instruction was more aligned with the core curriculum with the use of Problem Based Interactive Learning (PBIL), a major part of the enVision Math curriculum.

At the secondary level, a multitude of instructional and supplemental materials were used including the use of technology, specifically the Odysseyware program. Pockets of excellence were evident at the secondary level. Teachers in these classes were more aligned with the curriculum and actively engaged students in group learning.

The district has provided supplemental instructional materials and intervention tools to address the learning needs of students. Odysseyware was intensively used at the secondary level and Imagine Learning was used at the elementary level for intervention. The Odysseyware is aligned to the NWEA assessment results allowing for seamless "just-in-time" intervention. Challenges with the implementation of both assessment and intervention programs hindered the effective use of the Odysseyware as intended. The district has actively worked to find a solution for issues as they have arisen.

An opportunity exists for the district to strengthen its implementation of the core curricular materials by focusing on how they are used in lesson design and planning. The curricular maps developed at the elementary level provide a roadmap for teachers that integrates the key

instructional practices into the curriculum. These maps are powerful tools for supporting instructional planning and practice. Requiring professional development on the curriculum maps for all school leaders, teacher leaders, and teachers could assist in bringing coherence to the system.

SWOT on Curriculum Development and Support

- A. **Strengths:** The District has provided schools with core curricular materials and intervention programs to support Tier 1 and 2 instruction. They have also developed curriculum maps at the elementary level to guide and integrate instruction, curriculum, and assessment. A wealth of technology resources exist, both hard (iPads, Chromebooks, other tablets, smartscreens, etc.) and soft (assessment programs, individualized instructional supports, intervention programs such as Odysseyware). There was a stronger implementation of the elementary math program.

- B. **Weaknesses:** Professional learning on the core programs, beyond initial training, does not appear to have been delivered or accessible to all teachers. Teachers seemed unaware of some of the supplemental materials that came with the district adopted core programs to support learners. When reading instruction was observed, some teachers were observed using materials other than the core. The strength of widespread availability of technology and access to online instructional materials is often offset by infrastructure challenges within the system.

- C. **Threats:** Sporadic implementation of the district’s core curriculum creates inequities throughout the system.

- D. **Opportunities:** Teachers are aware of the district's adopted curriculum and are implementing various components. This provides a baseline for future professional development tied to the district adopted instructional strategies supported by the curriculum. The teacher leaders are a strong support for differentiated professional development at the school sites.

| Actions: Curriculum Development and Support | | Timeline |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| 2.1) | Identify, articulate, and implement clear expectations as to the curriculum to be used for designated and integrated ELD, and students with disabilities. | 120 Days (June, 2020) |
| 2.2) | Define how various special education programs are to access and use the core program. Provide professional learning to teachers on the effective use of the core program in special education. | Beyond (July, 2020) and ongoing |
| 2.3) | Provide differentiated professional learning opportunities on the various components of the adopted text, including the integration of technology tools, to move from awareness into quality and rigor. | Beyond (August, 2020 and ongoing) |

3. Instructional Strategies and Practices - Focus Component

(CCEE Instructional Component 3) The LEA establishes and defines its instructional practice and strategies to be culturally inclusive, differentiated, rigorous, coherent and standards-aligned, including the use of instructional technology and other experiences beyond the textbook. Decisions and pivots will be done through the analysis of data and use of the continuous improvement model.

Finding 3a

The district has identified three instructional practices: reading comprehension, CCSS writing instruction, and implementation fidelity of the adopted math program, that provide all students access to and experience with rigorous, relevant, and coherent standards-based instruction. In addition, the district has developed elementary curriculum maps to provide guidance and alignment of content. In many classrooms, there is a need to continue to deepen the level of rigor for all students.

Finding 3b

Specific attention is needed for the instruction of English learners and students with disabilities. Designated ELD instruction and UDL practices were not observed. These three practices play out differently at the elementary and secondary levels and need specific attention for selected subgroups.

Discussion

There is a district-wide intentional focus on improving and extending instructional strategies and practices through the implementation of three key high leverage instructional practices – reading comprehension, CCSS writing instruction, and implementation, with fidelity, of the adopted math program. These key instructional practices, implemented in August 2019, were selected to increase student engagement, support students in accessing and experiencing rigorous standards-based instruction and meet the needs of diverse learners. The instructional priorities are expected to be used with all student groups and by all teachers. However, the implementation of the instructional priorities varies from site by site.

The high leverage instructional practices selected by the district have the potential of moving forward student outcomes if a common understanding, language, and expectation is articulated. Each strategy is identified in Hattie's (2018) work to have effect sizes larger than .40 supporting the positive impact these strategies could have on student outcomes. The effect of using these strategies can only be evidenced if there is a clear expectation for use and delivery. This was noted more in elementary classrooms than in secondary classrooms.

Many schools at the elementary level had adopted in their plans the *Say Something* strategy and PBIL. If a school had not adopted these two strategies, they had selected a strategy that would

reach the same outcome. Classroom observations demonstrated at a continuum of implementation with some at just an awareness stage and others at full implementation.

At the secondary level, the strategies aligned to the district identified practices were not observed. No evidence was collected that identified a common set of instructional practices in grades 6 - 12. The secondary schools are still at the infancy stages in connecting the data from the NWEA to the implementation of common instructional practices. In addition, three secondary schools have new principals this school year.

Direct instruction was only observed in a few secondary classes with some classes engaging students in academic conversations. The district is currently making an effort to move away from the academy structure previously established at high schools. The structure limits flexibility in providing a robust master schedule as well as opportunities for teacher collaboration.

Among schools observed, especially at the elementary level, there were examples of principals cultivating teacher leadership to provide an opportunity for teachers to serve as a peer resource for teaching and learning, to meet regularly to review student work and focus on the delivery of standards-aligned instruction.

Very little ELD instruction was observed at the elementary level. Often it was not included on the daily agenda or schedule. At the secondary level, ELD instruction was evident yet very little oral language was observed. UDL strategies were also not observed at either level.

Opportunities exist for the district to build from the evidence-based key practices identified throughout all content areas. Building a common language and understanding of what each strategy looks like within the curricular tools the district has adopted will support the implementation of the curriculum and the use of the key practices in classrooms throughout the district.

SWOT on Instructional Strategies and Practices

- A. **Strengths:** The district has some very strong administrators and teacher leaders that are supporting the implementation of the key district instructional practices. Classrooms were organized and welcoming. Most had schedules, agendas and objectives/standards posted. Each school observed had ample technology available.

- B. **Weaknesses:** A lack of clarity on the district's key instructional practices, not the identification of them but the implementation of the practices, was noted. Practices were implemented differently at different sites or as indicated, not at all at the secondary level. Very little evidence of differentiated small group instruction was evident. Very little student collaborative discussion was observed at both levels. Tasks lacked academic rigor.

- C. **Threats:** Lack of definition of the selected key instructional practices and the expectation for fidelity to use in all classrooms and with all student populations creates inequities within the system.

- D. **Opportunities:** Data exists and can be better used to involve instructional leadership and other stakeholders in sounder decision-making using a cycle of inquiry process (around student instruction, school staffing, district-wide fiscal decisions, etc). A structure exists to align the professional learning between the district and school sites. Build off of this to support the district-wide implementation of effective teaching strategies.

| Actions: Instructional Strategies and Practices | | Timeline |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| 3.1) | Deepen understanding of the key instructional practices to be used by all teachers in all classrooms and in all disciplines by clearly identifying each practice and articulating how the practice is expected to be used. Provide corresponding professional learning for teachers on how to implement the strategies using their instructional tools. | 30 Days & Ongoing (March, 2020 start) |
| 3.2) | Clearly articulate the requirement for Designated ELD instruction and provide professional learning on the use of core aligned materials for the provision of Designated ELD. | Beyond (August, 2020) |
| 3.3) | Deepen the knowledge and understanding of the teaching model for the provision of supports and services to students with disabilities at the secondary level. Consider a Learning Center to provide additional support as needed. | Beyond (August, 2020) |

4. Social Emotional Learning and Health Development - Focus Component

(CCEE Instructional Component 4) The social emotional and behavioral well-being of the whole child is a critical component in the LEA’s mission and vision. Identified social emotional learning (SEL) skills are integrated into the curriculum and instruction practices and resources identified for student support and school capacity building. SEL is embedded in the policy and practice and is modeled by adults LEA-wide.

Finding 4a

At all schools, the social emotional and behavioral well-being of the whole child is evidenced within the instructional vision and in policy, and leaders at all schools could articulate their school’s selected areas of SEL focus.

Finding 4b

Implementation of SEL practices were observed at many elementary schools and specific social emotional learning skills are integrated into the curriculum and instruction at most elementary schools.

Finding 4c

There is a need at many school sites across the system to fully implement the use of data analysis in a cycle of continuous improvement to inform SEL work. While the work of systemic awareness of the SEL focus has been realized, data analysis will only sharpen the work started.

Discussion

In alignment with the district's LCAP goal #1 and the superintendent's vision, there is a consistent focus on SEL at all schools. At the site level, every school had some aspect of SEL in place and clearly stated school-wide expectations. Implementation of specific SEL programs varied across the district, with some schools fully committed to a specific program, e.g., *Pax* or *The Leader in Me*. At some schools, there was a mix of approaches and multiple programs in use.

At the elementary level, there are exemplary instances of SEL program implementation. Those examples share a common trait of engaging teachers in the decision-making process in regard to program selection and provide opportunities for initial and ongoing training and skill development for educators. The district has supported schools in focusing on their SEL work by providing an Academic Support Provider at each site.

In the past, the district introduced PBIS across the district as the foundation of SEL and the current Superintendent has elected to promote site autonomy in the selection of SEL programs and approaches. Although some schools articulated a commitment to PBIS, there is little evidence of SEL practices operating under the larger umbrella of PBIS and MTSS. As a result, at some schools, there was evidence of a scattered approach to SEL based on teacher preference. This was particularly noticeable at the upper-grade levels (in elementary schools) and secondary schools, where more observed classrooms seemed focused on quiet and orderliness as social expectations, as opposed to student interaction, and demonstration of 21st-century skills of creativity, critical thinking, and communication. Therefore, the autonomy provided to school site leaders to select and implement SEL programs needs to be balanced by district leadership providing site leaders and teachers a baseline guiding document that clearly articulates bottom-line expectations on program selection or on how teachers are to be held accountable for its implementation.

SWOT on Social Emotional Learning and Health Development

- A. **Strengths:** All schools have a consistent focus on SEL and some have exemplary implementations of specific programs. Every school had articulated behavior expectations. A number of site leaders described using SEL data to address relationships between students

and adults. All site leaders could articulate the SEL programs being used in their schools and all schools had evidence on their walls to support implementation. All schools have Academic Support Providers.

- B. **Weaknesses:** Specific behavior expectations are not explicitly taught at all schools. Some elementary schools use multiple SEL programs, which reduces accountability and focus, and results in a scattered approach. There is no visible SEL program in place at comprehensive high schools. Across the district, SEL work is not specifically grounded in MTSS or PBIS.
- C. **Threats:** There is a lack of monitoring of SEL implementation data and a response to that data. In some observed classrooms, there is a focus on quiet and order, resulting in a lack of student interaction, and the fostering of 21st-century skills of creativity, critical thinking, and communication.
- D. **Opportunities** Resetting MTSS and PBIS as the foundation of all SEL activities will ground the district’s work in this area. There is an opportunity to build system coherence by providing leaders with the “must-do” expectations of SEL program selection, e.g., PAX, Kimochis, etc., and how programs are to be implemented by teachers. There are opportunities for more schools to utilize low or no-cost best practices to address engagement, attendance, and suspensions, e.g., awards assemblies, certificates, focused work on mindset and respect. In addition, there are examples within the district of schools implementing alternatives for addressing challenging behavior, e.g., a wellness room system for students to self-select a time-out prior to behavior escalation.

| Actions: Social Emotional Learning and Health Development | | Timeline |
|--|--|---------------------------------|
| 4.1) | Provide school site leaders and teachers with a guiding document that clearly states district expectations regarding: a) criteria for their selection of SEL programs, b) how teachers are to implement the selected program, and c) how sites are to engage in SEL data analysis. | 30 Days & Ongoing (March, 2020) |
| 4.2) | Continue to model and refine professional learning opportunities for site leaders that focuses on how to lead educators’ learning about SEL data analysis practices through the use of specific protocols. | 30 Days & Ongoing (March, 2020) |
| 4.3) | All site leaders to <u>collaboratively</u> develop in writing action steps to address, through the lens of SEL, ongoing challenges in lowering suspensions, addressing the specific needs of identified subgroups, and student engagement with the school. | 60 Days (April, 2020) |
| 4.4) | Integrate components of the district’s CEIS plan into the 2020-21 LCAP plan, e.g., trauma-informed practices, PBIS, cultural competency, and implicit bias. | Beyond & Ongoing (August, 2020) |

5. Assessment and Accountability

(CCEE. Instructional Component 5) There is an LEA-wide systemic process to measure and analyze the data on student academic and behavioral learning (i.e. diagnostic, summative, formative) with a paired accountability system for all stakeholders, from home to boardroom, that details the means of school improvements based on data.

Finding 5a

As previously stated in the Summary of Findings, there is a lack of alignment between the curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Continued work must be done with administrators and teachers to build understanding of the rationale for and purpose of each assessment, including those used for EL reclassification.

Finding 5b

The district implemented a new assessment system at the secondary level, Northwest Evaluation Assessment (NWEA), with minimal professional development, accountability for full administration, expectations for analysis of the data or consideration for technical requirements.

Discussion

The State of California has stated, “skilled use of assessment tools and processes is critical for ensuring students’ achievement in ELA/literacy and ELD. Only when teachers and leaders have a range of accurate information about student learning are they in a position to make decisions that advance learning” (2014). The VCUSD has made progress in assembling the tools and is working to refine the processes after rebuilding their assessment system this year. The area of greatest need in the items called for by the state is in the skilled use of those tools and processes.

There is a multi-level academic assessment system at the elementary level that includes diagnostic, formative, benchmark, and summative evaluations of student learning. There is a valid concern among teachers that some benchmark assessments are not aligned with instruction, even though the selection of those assessments was undertaken in a collaborative way that included teacher representatives. On a practical level, some elementary teachers were observed administering benchmark assessments on paper, which then requires an additional step of interpreting and documenting results into the appropriate data system. This practice brings into question the validity and accuracy of manually collected data when compared to data generated by a computer-based adaptive administration. In regards to EL reclassification, district leadership needs to provide clarity regarding the exams used to inform the reclassification of English Learners; this stems from the contradictory information provided resulting in an unclear understanding of what exam or exams, and for what grade level, are used.

At the secondary level, for the first time, the district has implemented across-the-board, three times a year assessment of all secondary students using the NWEA, or MAP, suite of assessments to measure students' understanding in ELA and math. The first administration, to set a baseline for all students, was conducted beginning in September 2019. The district should be commended for recognizing the importance of providing this type of assessment data to drive secondary instruction and intervention. Initial implementations are always challenging. The effort to implement appears to have taxed the infrastructure of the district's bandwidth as well as the skill levels of some teachers administering the assessments. Students attempting to make up the first administration of the baseline assessment were observed in early November, which speaks to the sense of urgency felt to complete the administration of the assessment as well as the accountability concerns. Contributing factors to this could be the need to close schools during the fires in the area.

Assessment is only valued when the results are used to inform instruction and create action steps. The reported use of data to inform and personalize individual instruction varied by site as did the use of data to support culturally responsive best first instruction. At the elementary level, ILT members were observed engaged in data collection. However, there was no observation of teams of teachers engaged in the analysis of assessment results or in analysis of student work. The current teacher contract limits the amount of time allowed for teachers to engage in this powerful cycle of investigation and inquiry, which would allow them to build their capacity for the work and increase their assessment literacy. Some schools are funding additional time for teachers to come together to analyze student work. This is still voluntary which can hinder consistency and collective efficacy. There is an opportunity for the district to build teachers' sense of efficacy by empowering them with a deep understanding of formative assessment practices, as well as using analysis of results of various forms of assessments that focus more attention on the learning than on the teaching.

SWOT on Assessment and Accountability

- A. **Strengths:** The district has outlined expectations for assessment at every level. The assessment instruments were revised this year to better align with the instructional pacing. Secondary schools implemented the NWEA for the first time this year providing teachers with data in ELA and math.
- B. **Weaknesses:** A misalignment between instruction and assessment created a lack of trust in the validity and usefulness of the data. The use of formative assessment was not observed consistently across the district. There was limited observed evidence of the use of data analysis to evaluate student learning.
- C. **Threats:** The limited-time built into the District's professional learning schedules negatively impact teachers' capacity to practice and build their assessment literacy.

D. **Opportunities:** Additional training and work to align curriculum, instruction, and assessment will build teacher efficacy and skill in using performance tasks. Collaborative work to develop assessment literacy would frame teachers engaging in shared learning and the development of skills of inquiry.

| Actions: Assessment and Accountability | | Timeline |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| 5.1) | Explore with labor partners options for creating dedicated collaborative time for teachers to use the cycle of inquiry as a driver for instruction. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | 60 Days (April, 2020 & beyond) |
| 5.2) | Reconvene the collaborative assessment design team to review the alignment of assessment and instruction. Look for opportunities to widely disseminate the information prior to implementation. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | 120 Days (June, 2020) |
| 5.3) | Establish protocols for data analysis to be used at all levels within the system and train all personnel on their use. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | 120 Days (June, 2020) |
| 5.4) | Ensure that all certificated personnel have direct access to assessment data captured in all systems and provide ongoing professional learning on how to use the data. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | August, 2020 & ongoing |

6. Family and Student Engagement

(CCEE Instructional Component 6) The LEA engages in two-way communication that reflects the cultural and linguistic needs of the community, with resources and engagement activities that give students agency, promotes student leadership and provides a space for active community engagement.

Finding 6a

Stakeholders reported appreciation and support for efforts made by the district, especially noting the open communication of the Superintendent.

Finding 6b

Efforts to promote student agency and voice vary from site to site.

Finding 6c

The current district practices involving enrollment projections, due to budget restrictions and declining enrollment, resulting in a need to overflow students negatively impacting the engagement and connection between students and families required to move and their home schools.

Discussion

Stakeholders expressed universal approval and appreciation for the work done by most sectors of district leadership. Much of this was directed at changes initiated by the Superintendent since he was appointed. His communication style, accessibility, and willingness to engage in face-to-face venues were especially noted by stakeholders.

While there is a perceived improvement in communication to families of students, as described by multiple stakeholder groups, efforts to promote student agency and voice are inconsistent across the District. There are exemplary instances of this occurring at select sites and instances where it was not observed.

Nearly all schools visited had easily accessible welcoming environments and personnel in the front office who clearly demonstrated a commitment to customer service. In most instances, this welcoming and inviting tone was echoed by school staff working in multiple capacities, both certificated and classified. To maintain and sustain the growth and improvement of which so many spoke requires district leadership to engage in continuous improvement to find ways to help site-based personnel engage and support the community they are privileged to serve. Multiple stakeholder groups described deep and long-standing connections to the city of Vallejo and VCUSD schools.

While the challenges of maintaining enrollment can sometimes be beyond a district's control, every effort needs to be made to avoid any actions that could disrupt such connections or cause students and families to leave the district. For example, one unintended consequence of a set of district policies is connected to the handling of student enrollment overflow. Some stakeholders reported increasing challenges in communicating and interacting with schools and district offices as their children increased in age through the system. The district needs to examine trend data to determine whether there are discernible patterns in which those students and families who leave the district choose to do so.

Finally, there are opportunities to increase efforts to highlight some of the district's success stories, growth areas, and commitment to serve the families and students of Vallejo by continuous improvement in framing and sharpening the district's narrative. The district has an opportunity to better mark internal resources as well as outside that would improve children's and families' lives, e.g., parent centers, Kaiser Medical partnerships, dental and medical clinics, and available child care. Similarly, every effort should be made to ensure that every person touched by the system understands and is committed to the district's vision, mission, and goals.

SWOT on Family and Student Engagement

- A. **Strengths:** There are instances of exemplary practice in supporting student voice. Nearly all schools visited had welcoming environments and personnel in the front office who clearly demonstrated a commitment to customer service. At many sites, non-front office personnel across the spectrum were friendly, helpful, and welcoming.
- B. **Weaknesses:** At some schools, it was observed that parent brochures were out-of-date. Some schools had minimal guidance and signage for entrance to the main office. The welcoming environment of front offices and personnel were not consistent across the district.
- C. **Threats:** By far, the greatest threat to the stability of VCUSD is students leaving the district. The overflow process ruptures student and family connections with home schools. Instances of poor customer service can cause families to seek alternative placement for their children, e.g., charter schools, private schools, and enrollment in neighboring districts.
- D. **Opportunities:** The Vallejo community and VCUSD enjoys an intensely proud and longstanding connection to its community members. There is an opportunity in this relationship to support a dynamic effort to shape and share the narrative of the district’s work and future. In addition, there are community resources separate from, and not impacted by, the district’s financial pressures. These resources are a ripe possibility for leveraging the district’s access to resources for its students and families, as well as for being folded into the developing narrative of VCUSD’s efforts and successes.

| Actions: Family and Student Engagement | | Timeline |
|--|--|--------------------------|
| 6.1) | Establish or build off an existing structure, a parent advisory group (representatives from each school) that meets quarterly with the express purpose of providing feedback on curriculum, instruction, and assessment through the lens of parents/guardians and families. (Summary Finding 1: Communication) (Supports IC1 Culture, Practice & Planning Process) | 60 Days (April, 2020) |
| 6.2) | Analyze and study the impact on students and families of the overflow processes and policies, which cause students to be transferred away from their home schools for a year. (Summary Finding 1: Communication) (Supports IC1 Culture, Practice & Planning Process) | 60 Days (April, 2020) |
| 6.3) | Convene a diverse task group of parents/guardians at the district level to improve engagement and communication by sharing what’s happening and for parents to share their positive connections to and experiences with VCUSD school sites in order to frame and sharpen the district’s public narrative. (Summary Finding 1: Communication) (Supports IC1 Culture, Practice & Planning Process) | 90 Days (May, 2020) |

7. Instructional Leadership Teams (ILT)

(CCEE Instructional Component 7) ILTs exist in every school and reflect across grades and disciplines with members that make culturally responsive, data-driven decisions to design instruction for all students and their needs. ILTs will facilitate professional learning and coaching to implement and support initiatives LEA-wide.

Finding 7a

Stakeholders described a form of ILTs in place at all schools across the District. However, there was limited evidence of how they worked in terms of purpose and organization, and none were observed in action.

Finding 7b

Instructional leadership teams are not integrated into district level and site professional development plans as a structure to support instructional initiatives, i.e., the district's focus on LCAP goals to guide instruction and individual site instructional focus areas.

Discussion

According to Stricker (2019), “effective instructional leadership teams (ILTs) are powerful levers for making change in schools...and can provide a systematic way for schools to execute their most important priorities” (p. 56). Instructional Leadership Teams are teams consisting of teachers and administrators that are focused on improving teaching and learning for all students. As stated, school leaders reported they have ILTs, many existing in the form of “design teams,” a designation created by a previous superintendent. Site leaders described a variety of levels of implementation of ILT structures. Some elementary leaders described their ILTs functioning as advisory bodies and some as decision-making entities, engaged in determining and leading the learning to build teacher capacity in site-selected instructional focus areas. At the secondary level, it was reported that department chairs serve as the ILTs. Therefore, we find that site leaders have autonomy as to how to select ILT membership, the manner in which they will be structured, and the work they will undertake.

Other than through instructional directors providing site leaders guidance, there is little district direction to outline ILTs' work. There was no evidence that ILTs were considered or included in the district professional development plans. As stated, there was no consistency across the district as to what the bodies were to be called. As a practical consideration, there needs to be a re-envisioning of the purpose and naming of instructional leadership teams.

The 2017-20 VCUSD LCAP Plan and Update (2019) calls for the district to “Increase professional development opportunities that ensure access to critical learning opportunities to all staff directly responsible for student learning. Facilitate focused collaboration across schools, grade levels, and

grade spans to support student learning.” This stated action step, addressed one of Stricker’s (2019) main requirements for successful ILT implementation, that ILTs need to be intentionally supported. In this case, that support should come in the form of targeted professional development that will allow teams to focus their work and facilitate the learning of the teachers at the schools they serve.

SWOT on Instructional Leadership Team

- A. **Strengths:** The basic structure of ILTs is in place at all district schools. There are instances of exemplary efforts to engage such teams in leading the work of improving instruction for all students.
- B. **Weaknesses:** There is no evidence of district expectations or written guidance about how site leaders are to engage the work of their ILTs and no evidence that the teams are targeted to receive specialized training to support them in doing their jobs.
- C. **Threats:** There is an extremely high rate of teacher absences and lead members of ILTs, in the form of Teacher Leaders, are frequently pulled from their assigned duties. Instead of supporting teachers in increasing the effectiveness of their instruction, TLs are frequently required to act as substitute teachers in classrooms with either an absent teacher, or one in which a vacancy was never filled.
- D. **Opportunities:** The opportunity exists to utilize an existing structure of knowledgeable professionals to leverage district and site efforts to raise the level of instruction. A recognition of this group’s potential is needed with clearly communicated expectations, and training to focus their work.

| Actions: Instructional Leadership Teams | | Timeline |
|--|--|-----------------------|
| 7.1) | Clearly articulate and document the role, purpose and selection process of the ILT members. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | 120 Days (June, 2020) |
| 7.2) | Communicate and document the frequency, protocols, and process for ILT meetings. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | 120 Days (June, 2020) |
| 7.3) | Provide professional learning to ILTs on data analysis and the continuous improvement cycle. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | Beyond (August, 2020) |

8. Administrative Coaching and Leadership - Focus Component

(CCEE Instructional Component 8) Infrastructure across the LEA supports and enhances administrator effectiveness in management and instructional leadership with consistent data (academic and behavioral/SEL) monitoring that informs instruction and is used for stakeholder engagement.

Finding 8a

District-funded teacher leaders (TLs) are provided at all elementary schools and academic support providers (ASPs) are in place at all schools.

Finding 8b

District leaders provide principals with professional learning opportunities on the use of data. Several systems are in place to collect and report on data, i.e., EADMS (IlluminateEd) and Aeries and new systems have been added, i.e., Imagine Learning, Odysseyware, and NWEA. The district would benefit from a defined and integrated data system and a deeper shared understanding of expectations of how data will be used at all levels within the system.

Finding 8c

Mid-level district leaders, i.e. Elementary and Secondary Directors, teacher leaders and coordinators, provide coaching and mentoring to principals.

Discussion

According to Fullan (2002), “Effective school leaders are key to large-scale, sustainable education reform. For some time, educators have believed that principals must be instructional leaders if they are to be the effective leaders needed for sustained innovation” (p. 16). Newmann, King, and Youngs (2000), found that the most impactful purpose of professional development for principals was to build their understanding of what it takes to build a school’s human capacity by leading teachers in the development of their knowledge and skills.

Principals in VCUSD were able to speak to their roles as instructional leaders even though 50% have three years or less experience in their roles. District leadership provides them opportunities to engage in learning and, during observations, multiple instances of coaching principals and other administrators were noted. In general, instructional leaders reported being satisfied with their learning opportunities, although it was noted that some felt they wanted more district support and differentiation for leaders based on individual needs. Some leaders mentioned a tendency in the past for the district to create multiple instructional plans that were not always fully implemented, contributing to the skepticism about the implementation of change mentioned earlier in this report. The district described a revamped coaching plan for first- and second-year principals; however, we were unable to locate a copy of the plan in writing.

While site leaders conveyed general satisfaction with district support in terms of developing their capacities to lead instruction, they were less enthusiastic regarding learning opportunities and support provided to them in dealing with operational tasks, such as budgeting and navigating their relationships with Human Resources. In most aspects, site leaders are able to balance building management with instructional leadership. Almost all sites were clean and well-maintained. There is, however, one glaring exception: many leaders reported that their roles as instructional leaders were negatively impacted by the lack of qualified substitute teachers, which creates a need for administrators and teacher leaders to cover classes. This is especially true at sites with abnormally high teacher absences.

There are several immediate opportunities in this area to build on that currently exist within the system. As described elsewhere in this report, VCUSD has some exemplary principals. A number of site leaders reported being part of an informal support system comprised of fellow principals. As described, this loose affiliation functions as a community of practice or professional learning community. In addition, there were strong examples observed of site leaders engaging in robust data collection. Their efforts, and some of the tools and protocols they use, could easily be shared and adapted to support all leaders in the task of building their own capacities to lead learning and support their teachers' professional development. Finally, using the existing process of instructional rounds to foster the principals' skills in providing specific instructional feedback to teachers would leverage that process.

SWOT on Administrative Coaching and Leadership

- A. **Strengths:** Schools are clean and structures for basic operations are in place, allowing principals an opportunity to strive to balance their work between operational and instructional tasks. School leaders understand and are able to speak to their role as instructional leaders. There was clear evidence of principals receiving ongoing feedback, coaching, and mentoring from instructional directors.
- B. **Weaknesses:** There is a perceived lack of district support for site leaders in some non-instructional areas, e.g., staffing. The instructional directors provide personalized instructional support that could be emulated by other departments to differentiate for the varying levels of administrator development.
- C. **Threats:** The primary threat to administrators being able to serve as effective instructional leaders is the lack of qualified teachers available at a number of sites. This requires administrators to be more reactive than strategic, sometimes having to serve as substitute teachers in their schools. The lack of clear policy directives, particularly from human resources sometimes forces site leaders to problem-solve daily in order to have qualified teachers in their classrooms.
- D. **Opportunities:** The district has a number of exemplary site leaders. There is an unofficial and informal support system in place, a community of practice among leaders, that has the

potential to be expanded and supported by the district. Also, there are instances of simple strategies, tools, and best practices used by a number of site leaders. The district is currently working on scaling up these practices, which would carry the imprimatur of leadership from the middle.

| Actions: Administrative Coaching and Leadership | | Timeline |
|--|---|--------------------------|
| 8.1) | Train administrators on how to facilitate data analysis for teachers, using a specific district-selected protocol. Provide written expectations as to how and when this work is to be facilitated at the school sites. | 30 Days (March, 2020) |
| 8.2) | Create a multi-layered differentiated three-year professional learning plan for administrators, focusing on specific needs of principals, e.g., administrators with considerable experience, new principals, and leaders who are grappling with high teacher turnover and high teacher absenteeism. | 120 Days (June, 2020) |

9. Professional Learning and Coaching

(CCEE Instructional Component 9) The LEA has a multi-level (teacher, school and district leadership) professional learning plan that includes a focus on raising student academic and behavioral learning and accompanying practices as a collective effort. Instructional coaches are in place to support the reflection and improvement of the accompanying practices.

Finding 9a

The district lacks a long-term multi-level professional learning plan that outlines the short and long term goals for the district and the professional learning needed to achieve those goals.

Finding 9b

The district has multiple one-year professional learning plans grounded in the LCAP goals. School professional learning plans align with the goals stated on LCAP.

Discussion

One of the greatest factors impacting student achievement is the “shared belief that teachers are able to achieve collective goals and overcome challenges to impact student learning. When teachers share that belief, it outranks every other factor in regard to impacting student achievement including socioeconomic status, prior achievement, home environment, and parental environment.” (Donohoo, 2017).

“Meaningful professional learning is not a product, but is a process comprised of multiple opportunities for educators to learn and practice skills that advance their expertise. Both teachers and principals can benefit from ongoing professional learning that is closely tied to student learning

and the realities of practice, and that builds off of the expertise of colleagues.” J. Bishop, L. Darling-Hammond, and A. Jaquith (2015 state document)

Multiple one-year plans exist within the District, both site level and centrally generated, to address deepening learning for instructional personnel tasked with raising student achievement and supporting social emotional learning. However, there is no one single coherent plan in a multi-year format. There are multiple opportunities for school leaders to engage in data-based professional learning led by the instructional directors with the expectation that this work will be led by them at school sites. However, there is no formal district guidance to guide that implementation and it is at various levels according to stakeholders.

All elementary schools have an instructional coach in the form of Teacher Leaders (TLs). The teacher leaders meet regularly with the elementary director for training and development of instructional tools for schools. The team has created several powerful tools to support instruction. These tools are housed on a shared Google drive and disseminated informally. Professional learning opportunities are provided through teacher networks, afterschool sessions, and professional learning during school vacations. These are voluntary options provided by the elementary staff. These options are focused on the key practices identified by the district.

The secondary schools are supported through department chairs, leadership teams, and various task groups. The purpose of these groups is to create documents that align curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Professional learning is also provided by the secondary TOSAs as the secondary schools do not have an instructional coach.

The teacher’s union contract language impacts the offerings for professional development. This causes a competition for the limited professional learning time between multiple department needs and school-based focuses. At some schools, this has caused a lack of focus and coherence between the district goals and site goals. Guidance on how the professional development is connected to the goals of the district would help to build coherence.

The district already has several systems in place to build a strong professional learning plan. An opportunity for multiple voices is available through the various meetings, teams, and networks currently in existence. These teams are developing very useful tools that support instruction, for example, the elementary curriculum maps.

SWOT on Professional Learning and Coaching

- A. **Strengths:** Teacher leaders are funded at all elementary schools to support instruction. The district is supporting some of these leaders with Cognitive Coaching training. Training is provided monthly for this team with supports and opportunities for coherence.

- B. **Weaknesses:** While some schools used data to develop the site level professional learning plan, these are not systemic practices. The ongoing competition for limited professional learning and collaborative time creates a scattered approach to professional growth.
- C. **Threats:** The lack of dedicated time for teacher collaboration, data analysis, and coherent professional learning hinders the ability to build collective efficacy.
- D. **Opportunities:** There are pockets of success in both leadership and teaching that could be leveraged through peer review or modeling. Teacher leaders and department chairs are site-based resources for changing instructional practices through coaching and feedback.

| Actions: Professional Learning and Coaching | | Timeline |
|--|--|--------------------------|
| 9.1) | Continue and expand the initiative to train TLs in Cognitive Coaching. (Summary Finding 3: Multi-year Professional Learning) (Supports IC11 District Leadership and Capacity) | Ongoing |
| 9.2) | Redefine the TL job descriptions to focus on coaching and leading learning. (Summary Finding 3: Multi-year Professional Learning) (Supports IC11 District Leadership and Capacity) | 60 Days (April, 2020) |
| 9.3) | Engage in a transparent, collaborative, and comprehensive, data-based needs assessment to determine critical areas of need in terms of training and coaching. (Summary Finding 3: Multi-year Professional Learning) (Supports IC11 District Leadership and Capacity) | 90 Days (May, 2020) |
| 9.4) | Develop a multi-year professional learning plan that aligns curriculum, instruction, and assessment. (Summary Finding 3: Multi-year Professional Learning) (Supports IC11 District Leadership and Capacity) | 120 Days (June, 2020) |

10. Data Management and Student Information Systems

(CCEE Instructional Component 10) There is LEA-wide appropriate user access to the student information system (SIS) that meets federal/state/local reporting requirements and allows for a cross-departmental, classroom to school data analysis to inform continuous improvement instructional decisions.

Finding 10a

Data are housed in multiple systems and in multiple formats, above and beyond the central SIS (Aeries).

Finding 10b

The current data system creates a situation in which individuals serve as conduits or gatekeepers, not to limit access, but to compensate for a systemic lack of individual capacity to access data, or the ability to manipulate it in the forms available.

Finding 10c

System infrastructure weaknesses sometimes impact users' ability to collect and use data.

Discussion

Multiple stakeholders detailed the district's use of a central student information system (Aeries) to house individual student data. They also reported on the use of multiple sources of additional data that are housed on numerous platforms and in multiple formats, e.g., supplementary programs such as Odysseyware and Imagine Learning. While some assessment systems interface directly with the SIS, some do not. As a result, those data must either be fed into the central system manually or be housed in other ways. In some cases, the supplementary systems do not provide reporting in forms where results can be manipulated by users to individualize or focus their results. This creates a multi-level system for data management in which higher levels of skill are required in order to fully access all of the data available. At present, there are a limited number of individuals who have such a skill set, but the district is currently working to build the capacity of leaders. In addition, those who do are tasked with multiple competing responsibilities and there is no instructional leader at the district level whose sole responsibility is the curation of data.

Instead, the district supports school leaders by funneling data to them in usable forms, sometimes in the form of Excel spreadsheets. However, this brings into question the systemwide capacity for all persons to build on their abilities to access and manipulate data. At present, the site leader's understanding of the full data system, and the ability to navigate it, is at an awareness level in many cases. There is an effort for site leaders to lead the next level of implementation in this area, which is the building of teacher capacity to access and manipulate data, and use data to effectively inform instructional practices. In addition, the district has not yet introduced protocols or formal written expectations about how site leaders are to facilitate this work schoolwide.

The district has opportunities to build upon its teachers' data literacy through the widespread use of supplementary instructional resources that capture and report on student growth and to break down that data in meaningful ways. This will require increased training in the use of those programs. As observed, there was a noticeable trend for some teachers to default to the use of those supplementary programs to provide "busy work" to students, rather than as powerful tools to assist in the evaluation of student learning.

SWOT on Data Management and Student Information System

- A. **Strengths:** The district has multiple systems from which to draw data. There is an increasing awareness of the importance of data access and expanding the capacity of users to manipulate data systems and data reports.
- B. **Weaknesses:** Data are housed in numerous platforms and available in multiple formats, some of which are challenging for users to manipulate. Protocols to examine data are not in use at multiple levels. Infrastructure weaknesses hamper access to data systems for some users. A small number of individuals are relied upon to be conduits of data to large groups of users. Efforts to provide users data are offset by a decreased sense of urgency for users to increase their digital literacy in this area.
- C. **Threats:** There is a critical widespread need for many administrators and teachers to rise above the awareness level of being able to use and navigate the district’s data system. Without this skill, teachers are limited in providing effective instruction and intervention for students. Supplementary instructional software used to manage and report on student learning could be used as a replacement for direct instruction.
- D. **Opportunities:** The district has leaders in place at both the central office level and at many school sites, who are highly skilled in managing data, and will be rich resources for scaling up of efforts in the area of data use and management.

| Actions: Data Management and Student Information System | | Timeline |
|---|--|---|
| 10.1) | Designate a district-level position(s) tasked with the responsibility of supporting site leaders and teachers with accessing and using multiple forms of data available within the system. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | 60 Days (April, 2020) |
| 10.2) | Develop a data system that includes expectations, and a guide that describes processes, protocols, and timelines for the examination of data. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | 120 Days (June, 2020) |
| 10.3) | Train teachers and school leaders on how to navigate the data system including specific training on data housed in pertinent supplementary programs. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | 120 Days & ongoing (Beginning June, 2020) |
| 10.4) | Fold into the job duties of site Teacher Leaders the responsibility to be the point person for understanding and facilitating others’ understanding of the district’s data system. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | 120 Days (June, 2020) |

11. District and Leadership Capacity - Focus Component

(CCEE Instructional Component 10) The LEA contains a strong multi-level (school and LEA leadership) organizational capacity and processes to make coherent, coordinated decisions and ensure that goals and metrics are mission and vision aligned across sites and departments. Established processes ensure each member, regardless of position, can fulfill their role and responsibilities.

Finding 11a

The current stability in the district leadership has worked to restore trust and transparency throughout the system.

Finding 11b

The leadership staff is knowledgeable and open to developing shared goals that would guide the work for the next several years.

Discussion

Stakeholder groups consistently expressed confidence in the leadership of the Superintendent, and he continues to refine a process to ensure each cabinet member's ability to lead work under their purview. Stakeholders reported they feel there has been a stabilization of upper leadership after a period of some transitional years. Leadership is working to establish the use of performance metrics across the system and leaders are generally provided professional learning and coaching opportunities to enhance their skills. The performance metrics should be focused on a few high leverage skills that will support schools and families effectively, e.g., the effectiveness of various communication methods, etc.. Leadership efforts appear to be aligned with the District's vision, mission, and goals, but some stakeholders expressed a desire to engage in transparent re-envisioning work to update and ratify those items. The same is true for the development of an updated plan to guide their work.

The need for organizational coherence around shared goals, effective leadership, accountability and commitment to equity and excellence is evident. While individuals within the system understand their role in the implementation of the LCAP goals, there is not a universal understanding of the long-term goal and vision for the district.

A process for making coherent, coordinated decisions that improve the overall health of the district are not perceived as transparent even when they are developed collaboratively. Stakeholders continue to believe that decisions are made from the top and handed down for implementation. Changing adult belief systems is undisputedly challenging work.

A culture of positive customer service, with schools and families being the customers, could be strengthened. Stakeholders shared experiences where calls and messages were not returned. Human Resources was identified by many stakeholders as an area where actions or lack of actions highly impact the ability of schools to function effectively. Schools frequently are short on substitutes, continue to have unfilled positions, and are not provided timely information for the effective evaluation of staff.

The district has an opportunity to align the work through the development of a multi-year plan. The staff is vested in developing a shared vision to guide the work. The message this communicates to the stakeholders is that the leadership team is in it for the long haul and is open to supporting the work to accomplish long term goals.

SWOT on District and Leadership Capacity

- A. **Strengths:** The stability and mix of the current leadership team support a rebuilding of trust throughout the system. Stakeholders overall generally reported having confidence in the Superintendent’s leadership and direction. Directors were welcomed at school sites and were clearly aware of the strengths and weaknesses of each school. The district has a strong vision for the secondary alternative education for students, including students with disabilities.
- B. **Weaknesses:** Lack of a system-wide long-term learning plan hinders each cabinet member’s ability to lead the work under their purview and prevents a strategic workflow that includes metrics and benchmarks that are reviewed regularly. The district has declining student enrollment with the possibility of school closures in the upcoming school year.
- C. **Threats:** The challenges in the HR department to complete critical tasks in a timely manner prevents schools from ensuring they have the highest quality staff educating the students in Vallejo. Sporadic communication between various cabinet-level departments undermines a coherent message throughout the system.
- D. **Opportunities:** The leadership staff is knowledgeable and open to developing shared goals that would guide the work for the next several years. The district has the capacity to build the systems needed. The leadership team could use the existing cabinet meeting structures to envision and plan a multi-year academic vision for all levels of the system.

| Actions: District and Leadership Capacity | | Timeline |
|--|--|---------------------------------|
| 11.1) | Establish a timeline for time sensitive information and communication provided to schools and community, and hold personnel accountable for meeting the timelines including evaluation requirements. | 30 Days & Ongoing (March, 2020) |

| | | |
|-------|--|--------------------------|
| 11.2) | Examine all structures and purpose for cabinet meetings to identify and commit time for cross grade level articulation and multi-year learning plan. | 60 Days (April, 2020) |
| 11.3) | Align performance metrics with district goals for all departments. | 120 Days (June, 2020) |
| 11.4) | Select specific data points to review monthly to monitor progress in student and staff attendance, behavior, and academic growth. | Beyond (August, 2020) |

12. Governance Support with Instruction

(CCEE Instructional Component 12) The governance team (board) members understand their roles and responsibilities and reflect the local community’s values, voice and interest. The board has clearly established processes and protocols to assist in the implementation of strong instructional practices and supports for all students.

Finding 12

The Board is very involved in the work VCUSD is doing and continues to be a strong connection to the community. Contributing to this is the positive relationship with the Superintendent.

Discussion

The Governing Board and the Superintendent have developed a culture of respect and responsibility. They hold each other accountable for improving student outcomes by ensuring that staff have the skills and tools needed to be successful. Board members have a realistic knowledge of the district's strengths and weaknesses and have deep connections with the community. The Board is a cohesive group with the shared goal of improving student outcomes.

With the coherence among the Governing Board and the District Leadership, an opportunity exists to effectively communicate high expectations for all stakeholders and to establish Board Policies that support those expectations.

SWOT on Governance and Support with Instruction

- A. **Strengths:** The Governing Board members and the Superintendent have established a relationship based on mutual respect for each other’s roles and responsibilities. Members of the Board have long-established commitments to Vallejo City USD.
- B. **Weaknesses:** Board members could benefit from a deeper understanding of the analysis of data.

- C. **Threats:** Clearly established protocols are needed to support the implementation of strong district policies around instruction. Continual budget cuts need to be made due to declining enrollment which affects every aspect of school and students.
- D. **Opportunities:** The cohesiveness of the Board members provides an opportunity for the district to move forward in supporting the Superintendent in reinforcing a culture of high expectations for staff and students.

| Actions: Governance Support with Instruction | | Timeline |
|---|--|--------------------------|
| 12.1) | Develop a public relations campaign to attract students to the district. (Summary Finding 1: Communication) (Supports IC11 District Leadership and Capacity) | 60 Days (April, 2020) |
| 12.2) | Hold parent listening tours to support the district message and increase the positive news as well as current information about the district. (Summary Finding 1: Communication) (Supports IC1 Culture, Practice & Planning Process) | Beyond (August, 2020) |
| 12.3) | Select specific data points to review monthly to monitor progress in student and staff attendance, behavior, and academic growth. (Summary Finding 1: Communication) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | Beyond (August, 2020) |

VIII. References

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Appendix A: CCEE Systemic Instructional Review Components

"Working together to strengthen the System of Support for every student."

| Instructional Components | Characteristics |
|---|--|
| <p>1. Culture, Practice and Planning Processes</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture in the local educational agency (LEA) is one that fosters a deep commitment to ensuring all students attain educational success. • The LEA practices and planning processes integrate an inclusive instructional vision and mission that is embedded within a tiered system of support. • Continuous improvement practices and processes are utilized to determine whether the instructional mission and vision is being attained. • A supportive culture and climate for stakeholders (e.g., teachers, leaders, staff, parents) is cultivated and evident across all LEA efforts. • Professional learning opportunities are provided, from the boardroom to the classroom, that creates and sustain a LEA-wide culture of inclusivity, celebration of diversity, and culturally reflective practices and policies. • A LEA Leadership Team provides direction, guidance, support and oversight for ensuring the health and wellness of the LEA. |
| <p>2. Curriculum Development and Support</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A coherent, standards-aligned curriculum, instruction and assessment system is in place that is culturally and linguistically responsive. • Supplemental and enrichment curricular and instructional materials are provided and reflect the diverse needs of the student population and provide equitable access for all. • The LEA utilizes a continuous problem-solving process that helps identify and provide supports needed to systemically implement the LEA's instructional efforts that align with the vision and mission of the LEA. • Decision rules are developed and socialized with teaching and learning personnel that provide entrance and exit criteria for robust and coherent tiered support for all students, including gifted, at-risk, and students with disabilities. • Data are used regularly to progress monitor and ensure the curriculum and instruction efforts are resulting in positive outcomes, both academic and behavior/SEL, for students. • There is a comprehensive data driven professional development plan that is intentional and differentiated for the needs of teaching and learning staff. |
| <p>3. Instructional Practice and Strategies</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a LEA-wide intentional focus on universal design for learning for improving and extending differentiated instructional practices that increase student engagement. • Instructional practices provide students access to and experience with rigorous, relevant, and coherent standards-aligned instruction that is responsive to the needs of all learners, including gifted students, cultural and linguistically diverse students and student with disabilities. • Instructional practices and strategies ensure that all student groups (gifted, EL, students with disabilities) and their respective teachers are included and participate in collaborative integrated planning for instruction. |



Appendix A: CCEE Systemic Instructional Review Components

"Working together to strengthen the System of Support for every student."

| Instructional Components | Characteristics |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology and experiences beyond the textbook (e.g., project-based learning) and the classroom are used to actively engage students and emphasize critical thinking skills. • LEA-wide instructional practices and strategies are actively cultivated through teacher leadership and provide the opportunity to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ serve as a peer resource for teaching and learning ○ regularly meet to review student work ○ focus on the delivery of standard-aligned instruction • utilize school data to plan, design and deliver culturally responsive instruction that results increased rate of student growth for academic and behavior/s |
| 4. Social Emotional Learning and Development Health | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The social emotional and behavioral well-being of the whole child is evidenced within the instructional vision and in policy and practice. • Social emotional learning skills are identified and integrated into the curriculum and instruction practices and is assessed. • When student behavior and well -being is of concern, there are a continuum of resources identified to provide support to students and build the capacity of the school to meet student needs. • Social emotional learning and health development is practiced and modeled by adults throughout the LEA. |
| 5. Assessment and Accountability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing, aligned, systemic processes are in place for measuring how, what, and how well a student is learning (e.g., early warning system, universal screening, diagnostic, formative, summative). • There is a systematic process (e.g., protocols) for using assessment data to make instructional decisions at the student, classroom, school, and LEA levels. • There is an accountability system that provides a holistic approach (e.g., academic, social, developmental) to educating students, parents, teachers, administrators, and LEA leaders for the purpose of improving school performance. • LEA-wide practices include intentional time for teachers and leaders to learn, digest, analyze, problem-solve and plan for instruction that results in improved student outcomes for academics, behavior, and SEL. • Decision rules are established that articulate entrance and exit criteria for students needing intensified instruction and intervention and are embedded within a multi-tiered system of support. • There is an established practice to ensure system wide fidelity to using/delivering effective instructional practices that results in improved student outcomes. |
| 6. Family and Student Engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student agency and voice is fostered to promote critical thinking and leadership that contributes to decisions being made. • There is an expectation in the Local Education Agency and support is provided to schools to ensure family/guardians, and other caregivers, and students are active members and decision makers within the LEA system of support and school community. • The LEA and school communities cultural and linguistic needs are reflected in the resources, engagement activities and |



Appendix A: CCEE Systemic Instructional Review Components

"Working together to strengthen the System of Support for every student."

| Instructional Components | Characteristics |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • curriculum. • The local educational agency actively seeks and acts upon two-way communication with students and families/guardians. Written protocols that delineate practices are developed that promote and engage students and families. |
| 7. Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ILTs exist in every school and meet regularly with organized agendas, minutes and a clear purpose for the team. • ILTs reflect cross grade and disciplinary representation of student groups including EL, gifted and students with disabilities. Participants are capable and empowered to use data to design instruction based on the needs for each and every student. • ILTs are actively involved in facilitating culturally responsive data driven decision making and creating the instructional supports necessary to deliver best first instruction that result in improved school-wide student outcomes. • ILTs facilitate professional development and coaching on instruction, assessment and data driven decision making. |
| 8. Administrative Coaching and Leadership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructures exist that support and enhance the administrator effectiveness and instructional leadership. • Administrators clearly demonstrate a balance between building management and instructional leadership. • Administrative practices include targeted instructional coaching to support and facilitate effective teaching strategies and practices. • Administrators spend an extensive amount of time in classrooms observing instruction and providing strengths-based and actionable feedback to teachers. • Administrators demonstrate a consistent use of qualitative and quantitative data to assess the rate of growth for academic, behavior and social emotional learning. • There is a consistent use of data to monitor progress in academic, behavior and social emotional learning. • Administration actively cultivates a growth mind set and a safe environment for personnel to take risks, speak their truth and contribute to decision making. • Administrators actively facilitate and engage parents/guardians as welcomed partners in the school community/family. |
| 9. Professional Learning and Coaching | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a comprehensive multi-year written plan, based on best practice, for improving teachers- both veteran and new, principals' and staff (classified and certificated) effectiveness in raising student achievement and supporting social emotional learning. • Data based professional learning opportunities foster collective responsibility for improved student performance facilitated by highly effective school and LEA leaders and grounded in student performance data. • Instructional coaches are in place to support teachers' reflections and efforts to improve classroom practices for academics, behavior and social emotional learning. • Leadership coaching and mentoring provides principals' opportunity to reflect on, monitor, adjust, and increase effectiveness of their roles in strengthening instructional practices in order to meet the needs of diverse learners. |



Appendix A: CCEE Systemic Instructional Review Components

"Working together to strengthen the System of Support for every student."

| Instructional Components | Characteristics |
|--|---|
| 10. Data Management and Student Information Systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a student information system (SIS) that actively stores and tracks all individual student data [e.g., grades, attendance, discipline], with appropriate access to teachers, administrators and parents. • The SIS provides for the following user-friendly information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ cross-departmental continuous improvement of systems ○ information that helps meet federal/state/local reporting requirements ○ data on tracking and reporting longitudinal student progress ○ data to support classroom/school instructional decision-making ○ information that helps understand/address patterns in student performance ○ data that supports the assessment and accountability system(s) |
| 11. District and Leadership Capacity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a process to ensure the capacity of each cabinet member's ability to lead the work under their purview. • Performance metrics that are aligned with LEA goals are established across all dept/offices and are regularly reviewed for growth and sustainability. • Leaders are provided professional learning and coaching opportunities to enhance their skills to fulfill their roles and responsibilities. • Each dept/office's strategic workflow, metrics and benchmarks are verified with data, aligned with LEA goals and vision and reviewed regularly • There is evidence of strong organizational capacity, dynamics, and processes to make coherent, coordinated decisions that improve the overall health and well-being of the LEA on behalf of students, families/guardians and staff • LEA and school leadership develop and facilitate collaborative and transparent processes to implement shared goals regarding teaching and learning, effective leadership, accountability and commitment to equity and excellence across the LEA. |
| 12. Governance Support with Instruction | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LEA governance team has clearly established written processes and protocols for the purpose of implementing strong instructional practices and educational supports for each and every student. • The LEA governance team has a delineated function and clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in improving school and educational outcomes. • The work of the LEA governance team reflects the local community's values, voice and interests. • The LEA governance team demonstrates interpersonal respect, trust, communication, and conflict resolution for each other, LEA leadership/staff, and the community they serve. |

Appendix B: VCUSD Action Matrix

| Action Number | Action | Timeline |
|---------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1.1 | Develop a multi-pronged approach to create communication systems that promote an inclusive and equitable teaching culture that embodies a collective belief in high expectations. | 30 Days & Ongoing (March 2020) |
| 1.2 | Establish and communicate the expectation for continuous improvement practices. | 30 Days & Ongoing (March 2020) |
| 3.1 | Deepen understanding of the key instructional practices to be used by all teachers in all classrooms and in all disciplines by clearly identifying each practice and articulating how the practice is expected to be used. Provide corresponding professional learning for teachers on how to implement the strategies using their instructional tools. | 30 Days & Ongoing (March,2020 start) |
| 4.1 | Provide school site leaders and teachers with a guiding document that clearly states district expectations regarding: a) criteria for their selection of SEL programs, b) how teachers are to implement the selected program, and c) how sites are to engage in SEL data analysis. | 30 Days & Ongoing (March 2020) |
| 4.2 | Continue to model and refine professional learning opportunities for site leaders that focuses on how to lead educators' learning about SEL data analysis practices through the use of specific protocols. | 30 Days & Ongoing (March 2020) |
| 8.1 | Train administrators on how to facilitate data analysis for teachers, using a specific district-selected protocol. Provide written expectations as to how and when this work is to be facilitated at the school sites. | 30 Days (March, 2020) |
| 11.1 | Establish a timeline for time sensitive information and communication provided to schools and community, and hold personnel accountable for meeting the timelines including evaluation requirements. | 30 Days & Ongoing (March 2020) |
| 9.1 | Continue and expand the initiative to train TEs in Cognitive Coaching. (Summary Finding 3: Multi-year Professional Learning) (Supports IC11 District Leadership and Capacity) | Ongoing |
| 4.3 | All site leaders to collaboratively develop in writing action steps to address, through the lens of SEL, ongoing challenges in lowering suspensions, addressing the specific needs of identified subgroups, and student engagement with the school. | 60 Days (April, 2020) |

Appendix B: VCUSD Action Matrix

| Action Number | Action | Timeline |
|---------------|--|--------------------------------|
| 5.1 | Explore with labor partners options for creating dedicated collaborative time for teachers to use the cycle of inquiry as a driver for instruction. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | 60 Days (April, 2020 & beyond) |
| 6.1 | Establish or build off an existing structure, a parent advisory group (representatives from each school) that meets quarterly with the express purpose of providing feedback on curriculum, instruction, and assessment through the lens of parents/guardians and families. (Summary Finding 1: Communication) (Supports IC1 Culture, Practice & Planning Process) | 60 Days (April, 2020) |
| 6.2 | Analyze and study the impact on students and families of the overflow processes and policies, which cause students to be transferred away from their home schools for a year. (Summary Finding 1: Communication) (Supports IC1 Culture, Practice & Planning Process) | 60 Days (April, 2020) |
| 9.2 | Redefine the TL job descriptions to focus on coaching and leading learning. (Summary Finding 3: Multi-year Professional Learning) (Supports IC11 District Leadership and Capacity) | 60 Days (April, 2020) |
| 10.1 | Designate a district-level position(s) tasked with the responsibility of supporting site leaders and teachers with accessing and using multiple forms of data available within the system. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | 60 Days (April, 2020) |
| 11.2 | Examine all structures and purpose for cabinet meetings to identify and commit time for cross grade level articulation and multi-year learning plan. | 60 Days (April, 2020) |
| 12.1 | Develop a public relations campaign to attract students to the district. (Summary Finding 1: Communication) (Supports IC11 District Leadership and Capacity) | 60 Days (April, 2020) |
| 1.3 | Develop a common process and protocols for the analysis of data to inform decision-making for every layer of the system, including monitoring the health of core instruction. | 90 Days (May 2020) |
| 1.4 | Bring together a variety of stakeholders to review and revise the district vision, mission and develop a multi-year learning plan. | 90 Days (May 2020) |

Appendix B: VCUSD Action Matrix

| Action Number | Action | Timeline |
|---------------|--|-----------------------|
| 1.5 | Using the current professional learning plan that integrates the work and support systems outlined in the LCAP and the CCEIS plan as a guide, develop action steps that include clear alignment to the district priorities, measurable goals, timelines, and responsible personnel. | 90 Days (May 2020) |
| 6.3 | Convene a diverse task group of parents/guardians at the district level to improve engagement and communication by sharing what’s happening and for parents to share their positive connections to and experiences with VCUSD school sites in order to frame and sharpen the district’s public narrative. (Summary Finding 1: Communication) (Supports IC1 Culture, Practice & Planning Process) | 90 Days (May, 2020) |
| 9.3 | Engage in a transparent, collaborative, and comprehensive, data-based needs assessment to determine critical areas of need in terms of training and coaching. (Summary Finding 3: Multi-year Professional Learning) (Supports IC11 District Leadership and Capacity) | 90 Days (May, 2020) |
| 2.1 | Identify, articulate, and implement clear expectations as to the curriculum to be used for designated and integrated ELD, and students with disabilities. | 120 Days (June, 2020) |
| 5.2 | Reconvene the collaborative assessment design team to review the alignment of assessment and instruction. Look for opportunities to widely disseminate the information prior to implementation. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | 120 Days (June, 2020) |
| 5.3 | Establish protocols for data analysis to be used at all levels within the system and train all personnel on their use. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | 120 Days (June, 2020) |
| 7.1 | Clearly articulate and document the role, purpose and selection process of the ILT members. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | 120 Days (June, 2020) |
| 7.2 | Communicate and document the frequency, protocols, and process for ILT meetings. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | 120 Days (June, 2020) |

Appendix B: VCUSD Action Matrix

| Action Number | Action | Timeline |
|---------------|---|---|
| 8.2 | Create a multi-layered differentiated three-year professional learning plan for administrators, focusing on specific needs of principals, e.g., administrators with considerable experience, new principals, and leaders who are grappling with high teacher turnover and high teacher absenteeism. | 120 Days (June, 2020) |
| 9.4 | Develop a multi-year professional learning plan that aligns curriculum, instruction, and assessment. (Summary Finding 3: Multi-year Professional Learning) (Supports IC11 District Leadership and Capacity) | 120 Days (June, 2020) |
| 10.2 | Develop a data system that includes expectations, and a guide that describes processes, protocols, and timelines for the examination of data. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | 120 Days (June, 2020) |
| 10.3 | Train teachers and school leaders on how to navigate the data system including specific training on data housed in pertinent supplementary programs. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | 120 Days & ongoing (Beginning June, 2020) |
| 10.4 | Fold into the job duties of site Teacher Leaders the responsibility to be the point person for understanding and facilitating others' understanding of the district's data system. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | 120 Days (June, 2020) |
| 11.3 | Align performance metrics with district goals for all departments. | 120 Days (June, 2020) |
| 2.2 | Define how various special education programs are to access and use the core program. Provide professional learning to teachers on the effective use of the core program in special education. | Beyond & Ongoing (July, 2020) |
| 1.6 | Develop and implement a Multi-tiered System of Support Framework with a renewed focus on PBIS. | Beyond (August 2020) |
| 2.3 | Provide differentiated professional learning opportunities on the various components of the adopted text, including the integration of technology tools, to move from awareness into quality and rigor. | Beyond & Ongoing (August, 2020) |
| 3.2 | Clearly articulate the requirement for Designated ELD instruction and provide professional learning on the use of core aligned materials for the provision of Designated ELD. | Beyond (August, 2020) |

Appendix B: VCUSD Action Matrix

| Action Number | Action | Timeline |
|---------------|--|---------------------------------|
| 3.3 | Deepen the knowledge and understanding of the teaching model for the provision of supports and services to students with disabilities at the secondary level. Consider a Learning Center to provide additional support as needed. | Beyond (August, 2020) |
| 4.4 | Integrate components of the district’s CEIS plan into the 2020-21 LCAP plan, e.g., trauma-informed practices, PBIS, cultural competency, and implicit bias. | Beyond & Ongoing (August 2020) |
| 5.4 | Ensure that all certificated personnel have direct access to assessment data captured in all systems and provide ongoing professional learning on how to use the data. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | Beyond & Ongoing (August, 2020) |
| 7.3 | Provide professional learning to ILTs on data analysis and the continuous improvement cycle. (Summary Finding 2: MTSS) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | Beyond (August, 2020) |
| 11.4 | Select specific data points to review monthly to monitor progress in student and staff attendance, behavior, and academic growth. | Beyond (August, 2020) |
| 12.2 | Hold parent listening tours to support the district message and increase the positive news as well as current information about the district. (Summary Finding 1: Communication) (Supports IC1 Culture, Practice & Planning Process) | Beyond (August, 2020) |
| 12.3 | Select specific data points to review monthly to monitor progress in student and staff attendance, behavior, and academic growth. (Summary Finding 1: Communication) (Supports IC2 Curriculum Development and Support) | Beyond (August, 2020) |