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| PROFESSIONAL LEARNING - Professional learning is the means by which teachers, administrators and other school and system employees acquire, enhance and refine the knowledge, skills, and commitment necessary to create and support high levels of learning for all students. | | | |
| Professional Learning Standard 1: **The context of professional learning--the who, when, why and where—contributes to the development and quality of learning communities, ensuring that they are functioning, leadership is skillful and focused on continuous improvement, and resources have been allocated to support adult learning and collaboration.** | | | |
| **PL 1.1 Learning Teams** | | | |
| **Not Addressed** | **Emergent** | **Operational** | **Fully Operational** |
| Teachers do not participate in learning teams or meet regularly to plan for instruction. | Some teachers in some grade levels or subject areas meet to plan for instruction, but meetings do not occur regularly and the work is not aligned with school improvement goals. | Most teachers meet regularly in learning teams to plan for instruction (e.g., develop lesson plans, examine student work, monitor student progress). This collaborative work would be enhanced by clear alignment of group expectations with the school improvement goals. | All teachers participate in learning teams throughout the year and meet regularly to plan for instruction (e.g., develop lesson plans, examine student work, monitor student progress). The collaborative work is aligned with the school improvement goals. |
| EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above –  One of McCleskey’s biggest strengths is our size. Each Thursday, our planning period is kept completely free for our teams of three, two general education teachers and one special education teacher. During this time period, which usually lasts a little over teachers get together print the resources for the following week as well as review data team results and behavior strategies. In addition to this, we are constantly informally meeting as a grade level team, working with the counselors to address needs of struggling students. Formally, the grade level team meets bi-weekly and discussed all issues, strategies, and other housekeeping responsibilities.  As a staff, we have grade level meetings with the entire school on the last Wednesday of each month. This is a time for us to come together as a staff and share our classroom successes. This is also the time when we view and discuss longitudal data and look at gaps in the data. This is really nice because we see many different perspectives, and this allows us to grow as a school.  Finally, to strengthen this process we also have monthly content area meetings, in which we share out strategies weakness in the curriculum. These meetings also help us prepare for standardized testing and make sure that the students are having the best academic experience in middle school as possible. | | | |
| RECOMMENDATIONS:  I would like to see breakouts during large meetings, such as, content area meetings and faculty meetings. This would structure the conversation and allow everyone to interact with one another. We have several introverted teachers on the staff who have great ideas, but they are rarely heard because they don’t want to speak up. | | | |

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| **PL 1.2 Learning Community** | | | |
| **Not Addressed** | **Emergent** | **Operational** | **Fully Operational** |
| There is little or no evidence that the principal, administrative team or related human resources (e.g., leadership team, coaches, central office) supports or reinforces the creation and maintenance of a learning community. | There is some evidence that the principal, administrative team, or related human resources (e.g., leadership team, coaches, central office) support or reinforce the creation and maintenance of a learning community, but additional support in this area is needed. Although administrators have created structures for meetings to occur, they have failed to provide teachers with professional development related to the collaboration process. | The principal, administrative team, and other human resources periodically support the creation and maintenance of an effective learning community to support teacher and student learning. In key aspects of the school, these individuals work collaboratively to reinforce collaborative forms of professional development and learning for staff members. Although this process is operational, it would improve if greater emphasis were given to monitoring its impact on school improvement goals and student achievement. | The principal, administrative team and other human resources consistently support the creation and maintenance of an effective learning community to support teacher and student learning. These individuals work collaboratively to reinforce teachers’ skillful collaboration (e.g., facilitation skills, conflict resolution, and group decision-making). They also help to create structures to support collegial learning and implement incentive systems to ensure collaborative work. They monitor the impact of these collaborative processes on school improvement goals and on student learning, and participate with other individuals and groups in the operations of the learning community. |
| EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above –  Our school’s function very well, but there is a lack of structure in what we are required to do. We meet regularly and differentiate the same lessons for all levels of learning. This makes it easier when students have schedule changes and when we are going through the data teaming process. Our teams also work because we make sure to have the special education teacher present whenever we plan, which provides a wealth of ideas and information. Our administration does an excellent job of letting teachers identify and solve their own problems and they add suggestions after we have established a conclusion. | | | |
| RECOMMENDATIONS:  Our school would benefit from having planning norms and procedures. This information would provide teachers with a checklist and ensure that they are able to cover their bases each Thursday during planning. Another thing that hurts the team process is the lack of diversity each teacher represents. There is one AC teacher, and one teacher with Special Education (we both have two on-level courses). Sometimes, it can make it hard for teachers to relate to one another or understand the other person’s perspective because of the difference in these levels. Our administration supports us when we try new tools and technology, but they are still emerging in their technology skills, so they can not provide as much support as they could if they were familiar with emerging technologies. | | | |

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| **PL 1.3 Instructional Leadership Development and Service** | | | |
| **Not Addressed** | **Emergent** | **Operational** | **Fully Operational** |
| There are few if any opportunities for teachers to participate in instructional leadership development experiences, serve in instructional leadership roles, or participate in supporting school-based professional learning. | There are opportunities for teachers to participate in preparing for and serving in instructional leadership roles and contributing to the school-based professional learning plans. However, the opportunities are limited to a small number of teachers. | There are many opportunities for teachers to serve in instructional leadership roles and develop as instructional leaders. They are highly engaged in planning, supporting, and communicating professional learning in the school. This would be enhanced if there were more opportunities for instructional leadership roles among various personnel. | A variety of teachers take advantage of opportunities to participate in instructional leadership development experiences and serve in instructional leadership roles (e.g., instructional coach, mentor, facilitator). They plan, advocate for support of, and articulate the benefits and intended results of professional learning. |
| EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above –  There are very few opportunities for leadership at McCleskey. There are mentor programs and a leadership team established for qualifying staff members to be a part of. Currently our leadership team is composed of administration, one representative from each content area, a parent representative, and a representative from our school’s foundation. The members of these teams are hand picked by administration and tend to be the same teachers year after year. This has caused a lot of frustration among experienced staff who would like to take on these roles, but has not been chosen. | | | |
| RECOMMENDATIONS:  Our school would function better if teachers went through an application process before receiving a leadership role. It would also be more successful if each teacher were only given one major leadership responsibility. This way, teachers could focus solely on that task instead of being stretched thin. An election process might also be beneficial if it is done by the content area teams and overseen by administration. It would also be beneficial to have someone to represent the content areas, special education, parents, community, and technology. This would provide many different perspectives to be heard while creating our school’s strategic plan. | | | |

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| **PL 1.4 School Culture for Team Learning and Continuous Improvement** | | | |
| **Not Addressed** | **Emergent** | **Operational** | **Fully Operational** |
| There is little or no evidence of the principal and other leaders establishing ongoing team learning with clearly articulated expectations for professional learning. | There is some evidence the principal and other leaders support a culture involving ongoing team learning and continuous improvement. However, there is not a clearly articulated plan for professional learning for teachers and administrators. | There is general evidence the principal and other leaders support a culture involving ongoing learning and continuous improvement through a plan for professional learning for teachers and administrators. The professional learning would be enhanced by including a variety of designs (e.g., lesson study, peer observations, modeling, instructional coaching, collaborative teacher meetings, etc.) constituting high-quality professional learning experiences. | The principal and other leaders support a school culture that reflects ongoing team learning and continuous improvement. The principal and other leaders plan for high-quality professional learning, articulate intended results of school-based professional learning, and participate in professional learning to become more effective instructional leaders. |
| EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above –  There are a lot of professional development opportunities supported by the county office, but professional development occurs once or twice and then the leaders never see the instructors again. Since the teachers do not have relationships with the county academic coaches, they are very reluctant to contact them with questions. However, my principal is working toward having teachers become professional development specialists by having teachers share out instructional tools briefly at the monthly faculty meeting. The staff at our school is very close, and teachers feel comfortable coming to one another for questions. After the brief introduction, there is at least one tech savvy teacher who will navigate the tool/strategy presented and can answer questions there team has and even provide tutorials if necessary. | | | |
| RECOMMENDATIONS:  The process of having teachers share out at faculty meetings is an excellent idea, but it could be stronger if they were shared at content area meetings or grade level meetings. This could allow teachers to focus on tools that are specific to their content area and it can provide grade level strategies to become common place. | | | |

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| **PL 1.5 Job-Embedded Learning and Collaboration** | | | |
| **Not Addressed** | **Emergent** | **Operational** | **Fully Operational** |
| Teachers spend little or no time during the work-week learning and collaborating with colleagues to improve their use of curriculum, assessment, instruction, and technology. | Some teachers spend a small amount of time during the work-week collaborating with colleagues. However, this time is often focused on non-curricular topics and typically occurs after school. | Most teachers spend time during a workday each week collaborating with colleagues about curriculum, assessment, instruction and technology use in the classroom. This professional learning would be enhanced by allocating more time each week for job-embedded learning (e.g., lesson study, peer-observations, modeling, instructional coaching, teacher meetings). | Teachers spend a significant part of their work-week in job-embedded learning and collaboration with colleagues addressing curriculum, assessment, instruction, and technology. They receive sufficient support resources (e.g., materials, time, training) and assist with securing additional resources necessary (e.g., funding, time, technology) to sustain their learning. (NSDC Standards recommend that formal and informal job-embedded learning take place during at least 25% of educators’ professional time. Such time can be devoted to lesson study, peer observations and coaching, modeling, conferencing, teacher meetings, mentoring.) |
| EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above –  As I have previously mentioned, the teams at are school are very strong and we spend hours a week working together. However, we have very do not receive sufficient resources to reach our maximum potential. Our school does not receive Title I funds and we are also not affluent. With the combination of our population and the lack of funding that comes from the county, our school goes without many resources that are common place at most other schools. | | | |
| RECOMMENDATIONS:  Currently, I am writing a grant for an iPad cart to be used in my class, and I believe our school would benefit from a school wide grant to help us obtain more resources. Countywide, it might be nice to reevaluate how we do professional development. There are a lot of people at the county office that are involved in professional development, but they lack meaningful relationships with staff and faculty at the local school level. If they had smaller areas to cover, or were based at a specific school this would benefit everyone involved in the professional development process. | | | |

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| **PL 1.6 Resources Support Job-Embedded Professional Learning** | | | |
| **Not Addressed** | **Emergent** | **Operational** | **Fully Operational** |
| Resources are not allocated for job-embedded professional learning that is aligned with high-priority school improvement goals. Little if any professional development is devoted to helping teachers use technology to enhance student learning. | Some resources are allocated for professional learning. However, much of the professional learning is conducted primarily after school and is not aligned with the high-priority school improvement goals. There is limited professional development devoted to helping teachers use technology to enhance student learning. | Most resources for professional learning are allocated for the identified high-priority school improvement goals. However, providing more job-embedded learning opportunities and professional development would enhance teachers’ use of technology to support student learning. In other cases, these forms of professional development need to be more ongoing and sustained to ensure actual classroom implementation of training strategies and processes. | Resources are allocated to support job-embedded professional learning that is aligned with high-priority school improvement goals and technology supporting student learning. There is sustained commitment to ensuring that these professional development activities result in successful classroom implementation. There is also a process in place to determine the value-added of key strategies and processes, i.e., how they impact student achievement and related organizational short- and long-range goals. |
| EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above –  Our school receives very little funding. Most of the school wide goals cost us virtually nothing. For instance, we have had a large push for daily sustained silent reading, using a reading strategy called thinking notes, and using Quizlet with our students. All of these resources are available to our school for no cost. I think my administration foes their best to work with the lack of resources they are provided, but they are unaware of just how many resources are available for little to no cost. These resources also can be done using technology without dominating our few resources. | | | |
| RECOMMENDATIONS:  We are very restricted in the funds we receive because of this I currently do not have recommendations. However, I do think we should continue to do research on more effective tools and strategies that will have a significant impact on the students and are also cost effective. There are many tools that teachers are already using that would be excellent, free resources to use as an entire grade-level. This would be convenient because there are on-site experts and it would make parents feel comfortable communicating with teachers when there are policies that are utilized by each grade level teacher. | | | |

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| Professional Learning Standard 2**:**  **The process—the how—of professional learning is aligned with articulated goals and purposes, data-driven, research-based, evaluated to determine its impact, aligned with adult learning theory, and collaborative in design and implementation.** | | | |
| **PL 2.1 Collaborative Analysis of Data** | | | |
| **Not Addressed** | **Emergent** | **Operational** | **Fully Operational** |
| Teachers and/or administrators use personal experiences or opinions to determine student and adult learning needs and goals. Data is not collected and analyzed in monitoring school and classroom improvement strategies, | Teachers and/or administrators work in isolation or with limited representation to review student summative data and determine student and adult learning needs and goals. Student and teacher data is collected and analyzed at the end of the year to monitor the accomplishment of classroom and school goals. | Teachers and administrators collaboratively analyze disaggregated student learning, demographic, perception, and process data to identify student and adult learning needs and goals. They collect and analyze relevant student and teacher data at the beginning and end of the year to monitor and revise school and classroom improvement strategies. Accomplishments are celebrated and results are regularly reported to family and community. | Teachers and administrators collaboratively analyze disaggregated student learning, demographic, perception, and process data to identify student and adult learning needs and goals. They continuously (minimum of 4 times a year) collect and analyze relevant student and teacher data (e.g. action research, analyzing student work, classroom observations, Awareness Walks, and surveys) to monitor and revise school and classroom improvement strategies. Accomplishments are celebrated and results are regularly reported to family and community. |
| EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above –  While the professional learning lacks follow through, most of the learning supports our SSP of increasing our schools strategic plan. Most of the professional learning we have received this year focuses on reading throughout all four core content areas to make sure that students are comprehending the materials. However, when data teams meet, this information is not brought up and the required conversation is about the growth between the pre-test and the post-test. The data teams have the autonomy to do as they would like, but they are required to show growth and document strategies for both students exceeding and not meeting the standard. These documents are saved to a collaborative staff drive. | | | |
| RECOMMENDATIONS:  Data teams are very difficult because they are still very new. It is also difficult to manage when there are so many grade level content area meetings who meet at their own pace. One thing I really like about our schools is the small size of the planning team and the way we are allowed to have so much independence. My teammate and I do a lot together that we are not required to do, so we can have every ounce of documentation should we need it. We plan collaboratively and actively plan activities for each learning style and level of learner. I feel as if our data teams would be stronger if teachers were required to list specific ways they will differentiate based of readiness and interest. We also need a more formal excel spreadsheet to help us sort through our data. One thing that we should also take the time to do is review our data. During pre-planning or post-planning grade level content area teams would benefit from looking through the data from the school year, seeing where students struggled the most, and the revamping the instructional style. That way, teachers would keep the curriculum consistent with standards that students are exceeding on and change presentation as necessary and can change content that is simply not working. Each team should meet with their assigned administrator to show off their data. With these very simple changes, our school could quite easily move from emergent to operational. We have all the right things, but we could work on the presentation and organization of these things. | | | |

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| **PL 2.2 Evaluating Impact of Professional Learning** | | | |
| **Not Addressed** | **Emergent** | **Operational** | **Fully Operational** |
| The principal and other leaders develop and implement a plan for evaluating teachers’ reactions to professional development events. Teachers’ contributions to the evaluation are limited to providing satisfaction ratings. The evaluation identifies changes in teacher knowledge and skills as a result of participation, but it does not evaluate changes in practice or impact on student learning. | The principal and other leaders develop and implement a plan for evaluating professional development events. Teachers contribute to the evaluation by collecting and analyzing summative student learning data. The evaluation identifies changes in teacher knowledge and skills as a result of participation and year-end student performance, but it does not evaluate change in teacher practice. | The principal and other leaders develop and implement a comprehensive plan for conducting ongoing (formative and summative for a one- to two-year period) evaluation of the impact of professional development on teacher practices and student learning. The evaluation also emphasizes changes in school culture, organizational structures, policies, and processes. Teachers contribute to the evaluation by collecting and analyzing relevant student learning and process data. | The principal and other leaders develop and implement a comprehensive plan for conducting ongoing (both formative and summative over a three- to five-year period) evaluation of the impact of professional development on teacher practices and student learning. Evaluation also emphasizes changes in school culture, organizational structures, policies, and processes. Teachers contribute to the evaluation by collecting and analyzing a variety (student learning, demographic, perception, and process) of relevant data. The plan specifies the evaluation question(s), data sources, data collection methodology, and data analysis processes. |
| EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above –  The principals collect data from professional learning by doing “informal walkthroughs.” The administrators are in the classrooms quite frequently, so they probably do collect a fair amount of data from just watching us perform, yet the teachers would feel more empowered if they got to formally reflect on the professional development. | | | |
| RECOMMENDATIONS:  The most empowering thing for teachers and students to have is a voice. Most of our professional learning is already selected for us by the county, so our local school does not have much to say about this. However, if all teachers were given a simple list of things they would like to learn about at the beginning of the year, I think that would be most beneficial. Even if their topics did not get selected, it makes the teacher feel valued. Cobb County is working toward this at the moment, and my teammate and I have been selected to be a part of it. Cobb County is doing professional learning academies that teachers can apply for based off their interest. When they attend the academy, they receive the day off of work and get to interact with their peers from across the county. We were selected for an academy called HIP or Humanities in Practice. This academy shows all humanities teachers how to make their content come to life. We have only had one meeting with the academy, but I have to say it was the best professional development I have ever been to. At the beginning of the day, we gathered at the Marietta Square and got a passport sheet. Throughout the day we were required to go around the Square and visit museums and shops. During the process, we reflected on how these places interacted with our content. This was very meaningful and could be easily done with students on a smaller scale. Our county would benefit from changing their professional development style to a more hands on approach that was modeled during this experience. The content was not “one size fits all content areas” like most professional development. It was specific. As a result, each teacher was able to glean so much more from their experience. This creates significant meaning for all teachers because they are able to develop relationships with teachers across the county and get specific ideas for their content area. This is the way professional development was meant to be. If these initiatives are pushed out to all schools, I think we will see a great change in attitudes toward professional development. | | | |

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| **PL 2.3 Interpreting and Using Research Results** | | | |
| **Not Addressed** | **Emergent** | **Operational** | **Fully Operational** |
| The principal and other leaders review professional journals that summarize research instead of actual research or they do not recognize a need for reading and interpreting research when making instructional decisions regarding professional development and school improvement approaches. | The principal and other leaders review educational research. They create opportunities for a few, select teachers to study educational research. They work with them to conduct reviews of research when making instructional decisions regarding the adoption of professional development and school improvement approaches. | The principal and other leaders demonstrate modest skills in interpreting educational research (validity and reliability, matching populations, and interpreting effect-size measures). They create opportunities for teachers to learn to use educational research. They work with them to conduct extensive reviews of research to make informed instructional decisions regarding the adoption of professional development and school improvement approaches. | The principal and other leaders demonstrate advanced skills in determining appropriate research design, interpreting research results, and determining whether results can be generalized. They ensure that teachers and community members learn to use educational research. They work with them to conduct extensive reviews of research to make informed instructional decisions regarding the adoption of professional development and school improvement approaches. |
| EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above –  At this moment, research is not collected and utilized from professional journals. There have been book studies at the school in past, but formal research from journals are not utilized. | | | |
| RECOMMENDATIONS:  The book studies are a great engaging way to have community within the school and learn together. This professional development could be significantly enhanced by incorporating journal articles that are relevant to the reading. In his book Knight states, “Learning activities and reading materials are appropriate for each student’s unique learning needs, and students learn about topics that are relevant to them” (Kindle Locations 2836-2837). This is the same for all teachers when research is relevant and practical, teachers will listen. Integrating journal articles with our book studies that are already in places will move us toward making our professional development more influential and authentic. | | | |

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| **PL 2. 4 Long-Term, In-Depth Professional Learning** | | | |
| **Not Addressed** | **Emergent** | **Operational** | **Fully Operational** |
| Teachers experience single, stand-alone professional development events that are typically large group, workshop designs. There is little if any evidence of implementation or change in practice in classrooms. No emphasis is given to enhancing teachers’ content knowledge or understanding. | Teachers attend multiple workshops on the same topic throughout the year to gain information about new programs or practices. They experiment with the new practices alone and infrequently with limited school-based support for implementation. No emphasis is given to enhancing teachers’ content knowledge or understanding. | Teachers participate in long-term (two- to three-year period), in-depth professional learning that includes a variety of appropriate professional development designs including the use of technology. The various designs are aligned with the intended improvement outcomes. They include but are not limited to follow-up support for implementing new classroom practices (e.g., collaborative lesson design, professional networks, analyzing student work, problem solving sessions, curriculum development, coursework, action research, and classroom observations). Some evidence is present of attention to enhancing teachers’ content knowledge. | Teachers participate in long-term (two- to three-year period), in-depth professional learning that engages learning teams in a variety of appropriate professional development designs including the use of technology. The various designs are aligned with the intended improvement outcomes. They include but are not limited to extensive, follow-up support for implementing new classroom practices (e.g., collaborative lesson design, professional networks, analyzing student work, problem solving sessions, curriculum development, coursework, action research, and coaching with feedback). A major focus of ongoing professional development is a commitment to maintaining and updating all teachers’ knowledge and understanding of the content they are teaching and changes occurring in their field(s). |
| EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above –  Since there is no funding given to our local school for professional development, we are at somewhat of a stand still in this area. The county does provide professional development that has been ongoing in the past, but it has been a couple of years since this has happened. As I have stated earlier, the county is restructuring their professional development by doing academies that meet during the school day, but this is something teachers must apply for. Right now, the word has only been spread through emails, but hopefully it will get more widespread as they continue to create these academies. | | | |
| RECOMMENDATIONS:  These academies being developed by the county are most certainly much more exciting than professional development has ever been before. One incentive that teachers have to participate in this professional development is four days off during the school year to attend these sessions, interact with teachers in similar content areas, and getting hands-on strategies that they can immediately incorporate in their classroom. Because these are so new, the county would benefit from producing visuals to help teachers understand how valuable the experience will be. | | | |

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| **PL 2.5 Alignment of Professional Learning with Expected Outcomes** | | | |
| **Not Addressed** | **Emergent** | **Operational** | **Fully Operational** |
| The principal and other leaders provide single, stand-alone professional development events that are typically large group, workshops with no expectations for implementation of new classroom practices. Generally, activities are not aligned with the school improvement plan or related priorities. | The principal and other leaders provide multiple workshops on the same topic throughout the year. They articulate the learning goal, but do not discuss expectations for implementation. Teachers receive limited school-based support for implementing the new classroom practices. Activities are only generally aligned with the school improvement plan or related priorities. | The principal and other leaders align a variety of professional development designs with expected adult learning outcomes (e.g., collaborative lesson design, professional networks, analyzing student work, problem solving sessions, curriculum development, coursework, action research, and coaching with feedback). The professional learning is long-term (two-to-three-year period) and in-depth with extensive school-based support for the implementation of new practices. They clearly communicate the expectations for implementation by providing rubrics that describe the desired classroom practices and communicate how those practices connect to the school improvement goals. Generally, activities are aligned with major priorities within the school improvement plan. | The principal and other leaders align a variety of professional development designs with expected adult learning outcomes (e.g., collaborative lesson design, professional networks, analyzing student work, problem solving sessions, curriculum development, coursework, action research, and coaching with feedback). They ensure that teams of teachers are engaged in long-term (two-to-three-year period), in-depth professional learning with extensive school-based support for the implementation of new practices. They clearly communicate the expectations for implementation with collaboratively developed rubrics describing desired classroom practices and communicate how those practices connect to the school improvement goals. |
| EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above –  As stated above, professional development frequently occurs in single sessions. These sessions are usually related to our school’s primary goal of increasing the Lexile score of students, so the teachers do know how and when to implement these strategies. The drawback to this professional development is the lack of follow-up. Most of us do implement these strategies and tweak them to tailor the specific needs of our school. | | | |
| RECOMMENDATIONS:  Instead of bringing the presenter back to do follow-up, teachers could discuss recent professional development each month at their monthly content area meeting. In Knight’s book, there is an entire chapter on the failures and frustrations that are a result of traditional professional development. There is a story that recounts the experience of Jean Clark that shows the value of follow-up for teachers. “For Jean Clark, recognizing teachers also provides an opportunity for follow-up and dialogue: ‘If you don’t have the follow-up and you don’t have the opportunity to continually reuse it and talk about it and dialogue about it, it’s not going to stick’” (Kindle Locations 4094-4096). Of course, since the people usually involved with professional development are stretched between all the schools within Cobb County, they are usually unavailable for follow-up. However, when you give teachers the opportunity to talk with one another candidly about the professional development when they are already together it is likely that there will be more implementation and success with the strategies and tools presented. | | | |

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| **PL 2.6 Building Capacity to Use Research Results** | | | |
| **Not Addressed** | **Emergent** | **Operational** | **Fully Operational** |
| Professional development is planned with no regard for research about adult learning needs and individual and organizational change processes. The sessions provided include strategies that do not mirror the instructional strategies teachers are expected to use with students (e.g., lecturing on inquiry method, covering material instead of helping participants to use and internalize it), and sessions are the same for all teachers regardless of their career stage. | Professional development is planned using research about adult learning needs and how individuals experience the change process. The professional development sessions demonstrate classroom practices through videotapes and simulations. The experiences focus on procedural learning - “how to do it”- rather than on developing deep understanding of concepts and problem solving strategies. Some professional development is specialized for new and mentor teachers. | Professional development is planned using research about adult learning needs and individual and organizational change processes. The professional development sessions include modeling and demonstrations of expected classroom practices. The experiences impact teachers’ depth of understanding enabling them to use the new strategies routinely. Some professional development is specialized to reflect career stages of new teachers, mentor teachers, and teacher leaders. | Professional development builds the capacity of the staff to use research about adult learning needs and individual and organizational change processes as they implement new strategies. Professional development sessions consistently employ the same instructional strategies that are expected to be used in their classrooms. The experiences impact teachers’ depth of understanding enabling them to solve problems and adapt new strategies to classroom circumstances. Professional development is differentiated to reflect career stage needs and interests (e.g., mentoring, leading learning teams, coaching, utilizing technology, and curriculum development). |
| EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above –  As I have stated repeatedly in other sections, our school’s professional development stems from whatever the county mandates. These regards are done county wide with little to no regard of the mass amounts of diversity that are represented at each school and level. | | | |
| RECOMMENDATIONS:  Although the county produces professional development sessions in local schools that are very generic, this does not mean the school can not do their own professional development within the building. In each building, teachers have unique talents, tools, and strategies that they implement on a daily basis. It would be most beneficial to learn these things from one another to create a cohesive environment and skills that are tried and true with the students in our building. If these were done once a quarter, this would be most beneficial. It requires no regular commitment that distracts from planning, but ensures that the school is collaborating outside their designated teams. | | | |

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| **PL 2.7 Knowledge about Effective Group Processes** | | | |
| **Not Addressed** | **Emergent** | **Operational** | **Fully Operational** |
| Teachers and administrators lack knowledge about effective group processes and/or work alone, disregarding collective responsibility for student learning. | Teachers and administrators have knowledge of stages of group development and effective interaction skills, but lack skill in group process strategies needed for productive collaborative work. As a result, colleagues work in temporary groups often encountering unresolved conflict or frustration. Technology (e.g., email, chat rooms, and websites) is used to support collegial interactions. | Teachers and administrators have knowledge and skills regarding group processes (e.g., group decision making strategies, stages of group development, effective interaction skills, and conflict resolution) that are necessary to accomplish tasks and satisfy the interpersonal expectations of the participants. As a result, the school culture is characterized by trust, collegiality, and collective responsibility for student learning where colleagues work collaboratively. Technology (e.g., subject area networks, lesson sharing, seminars) is used to support collegial interactions. | Teachers and administrators have knowledge and skills to monitor and improve group processes (e.g., group decision-making strategies, stages of group development, effective interaction skills, and conflict resolution) that are necessary to accomplish tasks and satisfy the interpersonal expectations of the participants. As a result, the school culture is characterized by trust, collegiality, and collective responsibility for student learning where colleagues work collaboratively in established, ongoing learning teams. Technology (e.g., online discussions, web casts, and seminars, educational blogs, listservs, downloadable resources) is used to support collegial interactions and to ensure effective and sustained implementation. |
| EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above –  The teachers at our school are always feeling robbed of their planning. Because of this, we do the minimum amount required when it comes to data teaming and collaborative planning. The county is pushing down many initiatives, such as Microsoft Office 365, that are being mandated. As these tools are being implemented we are beginning to see teachers use technology to collaborate. So far, this has been a refreshing change. Instead of emailing documents back and forth to one another, we have created shared folders to use and organize all of our soft copies. This has made working together and collecting documentation much easier for everyone. | | | |
| RECOMMENDATIONS:  We are beginning to implement technology to help us save time and collaborate. To take a small step in the right direction, it is suggested that we continue to use online tools to allow us to collaborate on our time table and use face-to-face interactions as necessary. It would also be in the school’s best interest to empower teachers by giving them more input on the decision making that happens at the local school level. Currently, there are not many conflict resolution and group strategies in place because there simply aren’t groups involved with making school wide decisions. Delegating certain items and allowing teachers to have ownership over school initiatives would certainly increase morale and attitude amongst the staff. Once these committees are created, then we can begin to create strategies that allow everyone to communicate effectively. | | | |

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| Professional Learning Standard 3 : **The content—the what—of professional learning reinforces educators’ understanding and use of strategies for promoting equity and high expectations for all students, application of research-based teaching strategies and assessment processes, and involvement of families and other stakeholders in promoting student learning.** | | | |
| **PL 3.1 Classroom Practices Reflect an Emotionally and Physically Safe Learning Environment** | | | |
| **Not Addressed** | **Emergent** | **Operational** | **Fully Operational** |
| Classroom practices reflect little or no evidence of teachers’ training in understanding the impact that attitudes regarding race, disabilities, background, culture, high expectations, and social class of both students and teachers have on the teaching and learning process. | Classroom practices of some  teachers reflect evidence of teachers’ training in understanding the impact that attitudes regarding race, disabilities, background, culture, high expectations, and social class of both students and teachers have on the teaching and learning process. | Classroom practices of most teachers reflect skill in communicating high expectations for each student and adjusting classroom activities to meet student needs. Respect for students’ cultures and life experiences is evident through the emotionally and physically safe learning environment where students of diverse backgrounds and experiences are taught the school code of conduct (customs) to help them be successful in the school context. | Classroom practices (e.g., considering interests, backgrounds, strengths, and preferences to provide meaningful, relevant lessons and assess student progress, differentiating instruction, and nurturing student capacity for self-management) of all teachers reflect an emotionally and physically safe environment where respect and appreciation for a diverse population is evident. There are high achievement expectations for all students and teachers. The principal and other leaders provide professional learning for teachers lacking understanding of the impact that attitudes regarding race, disabilities, background, culture, high expectations, and social class of both students and teachers have on the teaching and learning process. |

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| EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above –  Even though the teachers at our school have a wide array of pedagogies, they all put the students first. Each day the classrooms at our school are filled with teachers who are there to teach, motivate, and inspire the students. The students thrive in this atmosphere and the vast majority of our students look forward to being at school each day. Teachers pay careful attention to the students’ individual needs and reach out to parents and counselors at the first sign of an issue.  The teachers are also careful to gather information on a child’s learning needs and use those needs to differentiate instruction on a child-by-child basis. Overall, this has to be our school’s largest strength. From the time a student steps into McCleskey from sixth grade forward, they can rely on their school to do anything possible to help them grow and succeed. |
| RECOMMENDATIONS:  As a school, we would benefit from keeping close relationships with one another and the counselors. Because we are such a small school, it is easy for us to gather information on the children that can help them do their best in the classroom. As long as we continue to work this way, we will remain fully operational in this aspect. |

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| **PL 3.2 Deep Understanding of Subject Matter and Instructional Strategies** | | | |
| **Not Addressed** | **Emergent** | **Operational** | **Fully Operational** |
| Teachers demonstrate superficial knowledge of subject matter and mostly rely on textbooks. They primarily use lecture, seatwork, and discussion as instructional strategies and paper-and-pencil tests for assessment. | Teachers demonstrate breadth of subject matter, but the content they teach is often not aligned with required learning goals (e.g., GPS, district standards). They may use some engaging instructional strategies and a variety of assessment strategies in some contexts; however, most of their instruction is presented in traditional whole-group, teacher-centered fashion. | Teachers exhibit a deep understanding of subject matter, use a variety of appropriate instructional strategies, and use various assessment strategies to monitor student progress toward meeting rigorous and required standards. They plan interdisciplinary units with colleagues and can articulate a rationale for why specific instructional strategies and assessments are appropriate to specific content or objectives. | Teachers exhibit a deep understanding of subject matter; differentiate instruction based on needs, interests, and backgrounds; use a variety of appropriate instructional strategies; and use various assessment strategies (e.g., constructed-response test items, reflective assessments, academic prompts, culminating performance tasks and projects, interviews, rubrics, peer response groups) to monitor student progress toward meeting rigorous standards. They plan interdisciplinary units with colleagues and can articulate a rationale for why specific instructional strategies and assessments are appropriate to specific content or objectives. |

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| EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above –  The teachers do a great job of assessing students both formatively and summative. During class they incorporate formative assessments throughout instruction and can even modify instruction as needed within the class period. These teachers formalize their instruction by using pre-tests and post-tests. Right now, most of these tests are comprised of multiple choice questions that mimic our former state test, the CRCT. |
| RECOMMENDATIONS:  As we continue to ask students to think critically about information, we must adjust our assessments to incorporate these thinking skills. Currently, in the social studies department, we are looking into incorporating more DBQs or Document Based Questions that require students to evaluate historical sources and develop a written argument from them. The DBQ is a test score in its own right; however, we want to begin incorporating more of this style of thinking and reflecting into our normal tests and quizzes. The teachers would be best served experimenting with this process with students throughout this school year, and formalizing it for the next school year. It would be nice to give students a relevant historical document for social studies or comparative writing piece in Language Arts and ask the students to answer a critical question while citing evidence. We are using a writing strategy called R.A.C.E.R. to help guide student writing, now we just need to learn how seamlessly incorporate this into our assessments.  We could also show growth by planning interdisciplinary units with one another. Many times, we might be teaching similar concepts and do not even realize it until the time to plan has passed. Going forward, we would be best served starting small between two content areas experimenting with this then moving to three and finally all four working together for at least one unit. Part of this might be nice to do with the lower level students who will significantly benefit from the consistent overlaps that will undoubtedly occur when interdisciplinary units are incorporated into the school day. |

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| **PL 3.3 Sustained Development of Deep Understanding of Content and Strategies** | | | |
| **Not Addressed** | **Emergent** | **Operational** | **Fully Operational** |
| The principal and other leaders encourage but do not require teachers to participate in district-based professional development opportunities to increase knowledge of content, research-based instructional strategies, and assessments. There is minimal if any evidence of school-based professional development to promote student achievement. They create work schedules that result in teacher isolation and individual practice. | The principal and other leaders emphasize the importance of teachers’ deep understanding of content knowledge, research-based instructional strategies, and assessment strategies. They create work schedules to support collegial interaction and sharing and encourage teachers to participate in district-based professional development focused on content, pedagogy, and assessment. | The principal and other leaders promote teachers’ deep understanding of content knowledge, research-based instructional strategies, and assessment strategies as a high priority. They avoid large-scale trainings that may not address the needs of all participants. They create work schedules to support collegial learning and differentiated professional development focused on content, pedagogy, and assessment. Teacher learning time and application of strategies and assessments is closely monitored. | The principal and other leaders promote the sustained development of teachers’ deep understanding of content knowledge, research-based instructional strategies, and assessment strategies. All professional development activities are purposeful and aligned with specific individual and group needs. They create work schedules to support ***ongoing***, collegial learning and differentiated professional development focused on content, pedagogy, and assessment. Teacher learning time and application of strategies and assessments is closely monitored. |

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| EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above –  The administration at our school does an excellent job of keeping teacher’s schedules free to plan with one another. In this time, we meet informally and go through our lesson plans with our content area teammates. Since we have this time it ensures that each teacher feels included in the planning process and has time to differentiate based off the needs of their classes. Professional learning is mentioned, encouraged, and applauded, but not required by administration. |
| RECOMMENDATIONS:  In order to become fully operational in this category, teachers need to be monitored more closely. Our administration comes in our rooms at least bi-weekly, but they do not give concrete feedback that the teachers crave. Since they will be in the classroom anyway, the teachers and administration would benefit from making a concise template to conduct during these informal walkthroughs. This will better prepare teachers for their formal walkthroughs and assessments and can identify weaknesses and strengths that the teachers have not realized. |

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| **PL 3.4 Partnerships to Support Student Learning** | | | |
| **Not Addressed** | **Emergent** | **Operational** | **Fully Operational** |
| There is no collaboration with parents or the community in developing activities to support learning. Communication through only written correspondence is limited to encouraging parents to attend school functions, yearly conferences, and performances. | There is a school committee to focus on developing community partnerships to support student learning. Communication through written correspondence or phone is about school programs, student progress, and encouraging attendance at school functions, yearly conferences, and performances. | There is a committee that works with families and the community through partnerships that develop programs to support student learning. Strategies are implemented to increase family involvement such as offering suggestions about ways parents can support student learning at home and communicating with families about school programs and student progress (e.g., information about report cards, grading practices, student work, homework, and school events) through a website, phone, email, voice mail, and written correspondence. | Partnerships among teachers, families, and the community are maintained to develop programs that support learning and enhance student skills and talents. Strategies are implemented to increase family involvement such as providing parent education workshops with information on child development and supporting student learning at home and communicating with families about school programs and student progress (e.g., information about report cards, grading practices, (student work, homework, and school events) through an interactive website, phone, email, voice mail and written correspondence. |

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| EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detail evidence supporting your rating above –  In our school, we have several partners in education, but most are not involved in decisions the school makes. The school has a website and sends home news letters occasionally, but the updates are sporadic so parents will look at it on their own terms. When something urgent is happening, there will be a call out.  The primary decision makers for the school are the members of our McCleskey Foundation. The foundation meets together to strategize ways to raise money for the school. Each year we sell foundation shirts, and this year we did our first fun run to raise money for the foundation. |
| RECOMMENDATIONS:  Our school would benefit from having a mass text system, such as, Remind. These go straight to the parents’ phones and are easy to refer back to. Our school would also benefit from extending an invitation to all staff, parents, and partners in education to every meeting. Instead of doing face-to-face workshops, it would be nice for our parent demographic that have an area of the website for them to check in with for this information. This would also prevent teachers from saying the same thing over and over again, and staying late to deliver these workshops. Face-to-face workshops were implemented in the past, but were unsuccessful due to lack of attendance. |

References

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