

Spring Lake Park Learning Community Framework

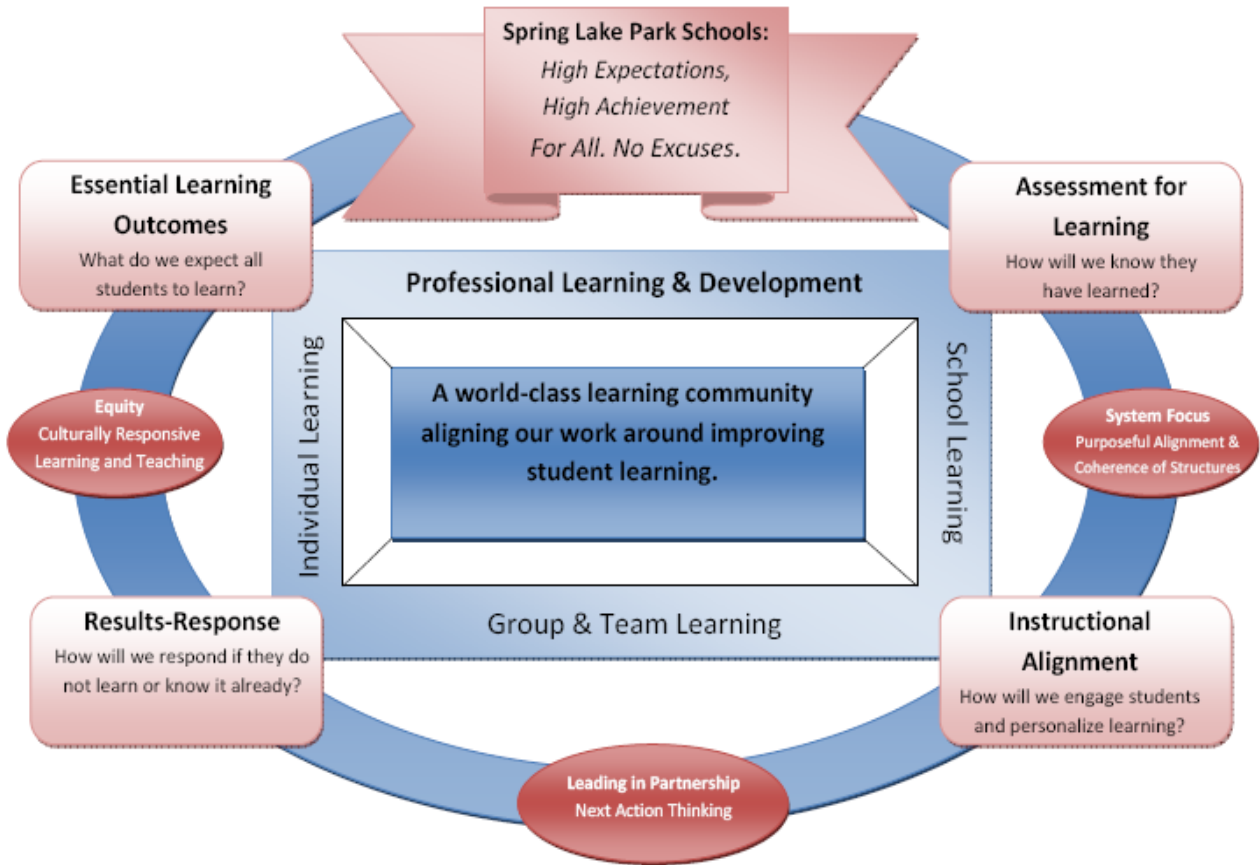


2011-2012



Spring Lake Park Learning Community Framework:

Creating and Sustaining a Professional Learning Community



Learning, Teaching, and Accountability

Spring Lake Park Schools Purpose

***High Expectations,
High Achievement for All.
No Excuses.***

A learning community is not created by completing a series of tasks. It is created by beginning a perpetual process of searching for better ways to fulfill the school's mission, reach its vision, and integrate changes into its regular activities.

Persistence is vital because the drive to improve is not an undertaking that will ever be completed. To become a Professional Learning Community, a district or school needs people who believe they can create a better future and who have the drive to stay the course through adversity.

Bob Eaker

How many effective schools would you have to see to be persuaded of the educability of poor children? If your answer is more than one, then I submit that you have reasons of your own for preferring to believe that basic pupil performance derives from family background instead of school response to family background? We can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us. We already know more than we need to do that. Whether or not we do it must finally depend on how we feel about the fact that we haven't so far.

Dr. Ron Edmonds

The Continuous Systems Improvement Framework was initially developed by the following members of the 2004-2005 Teaching, Learning, and Accountability Advisory Council: Michael Borgendale, Michelle Brooks, Laura Brown, Angela Christen, Kristin Goessel-Seery, Kim Fehringer, Dari Ferguson, Judi Kahoun, Bill Keilty, Susan Leet, Matt Meier, Deb Munter, Jerelyne Nemanich, Mary Ann Wagner, Amanda West, Tom Ambrasas, Mike Callahan, Claudia Hagberg, Erik Hendrickson, Frank Herman, Paula Hoff, Van Jordahl, Tom Larson, Glenn Martin, Jeff Ronneberg, Karen Schaub, Stacey Sovine, Mike Steel.

The plan has been updated each year by our Learning, Teaching and Accountability Advisory Council.

Table of Contents

1.	Spring Lake Park Schools Strategic Framework	3-4
2.	Overview of Continuous Systems Improvement Framework	
	▪ Purpose of Continuous Systems Improvement Framework	5
	▪ Assumptions and beliefs that guide our work	5
	▪ System and key processes overview	6
	▪ Leadership: Roles and Responsibilities	7
3.	Professional Learning Framework	10
	▪ Purpose and Assumptions and Beliefs	10
	▪ Overview of professional learning in Spring Lake Park	11
	○ District-level professional learning	12
	○ School-level professional learning	14
	○ Individual professional learning	15
	▪ Continuous improvement Cycle: Planning & Evaluation Professional Learning	16
	○ Planning professional learning: Key Process Steps	17
	○ Evaluating professional learning	18
	▪ Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning	19
	▪ Wheel of Professional Learning	20
	▪ Continuous improvement and professional learning budget	21
	▪ Teacher induction	21
4.	Curriculum Continuous Improvement Process	22
	▪ Purpose and Assumptions and Beliefs	22
	▪ Overview of curriculum development	23
	▪ Curriculum Continuous Improvement process	24
	▪ Curriculum Improvement Cycle Innovation Configuration	25
	▪ Spring Lake Park Schools Curriculum Formal Review and Development Process	27
	▪ Definitions	28
5.	Assessment Continuous Improvement Process	29
	▪ Purpose and Assumptions and Beliefs	29
	▪ System Overview	30
	▪ Assessment Key Processes	31
	▪ 2009-2010 Assessment Plan	32
	▪ Roles and Responsibilities	33
6.	Personalization Continuous Improvement Process	34
	▪ Purpose and Assumptions and Beliefs	34
	▪ System Overview and Key Processes	34
	▪ Structures and Organizational Support	35
	▪ Roles and Responsibilities	35
7.	Results – Response Continuous Improvement Process	37
	▪ Purpose and Assumptions and Beliefs	37
	▪ Systems, Structure and Organizational Support	37
	▪ Key Processes	38
	▪ Roles and Responsibilities	38
8.	Works Consulted	39
9.	Other Documents	42

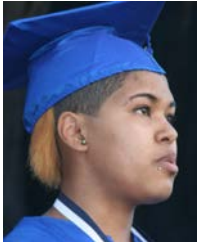


FIRST CLASS. WORLD CLASS.

The Spring Lake Park Way

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

This is the roadmap that the Spring Lake Park School District follows in its continuing—and measurable—focus on success and in its commitment to the needs and emerging needs of all students.



OUR DISTRICT PURPOSE

High Expectations
High Achievement
For all.
No Excuses

OUR DISTRICT VALUES

These values describe how we will work with our learners and each other:



Accountability

- To fulfill one's roles and responsibilities and be responsive to the results.

Courage

- Doing and saying the right thing at the right time in the right way despite challenge, adversity, or conflicting self interests.

Excellence

- A relentless and intentional effort in continuous improvement.

Innovation

- Purposeful, courageous, continuous improvement through research and action.

Integrity

- Always aligning our actions with our values and beliefs.

Learning

- Continuous, meaningful, and challenging effort that results in student success.

Respect

- Listen to, accept, and value each individual in the school district and community.

Shared Responsibility

- Working together interdependently and collaboratively, learning from one another, entrusting one's self interest to another, and taking ownership for our individual and collective actions and decisions.

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

We will be recognized as a World Class Learning Community of Choice aligned around improving student learning.

- We will be a school district which stands apart as the leading choice in the area, one of which our community is proud and actively involved
- We will ensure that all students are valued, inspired, and have a sense of belonging in developing the academic, life and career skills necessary to be college-ready and succeed in the 21st Century
- We will raise our highest levels of learning while narrowing the gap between our highest and lowest achieving students
- We will eliminate race and socio-economics as predictors of which students occupy the highest and lowest levels of learning
- We are recognized as purposeful, results-oriented, open and accessible, and consistently striving for improvement



OUR OVER-ARCHING GOALS FOR ALL PLANNING AND FOR PROVIDING A FOCUS IN MOVING TOWARDS OUR VISION

- We will achieve greater levels of coherence and alignment throughout the system.
- We will proactively position the school district for the future in all planning and decision-making.

OUR STRATEGIC AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

We have defined indicators of success within five strategic areas –or scorecards—that serve as district and school tools of accountability and continuous improvement. Initiatives and projects are identified within each area that will directly or indirectly improve student learning

- **Improving Student Learning and Development** Raise our highest levels of learning while narrowing the gap currently predicted by race and socio-economics
- **Engaged, Enthusiastic Learners** Align the work of adults to continuously improve personalized instruction and responsiveness to meet our students' unique and varied learning needs
- **Equity** Develop systems and school cultures which welcome and engage all people, cultures, and beliefs
- **Effective Operations** Improve our effective management of human, financial, and physical resources
- **Communications and Connections** Increase the connection, engagement, and support of our families and community

Consultation and Structure Needed to Accomplish Our Framework for the Future

Leadership Committees and Councils

*These committees and councils meet to facilitate the work related to **Our Framework for the Future**. This chart purposefully limited the number of committees and councils. Task Forces will be used to respond to needs and support the work of our Leadership Committees. Legally mandated committees will also be meeting in addition to these to fulfill obligations.*

	School Board	District & District Administration	Schools and Departments	Maintaining Focus on Our Roadmap Through Ongoing Collaboration
Roles and Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops Strategic Framework • Develops policy • Approves annual budget • Oversees district performance • Utilizes public engagement • Accountable to the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops the District operational plan • Develops and continuously improves district systems and processes • Develops annual budget • Leading in Partnership, practicing and developing leadership and management best practices • Facilitates the implementation of a learning organization developing a professional community of learners • Facilitates District and school improvement planning and performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops School Continuous Improvement Plan, aligned with district operational plan • Develops and continuously improves school/department level systems and processes • Develops annual school/department budget • Practicing and developing leadership and management best practices • Fosters shared responsibility and best practices consistent with being a Professional Learning Community 	<p><i>PLC Teams and Collaborative Teams meet because the members have a similar role &/or hold a shared responsibility, and come together to learn from one another and enhance the way they do their work. Below is a sample of some of these teams.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Professional Learning Community Teams <i>Examples: 4th grade at Westwood Elementary or English 9 teachers</i>
Committees and Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Framework Advisory Council • Systems Improvement Advisory Council • Policy development • Negotiations • Panther Foundation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet • Learning, Teaching, and Accountability Advisory Council (LTA Advisory Council) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committees and task forces whose work aligns with the work of the LTA Advisory Council ---PreK-12 Assessment Committee ---Student Support Committee ---Curriculum Task Forces ---Innovation Cohorts • Communications & Connections Advisory Council • Parent and Community Advisories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Examples:</i> ---Gifted & Talented ---Special Education ---Athletics ---Early Childhood Family Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Learning and Equity Teams (<i>Aligned with LTA Advisory Committee</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ---Staff, administration, students and community as appropriate • School Operations Committee • PTAs and PACs <p><i>Task Forces initiated as needed to complete tasks and/or studies on a short-term basis.</i></p> <p><i>School advisory committees operate primarily in phases A, B, D, and E of the decision-making framework. The principal or appropriate choice-maker is engaged in all phases, but primarily phase C.</i></p> <p><i>Schools may have other standing committees or task forces as deemed necessary at their school.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal Meetings (<i>Principal meeting once/month, Teaching and Learning once/month</i>) • District Leadership Team • Innovation Cohorts • Gifted Services Coordinators • Curriculum Leads meetings • EL Department meetings • Continuous Improvement Coaches meetings • Learning, Teaching and Accountability Leadership Team meetings • Study Groups in schools • Classroom Walkthroughs and Instructional Rounds

Spring Lake Park Learning Community Framework: *Creating and Sustaining a Professional Learning Community* Spring Lake Park Schools



Purpose of the Spring Lake Park Learning Community Framework

The Spring Lake Park School District takes pride in our consistent pursuit of ensuring *High Achievement for All* by creating and sustaining a professional learning community throughout our district. This is accomplished by meaningfully aligning the professional work of our staff around student learning, which results in integrating professional learning with the key processes related to curriculum, instruction, assessment, and continuous

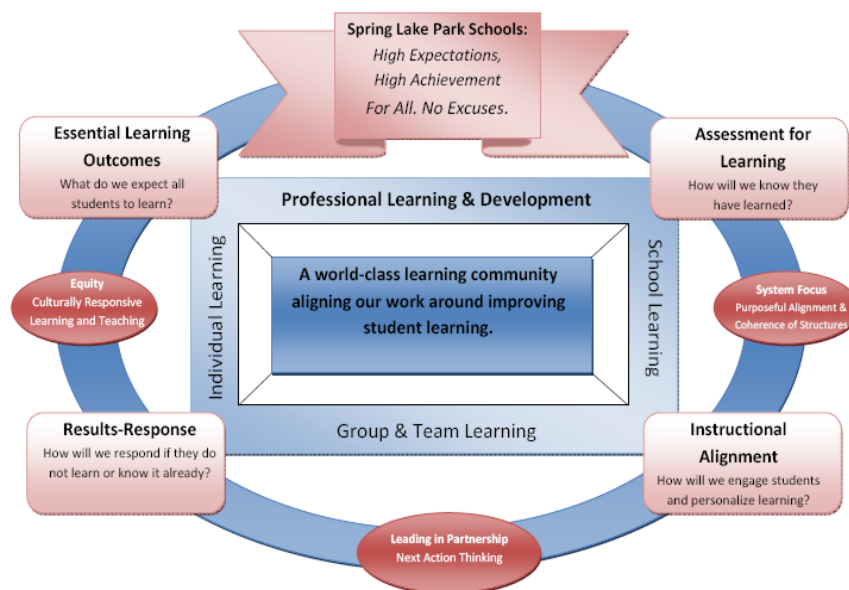
Assumptions and Beliefs that Guide Our Work

- All students can and will learn. Maximum student achievement can be ensured by establishing high expectations for all students, clearly identifying essential learning outcomes, providing educational experiences at the appropriate level of challenge, and appropriately responding to indicators of performance as a result of formative assessment of student learning (Black, et al, 2004; Stiggins, et al, 2004; Wiggins, G. and McTighe, J., 2004, Tomlinson, C., 2003, 2004; Marzano, R., 2001, 2003).
- Ongoing, embedded professional learning is central to school improvement and student success. This professional learning must be results-based and begin with a clear focus on learning and learners, aligning with student learning needs and providing staff with time and ongoing support to effectively respond to student needs (Standards for Professional Learning, Learning Forward 2011).
- Collaboration and time for staff to work together is essential if all students are to be successful. Improvements in student learning have never been observed in the absence of professional development (Guskey, T., 2000, 2003, 2004). Time for teachers and staff to engage in conversations and planning through job-embedded professional learning, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), will be formally scheduled in each of our schools.
- Change is a natural, dynamic, and recurring process that is essential in a learning environment. Successful schools in the future will adapt to new situations and respond to changing environments. This is accomplished in Spring Lake Park by encouraging and facilitating innovation, and ensuring that individual and organizational processes, needs, and concerns are appropriately addressed (Hargreaves, 2004; Hord and Hall, 1987)
- Highly effective, distributed leadership is essential to student success and creating and sustaining a professional learning community. (DuFour, etc.) We will engage in purposeful leadership development and provide support to our formal and informal leaders.
- We are an organization based on standards and evidence-based best practices. These standards and practices guide planning for professional learning, curriculum development, and assessment planning.
- We will use a backwards design model to guide planning for professional learning and curriculum development. Beginning with the end in mind leads to effective planning, successful implementation, and a continuous improvement focus (Guskey, 2000, Wiggins & McTighe, etc.).
- We are committed to continuous improvement and a results-oriented and systems focus implicit in all practices. We must provide effective and efficient use of data to guide decision-making in all aspects of our district (Fullan, M., 2004; Lezotte, L., 2002; Reeves, D., 2004; Schmoker, M., 2002).
- We are a school district that stands apart from the others, one of which our community is proud, actively involved, and has made a choice to work and learn
- Next Action Thinking: Asking, "What's the best next action?" as a fundamental and consistently asked question. No meeting or discussion will end without a clear understanding of whether some action is needed. Deep understanding and clarity regarding assumptions are of limited value unless they are followed by commitments to take action and an interpersonal accountability for completing them (Sparks, 2005).



Spring Lake Park Learning Community Framework: System and Key Process Overview

A system is a collection of parts that interact to function as a whole. A successful system interacts and operates interdependently and cannot be divided into separate parts. We recognize that each of the key processes, represented in the rectangles, within our *Spring Lake Park Learning Community Framework* (see Figure 1) are interdependent and must function effectively and efficiently so that teachers and staff are supported in their work as a *Learning Community*. In addition, each of the ovals in the figure represents a foundational base of core beliefs and practices that need to be fostered and sustained by administrative and teacher leaders at the school and district-level. Finally, at the foundation of our system is ongoing professional learning. At the center of this work is our focus as a learning community, aligning our work around improving student learning.



Professional Learning: Providing the connection among the four key processes

Ongoing, embedded professional learning is central to school improvement and student success. It provides the foundation that connects the four key processes of a professional learning community, as indicated in the diagram below. As members of a PLC (at the school or team level) answer each of the key questions above, they also ask: *What do we need to know and be able to do?* This professional learning must be results-based and begin with a clear focus on learning and adult learners, aligning with student learning needs and providing staff with time and ongoing support to effectively respond to student needs. Embedded within this process is the *School-level Continuous Improvement Planning Cycle*. Our practices throughout this process are guided by Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning.

Key Processes: Essential Learning Outcomes, Assessment for Learning, Instructional Alignment, and Response

There are four key questions that all members of a learning community focus on. These guiding questions, shown in the figure above as well as below, drive our day to day work at a system, school, team, and classroom level, resulting in the ongoing creation of a learning community focused on improving student learning. *The effective integration of these key processes results in a viable, aligned curriculum.* A viable curriculum purposefully aligns the *intended curriculum*, *assessed curriculum*, and *taught/learned curriculum*. This requires consistency and articulation in delivery up the grade levels and across a grade level or course, as well as flexibility in how teachers are able to adapt the curriculum to meet the varying needs of their students.

1. Essential Learning Outcomes: *What do we expect all students to learn?*

This is the *intended curriculum*. Through this process the Essential Learning Outcomes that students will achieve at each grade level are identified at the district level through the curriculum development process. Spring Lake Park graduate expectations guide this backwards design. State standards, national standards, and local practices drive decision-making, development, and revision.

2. Assessment for Learning: *How will we know they have learned?*

This is the *assessed curriculum*. Assessments, formative and summative, are designed to measure student learning of our intended curriculum. The results of these assessments are used to involve students in their learning and differentiate instruction to meet student needs.

3. Instructional Alignment: *How will we engage students and personalize learning?*

This is the *taught/learned curriculum*. The intended curriculum provides the learning targets that are taught in the classroom. Teachers use these learning targets to collaboratively and individually develop assessments and instructional plans to appropriately respond to student needs. Time is formally scheduled so that PLC Teams and other teams can engage in ongoing conversations to ensure articulation of the curriculum.

4. Results-Response: *How will we respond if they do not learn or know it already?*

In a learning community there are a variety of ways that student needs are responded to. Each school has a System of Interventions to support teachers so that they are not working on their own, in isolation, in responding to the learning needs of their students. District departments such as Basic Skills, English Language Learners, Gifted and Talented, and Special Education integrate services to meet the needs of our students and support staff.

Leadership: Roles and Responsibilities

These committees and councils meet to facilitate work related to the district Strategic Framework for the Future (pp. 3-4), as well as engage in the day to day continuous improvement planning throughout the district. The number of committees and councils was purposefully limited as part of the development of the Strategic Framework for the Future. Task Forces will be used as needed to respond to needs and support the work of our Leadership Committees. A description of the roles and purpose of the School Board, district and district administration, and schools and departments can also be found in the Strategic Framework for the Future.

Committees and Councils

Learning, Teaching, and Accountability Advisory Council (LTA Advisory Council)

This Advisory Council provides system-wide leadership and coordination of processes and procedures related to professional learning, curriculum and instruction, assessment, and school and organizational improvement planning. The Council meets throughout the year to engage in planning and provide site-level support in the above areas. Members of the LTA Advisory Council receive ongoing training, including the opportunity to attend regional and national conferences regarding exemplary practices related to professional learning, curriculum, assessment, leadership and continuous improvement. They also sit on school-level Learning and Equity Teams, providing leadership at the school level. *Facilitator: Denise Waalen and Jeff Ronneberg (Jennifer Kunze, Jerelyne Nemanich)*
Membership includes, but is not limited to:

- teachers from each K-3 school (3)
- Westwood Intermediate teachers (2)
- Westwood Middle School teachers (2)
- SLP High School teachers (2)
- Learning Alternatives teacher (1)
- Early Childhood teacher (1)
- special education teacher (at least 1)
- support staff representative
- Assessment and Inst. Tech. Coordinator
- Coordinator of Teaching and Learning
- Continuous Improvement Coaches (teachers)
- Principals & Director of SLP Learning Alternatives
- Gifted and Talented Coordinators (TOSAs)
- Director of Special Education
- Coordinator Equity and Federal Funds
- Early Childhood Coordinator
- Parent and/or community representative

Learning and Equity Teams (School-level)

These teams facilitate building-level processes and procedures related to school improvement planning, professional learning design and delivery, the work of PLC Teams, curriculum and instructional alignment, and assessment. The work of these teams aligns with the LTA Advisory Council. The principal and LTA Advisory Council member(s) from each school are responsible for facilitating the direction of the Learning and Equity Teams. Membership and meeting times are determined at each building. *Facilitator: Principal and/or designee*

Grade-level/Department Professional Learning Community Teams

All teachers in the Spring Lake Park Schools participate in a PLC Team on a weekly basis at a minimum. This time is embedded within the context of the school day, and involves teachers implementing job-embedded professional learning processes focused on improving student learning through the continued investigation of the following questions: 1. What do we expect all students to learn; 2. How will we know the have learned the essential learning outcomes?; 3. How will we engage students and personalize learning; and 4. How will we respond when, despite our best efforts, a student experiences difficulty in learning, or deepen the learning for students who are exceeding expectations? As members of a PLC Team focus on each of the key questions, they also ask: *What do we need to know and be able to do so we are able to collectively clarify student expectations, assess progress, design effective learning experiences, and respond to student needs effectively?*

The embedded professional learning processes implemented by PLC Teams may include, but are not limited to, any or all of the following: setting SMART goals, developing common assessments, examining student work, and lesson study. School principals and school LETs will identify the work of PLC Teams throughout the building, and align their work with school-wide goals identified through the continuous improvement planning process.

Vertical Teams

Teachers may participate in vertical teams on a periodic basis. This will involve vertical teams within a building, such as grades K-3, or across buildings. Vertical teams meet to engage teachers in ongoing dialogue to reveal gaps and overlaps in the implementation of curriculum and/or to identify program strengths and weaknesses.

Systems Improvement Advisory Council (SIAC)

The Systems Improvement Advisory Council serves to convey community beliefs and opinions as they relate to continuous improvement efforts, and teaching, learning, and accountability issues in the Spring Lake Park Schools. Members serve as a sounding board for the community and gain knowledge about curriculum, professional learning efforts, and instructional programs and assessments of and for learning being implemented in classrooms throughout the district. The committee is composed of parents, students, teachers, administrators, and community members. *Facilitator: Denise Waalen and/or designee*

Student Support Committee

The Student Support Committee meets regularly to ensure alignment and appropriate integration of our student support services. These include the following: English Language Learners Services, Special Education, and Title I/Basic Skills. Counseling, social work, and other services are included as appropriate.

Facilitators: Carlyne Zieske Tom Ambrasas

PreK-12 Assessment Committee

The PreK-12 Assessment Committee will meet on a periodic basis to assess the fit and relevance of our current assessment practices, identifying areas for improvement and necessary alignment with other practices in the district. Members of the PreK-12 Assessment Committee will develop recommendations to present to the Assistant Superintendent and LTA Advisory Council. *Facilitator: Jerelyne Nemanich*

Curriculum Task Forces

Curriculum task forces are formed to research best practices, study current district practices, identify essential learning outcomes, and engage in formative review of curriculum effectiveness. Curriculum is developed through a process of backward design and integrates assessments of and for learning in our day to day practices. The details of this process are explained in the *Curriculum Development, Instructional Alignment, and Assessment Framework*. Membership is based on the curriculum under review, with teachers representing all grade levels and/or departments.

Facilitators: Denise Waalen, Jennifer Kunze and/or designee

A K-12 task force may comprise, as appropriate:

- Elementary teachers (curriculum leads and others - at least one per building with all grade levels represented)
- Secondary teachers (curriculum leads and other(s) - at least two per department in each building)
- Learning Alternatives teacher
- ECFE teacher
- Student services: Special Education, Title I, English Language Learners, Gifted and Talented
- Instructional Technology Coordinator (as needed)

Professional Learning Task Forces

Professional learning task forces are formed to identify best practices related to context, process, and content for initiatives in the planning stages. In addition, task forces may be formed to evaluate professional learning initiatives, conduct planning related to the Professional Learning and Development Academy. The work of the task forces will be presented to the LTA Advisory Council to ensure alignment with district-wide directions.

Continuous Improvement Coaches

Continuous Improvement Coaches, who have been hired at each building, strive to increase student achievement by working in partnership with their principals and teacher leader colleagues to lead and enact both district and school initiatives at their site. The job-embedded professional learning carried out by the Continuous Improvement Coaches, or "CICs," is aligned with the Continuous Systems Improvement Framework. The CICs meet bi-weekly, or more when needed, with the Teaching and Learning Coordinator, to share dialogue about the content, context, and processes of the professional learning they are implementing. This team also regularly studies issues related to high quality, effective instruction, and helps plan for and conduct the district's annual professional learning evaluation.

Facilitators: Jennifer Kunze

Leadership Roles

The individuals who fill the following roles provide leadership and support at the district and school-levels, and work collectively to facilitate all aspects of the Learning Community Framework.

- *Teacher Leaders*

- LTA Advisory Council members

The Learning Teaching Advisory member work is in collaboration with other members of the LTA to improve student learning by facilitating a system that results in all staff being engaged in high quality, ongoing professional learning that is integrated with the Continuous Systems Improvement Framework.

- Curriculum Leads

The curriculum lead provides leadership to ensure that the essential learning outcomes and the instructional program in their content area is aligned, coherent, and implemented to address student needs effectively.

- Continuous Improvement Coaches

The Continuous Improvement Coach will facilitate school, team and teacher professional learning and continuous improvement processes aligned with district initiatives in partnership with the principal to improve student learning.

- 21st Century Fluency Leads

The 21st Century Fluency Lead provides leadership to ensure that the 21st Century Fluencies are embedded in the essential learning outcomes and integrated into instruction

- School Learning and Equity Team members

Learning Equity Team members lead in partnership within the school level Professional Learning Community to facilitate school improvement planning and professional learning to improve student learning.

- *Coordinator of Learning and Teaching*
- *PreK-12 Assessment and Inst. Tech. Coordinator*
- *Equity & Federal Funds Coordinator*
- *Gifted and Talented Coordinators*
- *Director and Coordinator of Human Resources*
- *Principals & Assistant Principals*
- *Director of Educational Services*
- *Superintendent*



Professional Learning Framework Spring Lake Park Schools

Purpose of Professional Learning

The purpose of professional learning in the Spring Lake Park Schools is to continuously enhance the learning of all students by engaging all staff in ongoing learning and support that continuously and collaboratively develops their knowledge and skills.

Professional learning is essential to accomplishing high achievement for all students. Spring Lake Park School's Learning Community Framework purposefully integrates professional learning with the continuous improvement planning process at the school and PLC Team level, as well as within our practices related to curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Assumptions and Beliefs that Guide Our Work

In alignment with the Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning and definition of professional learning, professional learning in the Spring Lake Park Schools:

- creates and sustains a Learning Organization focused on student and staff learning throughout the district, fostering a norm of continuous improvement in the daily work of each school and all staff;
- is results-based, using a backwards planning model that ensures coherent, sustained and evidence-based professional learning strategies beginning with a clear focus on student learning;
- provides ongoing, long-term focus and support to ensure improvement, is job-embedded in nature, and provides for staff to learn and work together several times each week;
- aligns with the school's and district's strategic framework and continuous improvement goals;
- recognizes that change is dynamic and is an individual and organizational process that must be planned effectively to meet the varying needs of staff;
- is data-driven, evaluated for effectiveness beyond staff satisfaction, using multiple sources of information to identify evidence of success in student learning. This takes place on a regular basis so that plans can be adjusted to meet the learning needs of students and staff.

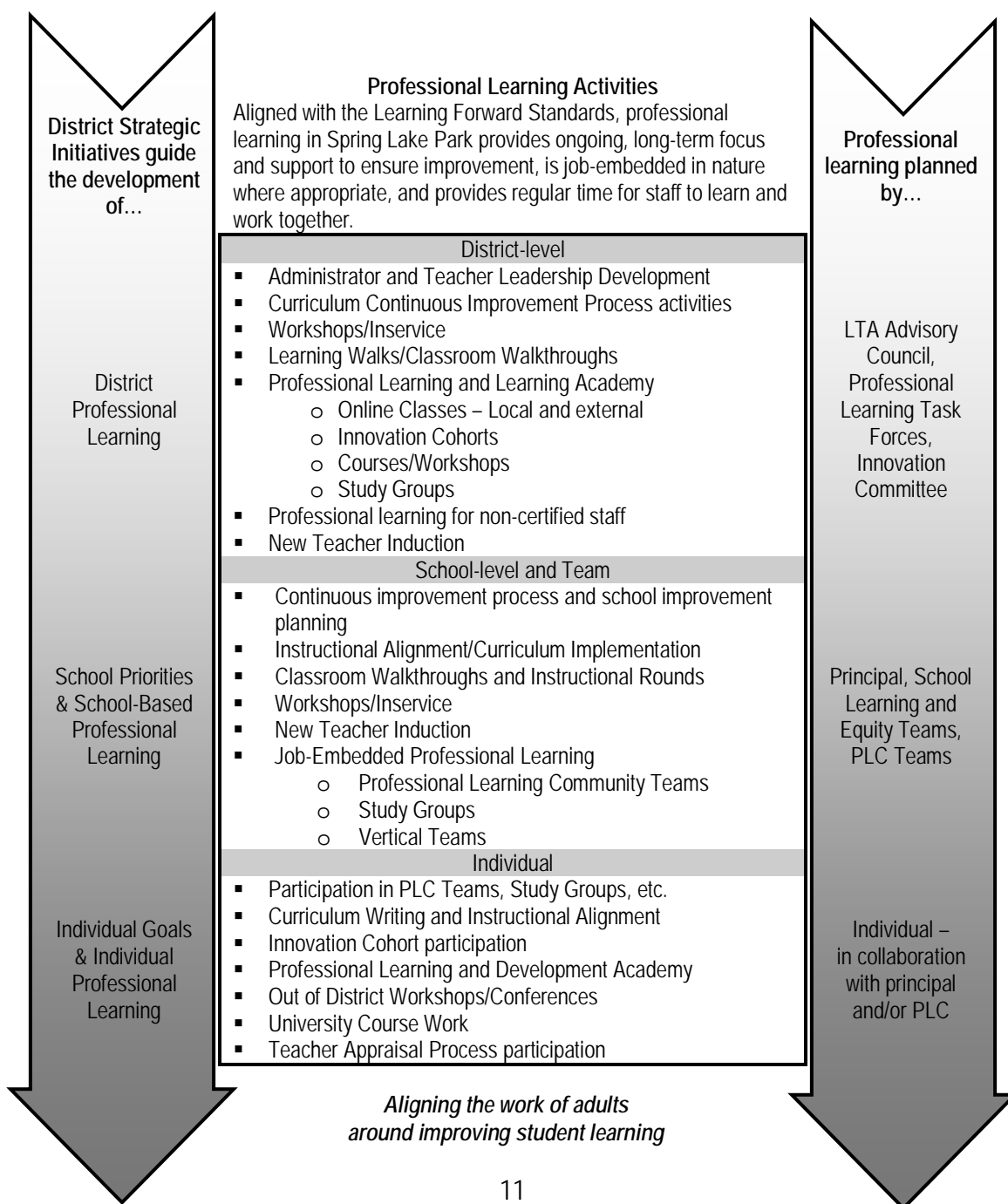


Overview of Professional Learning in Spring Lake Park

In Spring Lake Park, professional learning is at the core of school improvement. All learning is aligned with the district strategic framework and school continuous improvement priorities. Professional learning takes place at three levels: a) District-level; b) School-level and PLC Teams; and c) Individually.

The design of Spring Lake Park professional learning at the district-level is based on student learning needs, curriculum development and implementation schedules, emerging evidence-based practices, and information gathered from staff. Staff and administrative leaders involved on the LTA Advisory Council play a critical role in determining the effectiveness of improvement and professional learning initiatives. They work together to plan and assess professional learning, and to provide embedded, structured time to ensure effective professional learning takes place.

At the school-level, principals and teachers identify improvement needs and align professional learning to these needs. In addition, all teachers participate in collaborative teams, or professional learning communities, on a weekly basis at minimum, to engage in collective, embedded professional learning that includes activities such as goal setting, instructional alignment of curriculum, and development and study of common, formative student assessment data.





District Level Professional Learning

Results-driven, high quality professional learning activities, as well as appropriate evaluation and follow-up activities are essential if we are to be successful in responding to and meeting student learning needs. Increased student learning is the focus of Spring Lake Park's Continuous Systems Improvement Framework, consequently all professional learning activities are planned to support all staff in improving student learning. The assumptions and beliefs stated earlier guide district-level professional learning planning.

Leadership Development

Effective leadership is essential to the success of any organization. Principals and teacher leaders lead continuous improvement efforts and provide the ongoing follow up and staff support necessary to ensure implementation of curriculum, improvement initiatives, and aligned professional learning activities. Developing the leadership capacity to accomplish this effectively throughout our system is a central aspect of the Spring Lake Park Schools professional learning focus. Therefore, administrators and teacher leaders throughout the district are involved in ongoing professional learning activities to enhance their knowledge and skills related to leadership and facilitation.

These professional learning activities occur on a regular basis, and involve a variety of professional learning processes embedded within our work to meet our leaders' various needs, such as participation in ongoing workshops/courses and study groups. This leadership development includes district support of membership and active involvement in relevant professional organizations.

Professional Learning for Certified Staff

Curriculum Continuous Improvement Process

Teachers and administrators are involved in the curriculum continuous improvement process. This process involves a study of current practices within Spring Lake Park and benchmark districts, and a review of evidence-based best practices. Teachers are encouraged to participate in this professional learning opportunity. More information about this process can be found in the *Curriculum Continuous Improvement Framework*. In addition, teachers and administrators have the opportunity to participate in classroom walkthroughs to assess the implementation of curriculum and identify professional learning needs.

Workshops/Inservice

The district provides district-wide professional learning on topics identified through curriculum development; staff needs assessment, and our continuous improvement planning and evaluation process. These inservices may occur on non-student contact days scheduled throughout the year in the district calendar, or involve teachers having the opportunity to be released from the classroom or attend workshops after-school, in the summer, etc.

Innovation Cohorts

Innovation Cohorts are developed to provide teachers with intensive, ongoing professional learning on topics that: 1. are currently being introduced or implemented as district-wide initiatives; 2. an innovation that has been identified by a large number of staff as a high interest area or need through the annual needs assessment; and/or 3. is an emerging best practice that may be implemented as a district initiative in the future.

Learning Walks

The superintendent and director of educational services conduct learning walks in one or two schools on a weekly basis. All administrators will participate in learning walks/classroom walkthroughs to learn how other schools throughout the district have moved district-wide or school-based initiatives forward, and "share the wealth" of one another's learning throughout the district.

Classroom Walkthroughs and Instructional Rounds

Instructional leaders, both administrators and teachers, participate in classroom walkthroughs and instructional rounds on a regular basis. Walkthroughs may be short visits, five to fifteen minutes conducted by an individual, to classrooms that provide a snapshot of student engagement, classroom environments, professional learning and resource needs, and the levels of use of initiatives being implemented. Instructional Rounds are similar to walkthroughs in nature, but are conducted by a team with reflective conversation following the rounds. Each may involve a longer visit in the classroom as appropriate. Teachers can also request to participate in instructional rounds as a personal professional learning experience.



Professional Development and Learning Academy (PDLA)

The Professional Development and Learning Academy will provide staff throughout the district with a variety of learning opportunities that align with district strategic initiatives and projects. In addition, we will provide learning opportunities on topics identified by staff as a need or interest area. A professional learning task force will plan these opportunities each spring/summer for the following year, and revise this throughout the year to meet emerging needs. All opportunities will reflect best practice in professional learning processes, providing ongoing focus and support. These opportunities may include, but are not limited to the following:

Online Classes – Local and external

It is always a challenge to get all staff who are interested in a learning opportunity together at the same time, restricting participation for some. In order to meet the varying needs and time demands of staff, online classes will be made available for staff in areas identified through the district-wide professional learning planning process. In addition, online classes may be developed to support staff in the implementation of curriculum initiatives.

Innovation Cohorts

Innovation cohorts involve a cohort of staff participating in an ongoing study of a district initiative that is currently being implemented, will be implemented in the future, or is an emerging best practice being considered as an initiative in the future. The purpose of innovation cohorts is to provide an ongoing, intensive professional learning experience for staff to build their individual and collective capacity for successful implementation, to build their capacity as possible leaders at their respective building or department, and to identify appropriate professional learning strategies that may or may not be effective to support all staff in the future.

Courses

Staff members will have opportunities to participate in courses that are developed after being identified through the district-wide professional learning planning process and may also be developed to support staff in the implementation of curriculum initiatives. These courses will be taught by internal staff and/or external staff as appropriate, and will be offered after-school and in the summer. Spring Lake Park staff may propose courses that they would like to see offered, or would like to teach, and that align with district-wide professional learning goals to the LTA Advisory.

Study Groups and other collaborative learning opportunities

Staff members will have opportunities to participate in study groups that are developed after being identified through the district-wide professional learning planning process. These study groups will be facilitated by internal staff whenever possible. Spring Lake Park staff may propose funding for study groups they would like to form to the LTA Advisory through the professional learning planning process.

Professional Learning for Non-Certified Staff

Non-certified staff are essential members of the Spring Lake Park Schools and are instrumental in influencing student learning. Professional learning opportunities will be identified and made available to non-certified staff on an annual basis through PDLA and other opportunities. Professional learning processes similar to those identified above will be implemented as appropriate.

New Teacher Induction

A comprehensive program of teacher induction is in place for teachers new to the Spring Lake Park Schools, and is a program we are continuously striving to improve. This induction program will involve training prior to the start of school, as well as mentoring and ongoing support throughout the school year. The **Coordinator of Human Resources** facilitates this process, and works with a team of experienced teachers from throughout the district in planning and leading the induction experience.



School-Based Professional Learning

Professional learning is facilitated at the school-level by the principal and Learning and Equity Team (LET). Principals are the school instructional leaders who assist in and monitor curriculum implementation and professional learning activities at the school level. They work in collaboration with the LET and continuous improvement coaches to ensure the identification of school-wide improvement priorities, support staff in meeting these priorities through professional learning, as well as provide direction and support to all teachers as they work in their professional learning community teams to improve student learning.

Each school's professional learning plan is embedded within their continuous improvement plan implemented by the school Learning and Equity Team. This team, along with the principal, facilitates the assessment of student learning needs, current school-wide needs, and examines the district Strategic Plan and District Operational Plan to determine priorities for improvement. Appropriate professional learning activities are developed by the LET to assist teachers in meeting the school-wide priorities. Finally, the LET assesses the effectiveness of these professional learning activities using the evaluation model described later in this framework.

Professional learning that has high levels of learning for all students and staff as a central goal must create structures that embed professional learning within the systems and culture of the school so that it is not one more thing we do, but defines how we do our work. Professional learning activities at the school-level:

- are school-based and job-embedded with collaborative activities geared towards improving student learning;
- are ongoing with a long-term focus;
- are adjusted to meet staff and student needs based on ongoing evaluation; and
- are supported by multiple resources and organizational structures; and

Professional learning activities at the school level may include, but will not be limited to, the following:

Continuous Improvement Planning at the School-Level

- School-level improvement priorities, projects, and professional learning activities will be continuously reviewed and refined to meet current needs.
- School-level professional learning evaluation is planned in conjunction with planning and will be completed annually to inform revisions to the ongoing plan.
- *School-level improvement goals and professional learning plans, as well as summative evaluations of previous year progress, will be shared with the School Board annually.*
- *Formative evaluations will not need to be reported to the district office or School Board, but will be shared at LTA Advisory Council meetings as schools share progress and provide support to one another in their improvement efforts.*

Job-Embedded Professional Learning

Professional Learning Community Teams (PLC Teams)

All teachers in the Spring Lake Park Schools participate in a PLC Team on a weekly basis at a minimum. This time is embedded within the context of the school day, and involves teachers implementing job-embedded professional learning processes focused on improving student learning through the continued investigation of the following questions: 1. What do we expect all students to learn; 2. How will we know they have learned the essential learning outcomes?; 3. How will we engage students and personalize learning; and 4. How will we respond when, despite our best efforts, a student experiences difficulty in learning, or deepen the learning for students who are exceeding expectations? As members of a PLC Team focus on each of the key questions, they also ask: *What do we need to know and be able to do so we are able to collectively clarify student expectations, assess progress, design effective learning experiences, and respond to student needs effectively?*

The embedded professional learning processes implemented by PLCs may include, but are not limited to, any or all of the following: setting SMART goals, developing common assessments, examining student work, and lesson study. School principals and school LETs will identify the work of PLCs throughout the building, and align their work with school-wide goals identified through the continuous improvement planning process.

Vertical Teams

Teachers may participate in vertical teams on a periodic basis. This will involve vertical teams within a building. Vertical teams meet to engage teachers in ongoing dialogue to reveal gaps and overlaps in the implementation of curriculum and/or to identify program strengths and weaknesses.



Instructional Alignment/Curriculum Implementation

Principals are the school instructional leaders who assist in and monitor curriculum implementation and professional learning activities at the school level. They work in collaboration with the LET, curriculum leads, and district curriculum coordinators to support staff in implementing the district Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs). Curriculum implementation must be an ongoing conversation at the school level so that any variation between the taught curriculum and intended curriculum is revealed and acknowledged, and revisions to the ELOs are made as appropriate. The school professional learning plan must include how the principal and LET will facilitate and support staff in their ongoing efforts to map and revise the curriculum to meet student needs.

Classroom Walkthroughs and Instructional Rounds Copy from the other

Walkthroughs are short visits to classrooms that provide a snapshot of classroom environments, professional learning and resource needs, and the levels of use of initiatives being implemented within the school. The purpose is to view the entire school, serving as a catalyst to school-wide dialogue, not to evaluate individual teachers. Teachers may participate in walkthroughs as a personal professional learning experience or as part of a school-wide or PLC Team process.

Study Groups and other collaborative learning opportunities

Staff members will have opportunities to participate in study groups that are developed after being identified through the school continuous improvement planning process. These study groups, or other protocols such as examining student work, lesson study, etc. will be facilitated by internal staff whenever possible.

Workshops/Inservice

The goal of professional learning at the school is to provide time for the staff to implement the curricular and instructional goals of their school continuous improvement plan. Workshop/inservice days will be set aside for the school to identify effective professional learning activities that will facilitate professional learning and support staff in accomplishing school-wide goals.

Individual Staff Learning

Each educator in the Spring Lake Park Schools is encouraged to engage in individual professional learning. This individual plan may encompass involvement in, but not be limited to, the following activities:

Curriculum Development

Teachers and administrators are involved in the curriculum development process. This process involves a study of current practices within Spring Lake Park and benchmark districts, and a review of evidence-based best practices. Teachers are encouraged to participate in this professional learning opportunity.

Innovation Cohort participation

Innovation cohorts involve a cohort of staff participating in an ongoing study of a district initiative that is currently being implemented, will be implemented in the future, or an emerging best practice being considered as an initiative in the future. The purpose of innovation cohorts is to provide an ongoing, intensive professional learning experience for staff while supporting their individual implementation.

Professional Development and Learning Academy

The Professional Development and Learning Academy will provide staff throughout the district with a variety of learning opportunities that align with district strategic directions and initiatives, professional learning improvement initiatives, and emerging best practices. In addition, we will provide learning opportunities on topics identified by staff as a need or interest area.

Out of District Workshops/Conferences

There are many valuable conferences and workshops that are held outside of the district. Teachers have the opportunity to attend these conferences by submitting their requests to their building TLT, and demonstrating how it shows a connection to school-wide goals and initiatives, and will have an impact on student learning.

University Course Work

The school district strongly encourages staff pursuit of graduate coursework. Whenever possible, the district will seek a partnership with local universities to offer graduate credit for online courses or traditional courses developed and offered locally.



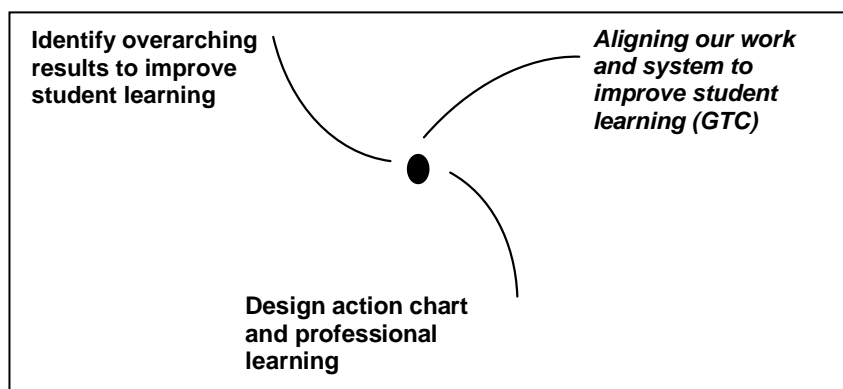
Continuous Improvement Cycle: Planning and Evaluating Professional Learning

The planning and design of Spring Lake Park School's professional learning is aligned with the Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning. It provides a cycle of improvement that focuses on effective planning and evaluation of improvement efforts and professional learning. The process utilized at the district and school level will follow the steps outlined below and on the following pages.

Effectively planning and evaluating professional learning ensures that we are able to align the work of the adults throughout our system while encouraging and supporting new and experienced educators in their continuous effort to improve instruction, implement curriculum effectively, and appropriately respond to student learning needs. Effective evaluation informs decision-making, demonstrates evidence of success, and allows us to make appropriate revisions to meet student and staff needs.

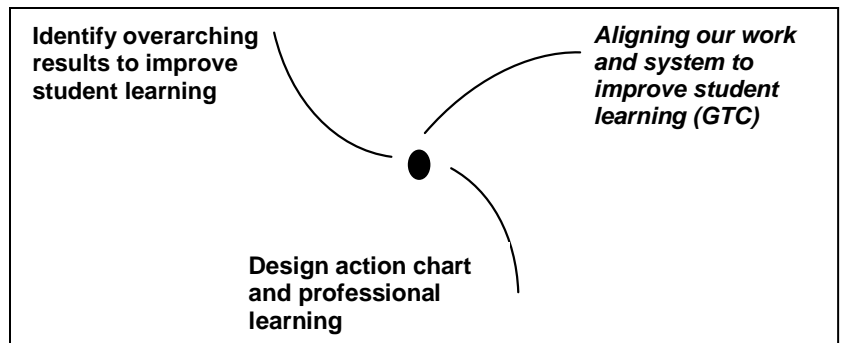
School and district leaders, both administrative and teacher, play an important role in identifying improvement priorities, planning professional learning projects to accomplish the priorities, and evaluating the effectiveness of these efforts. Administrators support teachers in their professional learning by providing needed resources and structured time set aside for professional learning. Teachers work collectively, along with administrators, to plan professional learning at the building and district level. Again, the focus is aligning the work and learning of adults, resulting in improved student learning.

Professional learning is facilitated at the school-level by the principal and the Learning and Equity Teams (LETs). Principals are the school instructional leaders who monitor curriculum implementation and professional learning processes. They work in collaboration with the Continuous Improvement Coach and LET to identify school-wide improvement priorities, support staff in meeting these priorities through adaptive and learning work projects and aligned professional learning, as well as provide direction and support to all teachers as they work in their professional learning community teams to improve student learning.



Continuous Improvement Cycle: Planning and Evaluating Professional Learning

Key process steps within each phase of planning is provided below, and highlighted in the graphic to the right. Structural Tension and the Growth, Transition, and Change framework are used as the foundation of planning throughout this process as a means to align the work of adults within the school around improving student learning. We are using a backwards planning model as beginning with the end in mind is the first step to ensuring that students will benefit from improvement and professional learning efforts.



Phase 1: Identify overarching results to improve student learning

TELL YOUR STORY... *What do we know about our current reality and emerging influences?*

- Celebrate Success: What are the accomplishments in the past 3 months to a year?
- Assess Current Reality: What are the current challenges and facilitating forces that are influencing our work towards vision and improving student learning? Review scorecards, Digital Data Analysis...
- Emerging and External Influences: What are the emerging/external influences that we need to consider and plan for?
- Insights: What is the data telling us - insights - about our progress and most pressing needs with student learning?

Establish Overarching Goal and Structural Tension: Desired Results and Current Reality

- What are our desired results in the next 12-36 months (identify appropriate *frame of reference* at "medium shot")?
- What is your current reality, specifically, in relation to each desired result?
- *The discrepancy between your desired results and current reality should establish an appropriate level of creative tension.*

Phase 2: Aligning our work and system to improve student learning

Identifying priorities and projects to improve student learning

- Root Cause Analysis: Knowing that our results are a reflection of our system - patterns of behavior, system and structures, mental models - review your Growth, Transition, and Change map and scorecards B, D, and E. How have our work and systemic structures influenced our current student learning results?
- Considering desired results and current reality, how do we need to refine our GTC? What are our priorities and projects?
- Identify start and completion dates, as well as delegate responsibility for each project. These individuals will be responsible for leading the planning of this project, with the LET, a task force, individually, or whatever structure is appropriate.
- *This completes your School Improvement Plan (Master Structural Tension Chart) that all projects and actions will telescope from. Before moving on, ask: Will the successful implementation of these projects move us from where we are now to where we want to be?*

Phase 3: Design action charts, professional learning, provide ongoing support and plan evaluation

Identify actions

- Before identifying actions, is a guiding change, decision-making process, etc necessary?
- Identify "experts within" and outside resources to support study or implementation
- What are our actions (milestones, deliverables, action steps) in the next year for each priority or project? *Each project will have it's own structural action chart, and steps within that will telescope to another structural action chart as appropriate. All actions align back to the master chart which established structural tension, identifying the school goal (desired results) and current reality.*
- Identify dates and responsibilities for each action (milestone, deliverable, action step) in the project.

Ensure organizational support and alignment for change and improvement

- Is this doable? Purposefully limit the number of projects you will be working on now, assessing how many you can successfully manage and avoid "initiative fatigue".
- Will the actions above help us to move from where we are to where we want to be?
- Do our systems and structures support successful implementation of priorities and projects? How and who will meet to ensure effective implementation of this work?
- Develop an evaluation plan (see next page) as you develop your action chart(s) to monitor and refine your implementation.

Continuous Improvement Cycle: Evaluation Cycle

Evaluation of continuous improvement initiatives and professional learning activities needs to be an ongoing process that is initiated as part of the continuous improvement planning process. All professional learning activities at the district and school-level are monitored and evaluated for their effectiveness and impact on student learning. Evaluation is used to determine if a planned initiative met stated goals, as well as to modify and improve current and future activities. When deciding how results of the continuous improvement and professional learning efforts will be evaluated, each of the levels in the table below must be addressed.

Spring Lake Park utilizes the process below to move from what Joellen Killion (2002) describes as black box evaluations to glass box evaluations. Black box evaluations focus only on results rather than what occurs in the program or is causing results. The interest is only in knowing if the outcome occurred, and does not seek to understand how a program produced results or what future staff needs are. Glass box evaluations, on the other hand, illustrate how all the elements of an improvement effort and their professional learning activities produce results. The implementation and impact are evaluated so that information is gathered to identify needed adjustments and staff support desired and required, increasing the likelihood of producing desired results for students.

Formative assessments developed at the school level as part of a "Glass Box" evaluation are to be used for the schools' information and do not need to be reported to the district or School Board, but will be shared by LTA Advisory members as they support one another in their work. Formative assessments should be conducted by the school teaching and learning team to: 1. assess the accomplishment of the intended goals of the professional learning activities; 2. monitor and adjust planned professional learning activities as needed; 3. gather and analyze participants' level of learning and implementation of new knowledge and skills; and 4. determine progress towards priorities of the continuous improvement plan. Each year the school will provide a summative statement linking their school improvement and professional learning activities to student learning. The summative assessment will also provide evidence of increased teacher knowledge and skills as a result of the schools professional learning initiatives.

Study Evaluation Cycle	What Questions Are Addressed?	How Will Information Be Gathered? <i>Suggested Options</i>	What is Measured or Assessed?	How Will Information be Used?
1. Participants' reactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Did they like it? ▪ Was their time well spent? ▪ Did the material make sense? ▪ Will it be useful? ▪ Was the leader knowledgeable and helpful? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Questionnaires administered at the end of the session ▪ Focus groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initial satisfaction with the experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To improve program design and delivery
2. Participants' learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Did participants acquire the intended knowledge and skills? ▪ Do they understand how the initiative fits in the big picture? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Simulations and demos ▪ Participant reflections (oral and/or written) ▪ Participant portfolios ▪ Case study analyses ▪ Open-ended statements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New knowledge and skill of participants ▪ Staff Concerns (Hord and Hall CBAM) ▪ KASAB (Killion) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To improve program content, format, and organization
3. Organization support and change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Did it affect organizational climate and procedures? ▪ Was implementation advocated, facilitated, and supported? ▪ Was the support public and overt? ▪ Were problems addressed quickly and efficiently? ▪ Were sufficient resources made available? ▪ Were successes recognized and shared? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ District and school records ▪ Minutes from follow-up meetings ▪ Questionnaires ▪ Focus groups and interviews ▪ One-legged interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The organization's advocacy, support, accommodation, facilitation, and recognition ▪ Staff Concerns (Hord and Hall CBAM) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To document and improve organizational structure and support to accomplish priorities and projects ▪ To inform future change efforts ▪ To identify what needs to leave the system
4. Implementation of strategies & participants' use of new knowledge and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Did participants effectively apply the new knowledge and skills? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Questionnaires, participant reflections and concerns, open-ended statements ▪ Structured interviews and/or focus groups ▪ Classroom Walkthroughs and/or observations ▪ One-legged interviews ▪ Video or audio tapes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff Concerns and Levels of Use (Hord and Hall CBAM) ▪ Degree and quality of implementation ▪ KASAB (Killion) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To document and improve the implementation of program content
5. Impact on student learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What was the impact on students? ▪ Did it affect student performance or achievement? ▪ Did it influence students' physical or emotional well-being? ▪ Are students more confident as learners? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student records ▪ School records ▪ Questionnaires ▪ Focus groups and/or interviews with students, parents, teachers, administrators ▪ Student achievement data collected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student learning outcomes: Cognitive (performance and achievement); Affective (attitudes and dispositions); Psychomotor (skills and behaviors); Intended and unintended. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To focus and improve all aspects of program design, implementation, and follow-up ▪ To demonstrate the overall impact of professional learning

References: Developed using the following resources primarily, through which more information can be found: Guskey. Evaluating professional development and other resources; Hirsch. Putting staff development on target. Killion. Assessing Impact: Evaluating staff development; Rockwood, MO professional development plan.



Standards in Practice: Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning

Increasing the effectiveness of professional learning is the leverage point with the greatest potential for strengthening and refining the day-to-day performance of educators. For most educators working in schools, professional learning is the singular most accessible means they have to develop the new knowledge, skills, and practices necessary to better meet students' learning needs. The use of Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning indicates commitment to effective professional learning. The use of the standards to plan, facilitate, and evaluate professional learning promises to heighten the quality of educator learning, performance of all educators, and student learning. Increased educator effectiveness makes possible a shift from current reality to the preferred outcomes of enhanced student learning results -- a goal to which all educators subscribe. (Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning, 2011)

The Spring Lake Park Schools embed the context, process, and content standards of Learning Forward throughout our continuous improvement process to ensure that our professional learning activity leads to increased student learning. The Learning Forward Standards are shared below, followed with examples of how we embed these standards within our day to day practice in the Spring Lake Park Schools.

Context Standards address the organization, system, and culture in which professional learning will be implemented.

- Professional learning that improves the learning of all students...
 - occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment - **Learning Communities**
 - requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning – **Leadership**
 - requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning – **Resources**

Context standards in practice within the Spring Lake Park Schools:

- District LTA Advisory members, school-level LET members, administrators, and teacher leaders are actively involved in school improvement and professional learning planning
- Time for teachers and staff to engage in conversations and planning through job-embedded professional learning, Professional Learning Community Teams, will be embedded within the school day on at least a weekly basis
- Administrators and teacher leaders are involved in professional learning to enhance their leadership and facilitation knowledge and skills. These leaders provide the ongoing follow up and support necessary to ensure implementation of improvement initiatives and aligned professional learning activities

Content Standards refers to the "what" of professional learning, beginning with a focus on what students must know and be able to do.

- Professional learning that improves the learning of all students...
 - aligns its outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards - **Outcomes**

Content standards in practice within the Spring Lake Park Schools:

- Professional learning is aligned with the curricular and instructional components of the school's improvement plan.
- Professional learning activities are planned to improve the learning of all students, deepen teacher and staff content knowledge, and provide them with core research-based instructional strategies necessary to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards.
- Content of the professional learning plan is cohesive, cumulative, and comprehensive, focused on application of new knowledge, skills, and strategies for the purpose of student learning and quality teaching.



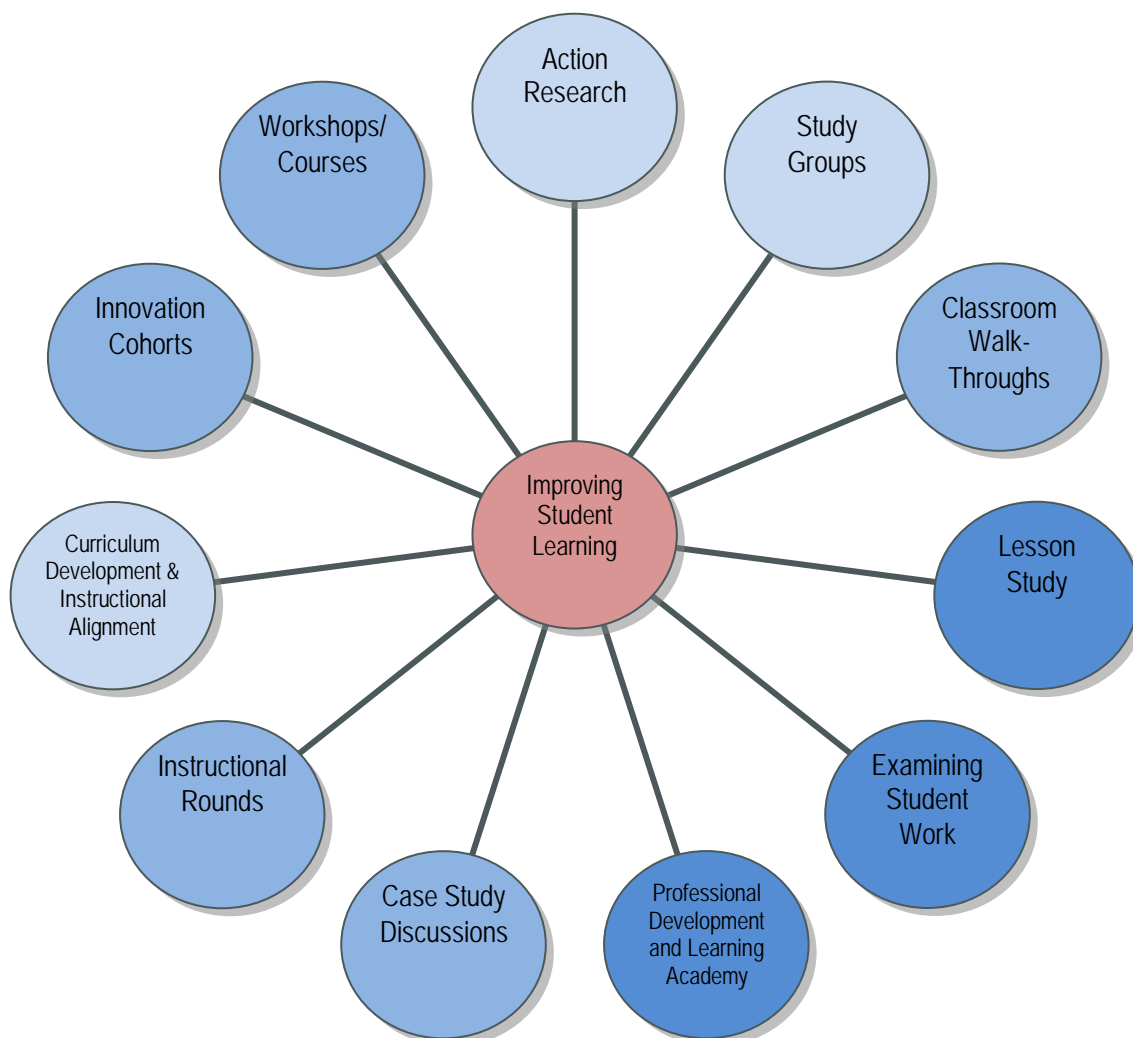
Process Standards refer to the "how" of professional learning.

- Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students...
 - uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning - **Data**
 - integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes – **Learning Designs**.
 - applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change - **Implementation**

Process standards in practice within the Spring Lake Park Schools:

- Disaggregated student achievement data is used to determine goals of the professional learning plan, monitor progress, and help sustain continuous improvement.
- Professional learning is embedded and differentiated as much as possible according to participant's level of knowledge, expertise and/or interests whenever feasible.
- Research-based models of professional learning practices and protocols are implemented, and teachers leaders are trained in their use. These practices may include but are not limited to the following activities listed in the Wheel of Professional Learning Activities:

Wheel of Professional Learning



Valuable resources for professional development processes, and used to identify the above activities: Brown Easton. (2004). Powerful designs in professional learning; Tools for schools: NSDC. (January, 2001). If not a workshop, then what; Austin, TX. PD Wheel of Assistance.



Budget

Each school will receive resources to facilitate their continuous improvement and professional learning efforts. The majority of resources should be directly aligned with the continuous improvement goals, and professional learning initiatives the school has identified. However, there also needs to be room for personal growth, consistent promotion of parent involvement, and curricular support at the building level. The principal and LET are responsible for utilizing the resources so they reflect the budget breakdown below (these are guidelines, not requirements):

Continuous Improvement (60-65%+): This funding area is targeted at developing and implementing your continuous improvement plan, including school-wide professional learning activities.

Curriculum Implementation/Instructional Alignment (10%+): This funding is used to support staff implementation of curriculum during the assess and adjust phases of the curriculum development cycle, as well as to support staff in responding to student needs.

Personal Professional Growth (10-15%): This funding area is to support the personal development of individual teachers. While the district Professional Learning and Development Academy will offer a variety of learning opportunities, other valuable learning opportunities may arise for staff that would support her/him in their personal learning. Requests are made to the school TLT with evidence of how participation will directly impact the teacher's day to day work, and student learning.

Parent Involvement (10%): Family and community connections have been identified as a strategic direction in the district Strategic Framework for the Future. The principal should designate the TLT or another group to facilitate professional learning activities that would enhance family and community connections.

Support Staff Professional Learning (5%): This funding area should provide meaningful professional learning experiences for the support staff in the building. While these staff members will also participate in activities outlined through the continuous improvement planning process, experiences that relate directly to their day to day work should be provided.

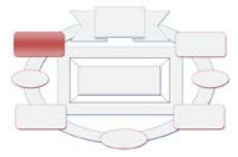
Teacher Induction

All new teachers participate in an induction program during August of their first year. In addition, new teachers participate in a learning community of new teachers throughout the year, facilitated by experienced classroom teachers and LTA Coordinators, to support one another in their experience.

Essential Learning Outcomes

Curriculum Continuous Improvement Process

Spring Lake Park Schools



Purpose of Curriculum Continuous Improvement

The purpose of the Spring Lake Park Schools Curriculum Continuous Improvement Process is to facilitate high achievement for all learners by continuously improving the quality and articulation of the learning experiences we deliver. Through ongoing study and evaluation of our system we align classroom assessment, instruction, and response practices towards the successful student achievement of our Essential Learning Outcomes.

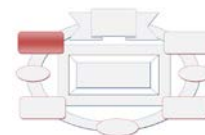
This framework provides a structure for professional practice that is used by staff to engage and motivate all learners to acquire, practice, and apply their learning in varied and meaningful contexts. In order to support teachers in this work, the Spring Lake Park Schools are committed to engaging staff in high-quality, ongoing, embedded professional learning and providing up-to-date instructional resources that reflect evidence-based best practice.

There are two components of this Curriculum Continuous Improvement Process: 1) Ongoing Refinement; and 2) Formal Review and Development. The *Ongoing Refinement Process* involves the identification of district and/or school-level projects on an annual basis for just-in-time improvements. The *Formal Review and Development Process* is used to respond to the need for systemic change as the result of a formal study and review.

Assumptions and Beliefs that Guide Our Work

The Spring Lake Park Schools will continuously improve the quality and articulation of students' learning experiences by:

- continuously improving K-12 vertical and horizontal articulation, free of gaps and repetitions. This requires providing the structure and ongoing time and support for staff to engage in embedded professional learning, through PLCs and horizontal team meetings, to successfully align our *intended, taught, and assessed curriculums* and effectively respond to student learning needs (Ainsworth, 2003; Hayes-Jacobs, 2000; DuFour, 2004, Zmuda et al, 2004; Lambert, L. 2003; Conzemius, A and O'Neill, J., 2001).
- using a backwards design model to curriculum development that is driven by defining desired student results and acceptable evidence to measure student success prior to planning learning experiences (Marzano, 2003; Wiggins & McTighe, 2004; Brown, 2004; Reeves, 2003; Stiggins, 2004, English, 2000).
- integrating assessment of and for learning in our day to day practices. Formative and summative assessments will be aligned with the intended and taught curriculum. Assessment results are used to guide professional learning planning, SMART goal identification, and to assess the effectiveness of curriculum so just-in-time interventions can occur (Black, et al, 2004; Marzano, 2003, 2004; Arter, J. A and Busick, K.U., 2001; Reeves, 2003; Pellegrino, J., 2004; Brown, J, 2004; Stiggins et al, 2004; Conzemius, A and O'Neill, J., 2001; Wiggins and McTighe, 2004).
- developing a common language and set of practices among staff to facilitate the continuous improvement process.
- aligning professional learning with curriculum initiatives so that staff have the support to implement the curriculum effectively. Staff receive ongoing, focused professional learning to support their effort.
- adhering to standards and evidence-based best practices through our curriculum development process.
- ensuring parent and citizen input in the process of curriculum development.



An Overview of the Curriculum Continuous Improvement Process

The practices of continuous improvement inform the Curriculum Continuous Improvement Process, aligning classroom assessment, instruction, and response practices towards the successful student achievement of our Essential Learning Outcomes. There are two components of the Curriculum Continuous Improvement Process: 1) Ongoing Refinement; and 2) Formal Review and Development. The *Ongoing Refinement Process* is led by curriculum leads at each level. Using the curriculum improvement innovation configuration curriculum leads identify district and/or school-level projects on an annual basis for just-in-time improvements. The innovation configuration is also an indicator of when the *Formal Review and Development Process* is needed. The following pages describe details of this process.

A viable curriculum purposefully aligns the *intended curriculum, taught curriculum, and assessed curriculum*. This requires consistency and articulation in delivery up the grade levels and across a grade level or course, as well as flexibility in how teachers are able to adapt the curriculum to meet the varying needs of their students.

Curriculum Development (Intended Curriculum):

The Essential Learning Outcomes that students will achieve at each grade level are identified at the district level through the curriculum development process. Spring Lake Park graduate expectations guide this backwards design. State standards, national standards, and local practices drive decision-making, development, and revision.

Essential Learning Outcomes

Essential Learning Outcomes are measurable outcomes that define what we expect each student to know, understand and be able to do in each curricular area and at each grade level and serves as the *intended curriculum*. This framework serves as a guide for focusing instruction and mapping the taught curriculum at the school-level. Elements of the Essential Learning Outcome document include:

- *Enduring Understandings*: Statements that clearly articulate the big ideas that promote long term understanding of the discipline or subject area that have lasting value beyond the classroom. These are the important understandings that we want students to retain after they may have forgotten the details (Brown, 2004; Wiggins & McTighe, 1998)
- *Essential Questions*: Focus our attention on what is important. They foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning. They occur naturally and should be asked over and over (Brown, 2004; Wiggins & McTighe, 1998)
- *Learning Targets*: Specify, in measurable terms, what all students should know and be able to do to achieve desired understandings and answer essential questions (Brown, 2004). These will be identified for each subject within each grade level
- *Assessment Plan*: Determining acceptable evidence, assessments of learning (summative), to assess and to evaluate student achievement of desired results.

Assessment for Learning (Assessed Curriculum):

Assessments, formative and summative, are designed to measure student learning of our intended curriculum. The results of these assessments are used by the teacher to modify instruction to meet student needs.

Formative Assessment (Assessment for Learning)

Assessment for learning promotes ongoing student growth. It includes the frequent assessments that measure students' knowledge or ability regarding a specific concept/skill, and allows a teacher and her/his student to identify her/his strengths and weaknesses. Teachers use formative assessment as a teaching tool to guide future instruction and to improve upon weaknesses.

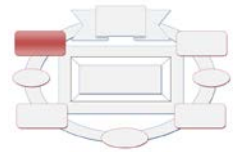
Summative Assessment (Assessment of Learning)

Assessment of learning provides a snapshot of what a student knows at a given point in time. It is often used to report achievement status to others. It is often an assessment that measures students' knowledge or ability at the conclusion of a unit or an end of course study.

Instructional Alignment (Taught Curriculum):

The intended curriculum provides the targets that are taught in the classroom. Teachers use these targets to collaboratively and individually develop instructional plans and assessments to appropriately identify and respond to student needs. Time is formally scheduled so that PLC Teams and vertical teams can engage in ongoing conversations to ensure articulation of the curriculum and to reveal and eliminate gaps and overlaps.

Curriculum Continuous Improvement Process

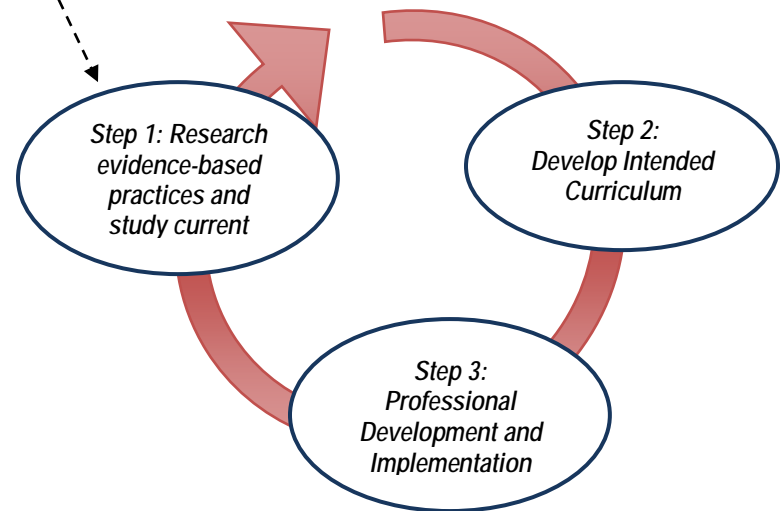


On-going Refinement Process



Only if formal review & development of Is needed

Formal Review & Development Process



Curriculum Improvement Cycle Innovation Configuration for Curriculum Leads

(School and teams may be responsible for some disciplines)

	On-going work of curriculum leads through annual projects			Task Force work may be required	
Components:	Evidence of Exemplary Work 1	2	3	4	Evidence of Need for Formal Review 5
Student Learning Results <i>Are students learning?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple & comprehensive measures of student learning drive curriculum improvement Student learning results demonstrate consistent growth using the balanced scorecard and discipline specific summative assessment data 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple measures of student learning drive curriculum improvement Student learning results demonstrate inconsistent growth using the balanced scorecard and discipline specific summative assessment data 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data does not drive curriculum improvement Student learning results do not demonstrate growth
Essential Learning Outcomes <i>What do we expect all students to Learn?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a guaranteed and viable curriculum: Enduring Understandings, Essential Questions, and Learning Targets for all grade levels and courses as described in definitions above Equity and 21st Century Life & Career Skills are integrated in the ELOs at all grade levels and courses ELOs (enduring understandings, essential questions and learning targets) are aligned and drive instruction ELOs guide the work of staff and differentiate among and between courses and grade levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a guaranteed curriculum: Enduring Understandings, Essential Questions, and Learning Targets for all grade levels and courses Equity and 21st Century Life & Career Skills are integrated in the ELOs at all grade levels ELOs are aligned but inconsistently used to drive instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a guaranteed curriculum: Enduring Understandings, Essential Questions, and Learning Targets for all grade levels Equity or 21st Century Life & Career Skills are inconsistently integrated in the ELOs at all grade levels ELOs are inconsistently used to drive instruction ELOs guide the work of staff at grade level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a curriculum: Enduring Understandings, Essential Questions, and Learning Targets for all grade levels Equity or 21st Century Life & Career Skills are referenced in the ELOs at all grade levels ELOs are used but do not drive instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum: Enduring Understandings, Essential Questions, and Learning Targets no longer align to state standards No evidence of equity or 21st Century Life & Career Skills in the ELOs ELOs are not used ELOs do not guide the work of staff
Assessments - How do we know they have learned? of learning for learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common summative assessments and success indicators are created / identified for each grade level and course Common benchmark assessments and success indicators are created or identified for all core courses at each grade level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common summative assessments and success indicators are created / identified for each grade level Common benchmark assessments and success indicators are created or identified for most core courses at each grade level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common summative assessments and success indicators are created / identified Common benchmark assessments and success indicators are created or identified at each grade level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summative assessments and success indicators are created / identified Benchmark assessments and success indicators are created / identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summative assessments and success indicators are not created / identified Benchmark assessments and success indicators are not created / identified
Instructional Alignment <i>How will we engage students and personalize learning?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructional practices reflect current evidence-based research regarding high achieving, at-promise*, and at- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructional practices reflect current evidence-based research regarding high achieving, at-promise, or at-risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructional practices reflect evidence-based research regarding high achieving, at-promise, or at-risk learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructional practices reflect teacher preference in strategies and content regarding high achieving, at-promise, or at-risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students are taught in the same manner

Curriculum Improvement Cycle Innovation Configuration for Curriculum Leads
(School and teams may be responsible for some disciplines)

	On-going work of curriculum leads through annual projects			Task Force work may be required	
Components:	Evidence of Exemplary Work 1	2	3	4	Evidence of Need for Formal Review 5
Personalization & Engagement <i>*At-promise are students whose data indicates they should be in gifted or honors programs but do not participate</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> risk learning needs Subject specific Innovation Configuration is being used with fidelity in areas where developed Instructional practices reflect intentional integration of equity, instructional technology, and 21st Century Life & Career Skills Evidence-based and high quality materials are available to address all student needs (core & supplementary) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> learning needs Subject specific Innovation Configuration is being used in areas where developed Instructional practices reflect integration of equity, instructional technology, and 21st Century Life & Career Skills Evidence-based and high quality materials are available to address most student needs (core & supplementary) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> needs Subject specific Innovation Configuration is inconsistently used in areas where developed Instructional practices reflect isolated events of equity, instructional technology, and 21st Century Life & Career Skills Evidence-based and high quality materials are available to address most student needs (core) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> learning needs Subject specific Innovation Configuration is not used in areas where developed Instructional practices reflect isolated events of equity, instructional technology, or 21st Century Life & Career Skills Materials are available to address most student needs (core) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject specific Innovation Configuration is not available but is needed Instructional practices do not reflect equity, instructional technology, or 21st Century Life & Career Skills Materials do not address the needs of students
Response to Results <i>How will we respond if they do not learn or know it already?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common summative assessments are given, the results are analyzed, and next action steps are taken for each grade level and course Common benchmark assessments are given, the results are analyzed, and next action steps are taken for each core course at each grade level Membership in an NCLB student group is not a predictor of student success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common summative assessments are given, the results are analyzed, and next action steps are taken for each grade level Common benchmark assessments are given, the results are analyzed, and next action steps are taken at each grade level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common summative assessments are given, the results are analyzed, and next action steps are taken Common benchmark assessments are given, the results are analyzed, and next action steps are taken Membership in an NCLB student group is a predictor of student success for some groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common summative assessments are given and the results are analyzed Common benchmark assessments are given, the results are analyzed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common summative assessments are not given Common benchmark assessments are not given Membership in an NCLB student group is a predictor of student success
Professional Learning <i>What do we need to know and be able to do?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embedded and on-going learning and application of content, assessment, instruction, intervention, and differentiation in the subject area prevails There is on-going evaluation of professional learning to guide continuous improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embedded and on-going learning and application of content, assessment, instruction, intervention, and differentiation in the subject area exists but inconsistently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning and application of content, assessment, instruction, intervention, and differentiation in the subject area exists but inconsistently There is evaluation of professional learning to guide continuous improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning of content, assessment, instruction, intervention, and differentiation in the subject area exists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New learning is not occurring Professional learning is not evaluated



Spring Lake Park Schools Curriculum Formal Review and Development Process

	Activity	Purpose	Guiding Questions	Process	Desired Results	Participants
Phase I: Research and Development (Intended Curriculum)	Step One Research best practices and study current practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify evidence-based best practices in the discipline To identify the Spring Lake Park current essential learning outcomes, assessments, and instructional practices in the discipline To analyze the effectiveness of the Spring Lake Park current practices in the discipline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What does the research tell us about teaching and learning within this discipline? How do our current Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs: Enduring Understandings, Essential Questions, Learning Targets, and Assessments of Learning), instructional practices and resources align with the research? Where are our gaps and overlaps? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a study of evidence-based best practices of curriculum and instruction in the discipline, including state and national standards, benchmark districts/schools Conduct a study of the current program. Compare and contrast the studies. Update and gather feedback from Systems Improvement Advisory Council (SIAC). Update Learning Teaching & Accountability (LTA) Advisory Council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Summary containing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best practice review Current practice review Directions and beliefs Innovation Configuration and any other instructional practices model Criteria for resource selection <p><i>Template included in appendix</i></p>	PreK-12 Curriculum Task Forces to be formed in spring-summer prior to year 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elementary, Middle, HS staff Special Education, Title I/Basic Skills SIAC/Community input required Coordinator(s)/Admin 6-12 Only Areas: Same as above except for Title I, Elem. and Special Ed
	Step Two Development (Intended Curriculum)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To revise and/or identify Essential Learning Outcomes: Enduring Understandings, Essential Questions, Learning Targets, and Assessments of Learning To recommend evidence-based instructional materials and practices in this discipline To identify professional learning needs to support student learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What revisions are needed in our ELOs? What are the common summative assessments that will be used in each grade or course? What are the district wide formative assessments used in each grade or course (math, language arts only)? What instructional materials and practices are needed for curriculum implementation? What is the professional learning plan for implementing the intended curriculum? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop or make revisions to the ELOs, based on the findings highlighted in the Executive Summary document Update and gather feedback regarding ELOs from the teaching staff, SIAC, and LTA Advisory Submit curriculum revision to the identified choice-maker After the ELOs are revised, identify potential instructional resources and pilot materials using the established criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum Task Force develops the Curriculum and revises the Executive Summary to include the revised ELOs. Recommendation for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core instructional resources Long term professional learning plan Budget proposal Pacing guide upon selection of core materials (identifies recommendations for when ELOs will be taught, materials or activities for use, and assessments to measure student learning) 	PreK-12 Areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elementary, Middle, HS staff Special Education staff Title I LA & Math staff SIAC/Community input required Coordinator(s)/Admin 6-12 Areas: Same as above except for Title I, Elem. and Special Ed
Phase II: Professional Learning and Implementation	Step Three Professional Learning and Implementation (Taught and Assessed Curriculum)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To implement the ELOs, instructional practices, and resources. To ensure professional learning and support necessary for effective implementation and improved learning for all students To ensure the alignment of the intended, taught, and assessed curriculum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are we teaching the intended curriculum as it was designed? Are we making progress towards our desired results? What professional learning and support is needed at individual buildings? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the intended curriculum Facilitate the development and/or revision of pacing guides and curriculum maps Develop, implement, analyze, and respond to common formative and summative assessments Provide professional learning. Establish exemplary lesson bank 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common formative and/or summative assessments (school and district level) Revised pacing guide and/or curriculum maps Revised assessment and professional learning plan as needed (school and district level) Exemplary unit and lesson bank 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitated by Curriculum Leads with the support of Coordinator(s)/Admin



Evidence-based best practice and current local practice study

During year one of the curriculum development process an in-depth study of evidence-based best practices and current local practices, of the specific subject area being considered, is conducted. This includes:

- a review and study of state and national standards, educational literature and research, and benchmark school districts/schools.
- a study of current practices in the Spring Lake Park Schools that identifies strengths, needed changes, teacher perceptions, etc.
- a study of student achievement data

Pacing Chart/Curriculum Maps

A curriculum map provides a picture of how the ELOs are being implemented in classrooms throughout the district, our taught curriculum. A sample curriculum map is developed as part of the curriculum development process, defining when learning targets are to be taught, materials or activities for use, and assessments to measure student learning of the learning targets. However, each teacher will be able to revise their map as they see fit throughout their implementation of the curriculum. Schools will facilitate an ongoing process of collectively reviewing and revising these maps, at the grade level and vertically, so that gaps and overlaps are identified and appropriate revisions can be made as necessary.

K-12 Vertical Alignment

K-12 Vertical Alignment defines the Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs) at each grade level in a particular subject area. The development of this document ensures vertical articulation of the intended, taught, and assessed curriculum so that there are no gaps or overlaps in the curriculum from one grade level to another. We design the curriculum down the grade levels, and deliver up the grade levels. To ensure continued alignment following initial development, teachers will collectively review this alignment and make necessary adjustments through vertical teams. This is done to recognize that revisions may need to be made as teachers implement the ELOs, and to ensure that gaps and/or overlaps do not occur.

Just-in-Time Modification

Continuous improvement recognizes that we can always improve on our work. Therefore, we will conduct a formative program review after teachers have had the opportunity to implement the Essential Learning Outcomes using their instructional resources for two years. If this review reveals resource gaps or significant gaps in the intended, taught and assessed curriculums, just-in-time modifications may be necessary. This may involve clarifying ELOs, revising instructional materials, and/or purchase of materials to meet need. An example would be that the state mandates a change in a standard for the next school year that is not covered by the current curriculum.

Standards

Benchmarks for student learning defined by the state and/or federal governments which schools are mandated to strive towards. Numerous professional organizations also provide standards for their particular discipline.

Exemplary Unit and Lesson Bank

A collection of exemplary units and lessons are collaboratively developed by teachers on learning teams throughout the district. These will be collected and made available to all teachers online. Exemplary units and lessons from other schools, districts, and/or organizations will be made available to staff as possible and appropriate.

Backward Design

Backward design begins with the end in mind, focusing first on desired results. This involves first identifying the essential learning outcomes, then identifying acceptable evidence to assess and evaluate the desired results, and then designing learning activities to promote student learning. Backward design is also used to guide the continuous improvement process used in the Spring Lake Park Schools.

Executive Summary Document

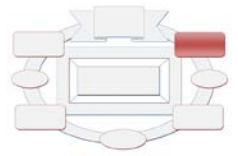
Curriculum task forces develop an executive summary following the completion of their year one study during which they research evidence-based best practices and study local practices.

Curriculum Framework

The curriculum framework is developed by the curriculum task force and serves as the guiding curriculum document for a subject area. See template in appendix E

Assessment Continuous Improvement Process

Spring Lake Park Schools



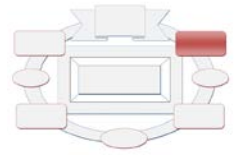
Purpose of the Assessment Continuous Improvement Process

The purpose of assessment in Spring Lake Park Schools is to gather data about student learning for a variety of uses:

- Measure and monitor progress toward learning
- Communicate academic growth
- Personalize and engage student learning
- Evaluate educational programs

Assumptions and Beliefs that Guide Our Work

- **The fundamental purpose of assessment is to ensure equitable learning experiences and to improve student learning.**
“High Expectations, High Achievement for All. No Excuses” is achieved when assessment data is used to inform instruction to improve student learning. Most important are the assessments that inform the day-to-day decisions of students, teachers, and leads to improved student learning.
- **Students must be involved in the assessment process.**
When students are active participants in the assessment process they are able to reflect upon and respond to their assessment results.
- **Assessment results must be shared with all stakeholders.**
The purpose of assessments in Spring Lake Park Schools is to inform teachers, students and parents about student achievement. Reports will reflect the objectives of the assessments and district standards.
- **Assessments must provide a complete picture of student achievement.**
In order to measure student learning a variety of assessments and assessment strategies are needed to provide evidence of student growth and achievement over time. Progress reported is based on evidence toward mastery of learning targets. Assessment of other factors such as behavior are measured and reported separately.
- **Assessments must help to measure growth over time.**
By evaluating student achievement data over time, we can determine the impact of curriculum and instruction on student performance regardless of individual differences in starting points or levels of prior knowledge.
- **Assessment data must be ethically collected and managed.**
We are committed to the ethical and timely use of data. Data collected concerning individual students and student groups will be used to enhance student learning.
- **Assessments must be reliable, valid and culturally responsive.**
Assessments are useful only when they provide quality information. Standards of quality must dictate the selection of tests, scoring guides and the development of standardized district assessments. Alignment of district, site, and classroom assessments with district, state and national academic standards is necessary to maximize student learning.
- **Training and support must be provided to teachers in assessment literacy.**
In order for teachers to be able to use assessment information to guide instruction, the district must provide professional learning and resources.



Assessment Continuous: System and Key Process Overview

In order to ensure student learning, students, teachers must work together to align their instruction with the intended curriculum and assessed curriculum. Teachers use a variety of assessment data to monitor progress and adjust their instruction to meet the needs of each and every student.

The Spring Lake Park School's comprehensive assessment program balances *Assessments FOR Learning* and *Assessments OF Learning*. These assessments are used to produce informed instruction and to help gauge the effectiveness of curriculum and programs, and ultimately to improve student learning.

Assessments FOR Learning are formative assessments that happen while learning is occurring. They are used to diagnose student needs, plan instruction, and provide students with feedback they can use to improve their work. An example of this would be an assessment given during a unit to measure student progress towards the identified learning targets so that the teacher can modify instruction accordingly.

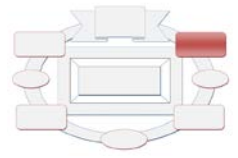
Assessments OF Learning are summative assessments used to sum up achievement at a particular point of time. These occur after learning has happened. These assessments are used to measure achievement status at a point in time for the purpose of reporting and accountability. For example, unit tests and the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA-IIs) are examples of Assessments of Learning. The results of unit tests are used to identify grades reported to parents on report cards. The results of the MCA-IIs are reported to the state and are used as an accountability measure for schools across the state as part of the "No Child Left Behind" law.

A battery of assessments is necessary because they provide important information to a variety of stakeholders. By providing an assessment program that balances Assessments OF Learning and Assessments FOR Learning, Spring Lake Park Schools show i commitment to continually monitor student progress and improve instruction.

Teachers use a battery of assessment data to monitor progress and individually adjust their instruction to meet the needs of every student. In order to teach students the information they need to learn, teachers must work together to align their instruction with the intended curriculum and assessed curriculum.

Teachers work in collaborative teams called "Professional Learning Community" or PLC, regularly reflecting on and answering four fundamental questions to improve student learning:

- *What is it we want all students to learn;*
- *How will we know when each student has learned the learning targets;*
- *How will we respond when a student experiences difficulty in learning, or how will we deepen the learning for students who are exceeding expectations; and*
- *What do we need to know and be able to do so we are able to collectively clarify student expectations, assess progress, and respond to student needs effectively?*



Key Process of Assessment

Teachers in Spring Lake Park schools have been trained in the practices of Rick Stiggin's Assessment For Learning. Teachers use the Keys of Quality Assessment and the Seven Strategies of Assessment for Learning in their work to improve student learning.

Why Assess?

- Determine purpose of assessment and who will use the results.

Assess What?

- What are the learning targets?
 - *Strategy one: provide a clear understanding of the learning target*
 - *Strategy two: use examples and models of strong and weak work*
 - *Strategy five: design lessons to focus on one aspect of quality at a time*

Assess How?

- What assessment structure will you use? (i.e. multiple choice, matching, short answer, essay, performance assessment, personal communication)

Communicate How?

- How will the information be gathered, reported?
 - *Strategy three: offer regular descriptive feedback*

How will students be involved?

- Student understanding of target – student friendly language, deconstructed, etc.
- Student use of data: goal setting, next learning, reflection, etc.
 - *Strategy four: teach students to self-assess and set goals*
 - *Strategy six: teach students focused revision*
 - *Strategy seven: engage students in self reflection and let them keep track of and share their learning*
- Student can participate in the process – identify exemplars, type of test, create, etc.

Key Process in the Use of Data

Data Analysis

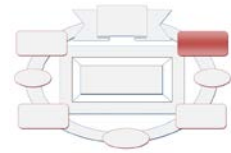
Identification of Strengths and Weaknesses

Identification of Root Cause

Development of Improvement Plan

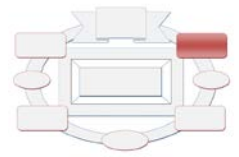
Seven Strategies are from Stiggins, R., Arter, J., Chappuis, J., & Chappuis, S. (2004). *Classroom assessment for student learning. Doing it right- using it well.* Portland, OR: Assessment Training Institute.

Spring Lake Park Assessment Plan for 2011-2012



Dark shading: state testing Light shading: school district assessments No shading: optional or school-level tests

Assessment	Grades	Purpose	Dates Assessed
Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA-II) MCA- II -Reading MCA- II—Math MCA-II—Science	3-8 & 10 3-8 & 11 5, 8 & 10	To evaluate instruction against the Minnesota State Standards in Language Arts and Math	Grades 3-8 Reading—April 24 & 25 Math—TBD Science – Grade 5: Week of March 5 Grade 8: May 16-18 Grade 10 : May 14-18
Graduation-Required Assessments for Diploma (GRAD)	Writing: Grade 9 Retests Grade 10 & 11 Reading: Grade 10 Math: Grade 11	To assure students have the basic skills needed to graduate from high school.	Writing—April 17 Writing Retests: November 2 Reading—April 12 & 13 Math—April 17 & 18 Reading and Math Retests— TBD
Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) Reading Math	3-8 3-8	To examine student growth and performance over time.	Fall testing— September 8– 30 Winter testing—January 3 - 31 Spring testing—May 1—27
DIBELS	K-5	To examine student growth and performance over time.	September, November, February & May Progress Monitoring weekly or bi-weekly
High Frequency Words	K-2	To examine student growth and performance over time.	First week of every month
EXPLORE	8	To assess achievement, career interests and study skills.	October
PLAN	10	To assess achievement, career interests and study skills.	October
Unit Tests	Elementary and Secondary	To assess student performance on the curriculum.	Varies
Other classroom assessments	Elementary and secondary	To monitor and adjust classroom instruction. Also used to help students see where they are in their learning.	Varies
Advanced Placement Tests	10,11,12	To assess student performance on the curriculum as defined by the College Board	May
ACT/SAT	11,12	College Admission Test	Throughout year



Leadership: Roles and Responsibilities

District Level

School Board

- Utilizes summative data to assess progress toward Strategic Plan

District Leadership Team

- Utilizes summative data to assess progress toward Strategic Plan

Learning and Teaching Advisory

- Utilizes summative data to assess progress toward professional learning
- Create Professional Learning Plan

Assessment Coordinator

Assessment Committee

- Assesses the fit and relevance of our current assessment practices
 - Identifies areas for improvement and necessary alignment with other practices in the district
- Membership includes one staff member from each building, one secondary principal, one elementary principal, District Curriculum Coordinator, facilitated by the Assessment Coordinator

Curriculum Review Task Forces

- Utilize curriculum review process to identify and determine common summative assessments
- Align learning targets to assessments
- Determine gaps in curriculum based on summative assessment data

School Level

Learning and Equity Teams (LET)

- Utilize data to create School Improvement Plan
- Monitor progress toward goals in School Improvement Plan

Principal

- Leads the utilize data to create School Improvement Plan
- Monitor progress toward goals in School Improvement Plan

Continuous Improvement Coach

- Utilize data to guide PLC team and individual teacher reflection

System of Intervention Coordinator

- Utilize data to monitor student programming within the System of Intervention

Staff

- Utilize data to monitor building progress

Team Level

Professional Learning Community/ Professional Learning Team

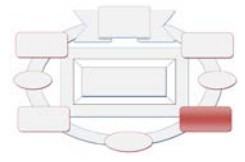
- Utilizes the PLC Team Planning Guide to direct their work
- Utilize data to guide the planning of instruction and assessment

Individual Level

Teacher

- Utilize individual teacher planning guide to direct their work
- Utilize data to guide instruction

Instructional Alignment Continuous Improvement Process Spring Lake Park Schools



Purpose of the Instructional Alignment Continuous Improvement Process

The purpose of personalized, instructional alignment in Spring Lake Park is to increase achievement for all students and inspire active, thoughtful, global citizens. This is accomplished by building meaningful relationships, by using a variety of assessments to develop deliberate and purposeful instruction, and by providing educational experiences that put students at the center of learning.

Assumptions and Beliefs that Guide Our Work

- All students can learn
- Race and socioeconomics are not predictors of which students occupy the highest and lowest levels of learning
- High level thinking increases achievement
- All students can think at high levels
- Meaningful connections beyond the classroom create engaged learners
- Classrooms are diverse
- Not all students learn in the same way
- Students learn when they feel like they belong and are actively involved in their learning
- Collaboration builds ownership in learning
- Today's students need opportunities to learn and use skills that prepare them for the 21st Century
- Professional learning is imperative to increase student achievement
- Individual responsibility and organizational support is essential for personalization to be successful

Personalization Framework: System and Key Process Overview

The Personalization initiative is an interdependent component of the Continuous Systems Improvement Framework. Its focus is on the key process "*Instructional Alignment*", which is guided by the question "*How will we engage students and personalize learning?*" The key processes used to address this question are found on the Personalization and Engagement concept map (see Figure 1). These include differentiated classroom practices, authentic instruction, and meaningful relationships with students. These concepts are interrelated, interdependent and put students at the center of learning.

Key Processes: The Differentiated Classroom, Authentic Instruction, Meaningful Relationships with Students

The effective integration of these three processes (the differentiated classroom, authentic instruction, meaningful relationships with students) results in on-task students engaged in purposeful learning and improved student achievement. This requires ongoing professional learning, collaboration among staff, and system-wide support.

1. Differentiated Classroom

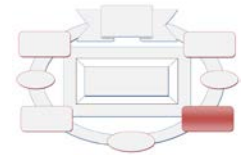
The purpose of the differentiated classroom is to meet the needs of all learners by employing varied, ongoing assessment, instructional strategies, higher order thinking, and learning experiences, as well as flexible grouping, and different levels of lesson complexity.

2. Authentic Instruction

The goal of the authentic instruction standards is to improve the intellectual quality of student thinking. Authentic instruction seeks to do this through incorporating the following into the majority of lessons: higher order thinking, substantive conversation, and connection to the world beyond the classroom. Higher order thinking and substantive conversation place special emphasis on "cognitive complexity" while connections to the world beyond the classroom "emphasizes transfer and application beyond school". See Newmann, Secada & Wehlage *A Guide to Authentic Instruction and Assessment: Vision, Standards and Scoring* (1995) for more detailed information on the authentic instruction standards.

3. Meaningful Relationship with Students

The purpose of meaningful relationships with students is to build a connection with every student by recognizing and responding to social and emotional needs, by affirming learning and cognitive styles, and by demonstrating cultural competence so that students' race and culture are valued.



Structures and Organizational Supports

The Personalization initiative was effectively implemented by a convergence of resources and will continue to be sustained through ongoing support from the following:

- Spring Lake Park School Board
- District and School Administration
- Professional Learning Communities
- Teacher leaders
- Continuous Improvement Coaches
- District Coordinators
- District wide professional learning opportunities
- School based professional learning opportunities

Leadership: Roles and Responsibilities

The personalization initiative is key to improving student learning. The relational work needed for personalization to be successful district wide is affirmed by Fullan's belief that "Personalization is about individuals, but is relational--between the teacher, the student, the home, and the school" (2006, p. 17). Furthermore, effectiveness in this initiative will require individual responsibility, common expectations and accountability throughout the district. Key roles and responsibilities include:

Teachers

- Implement the components of Personalization initiative in order to increase student learning
- Collaborate with PLC
- Participate in continuous learning
- Engage students in their learning

Continuous Improvement Coaches

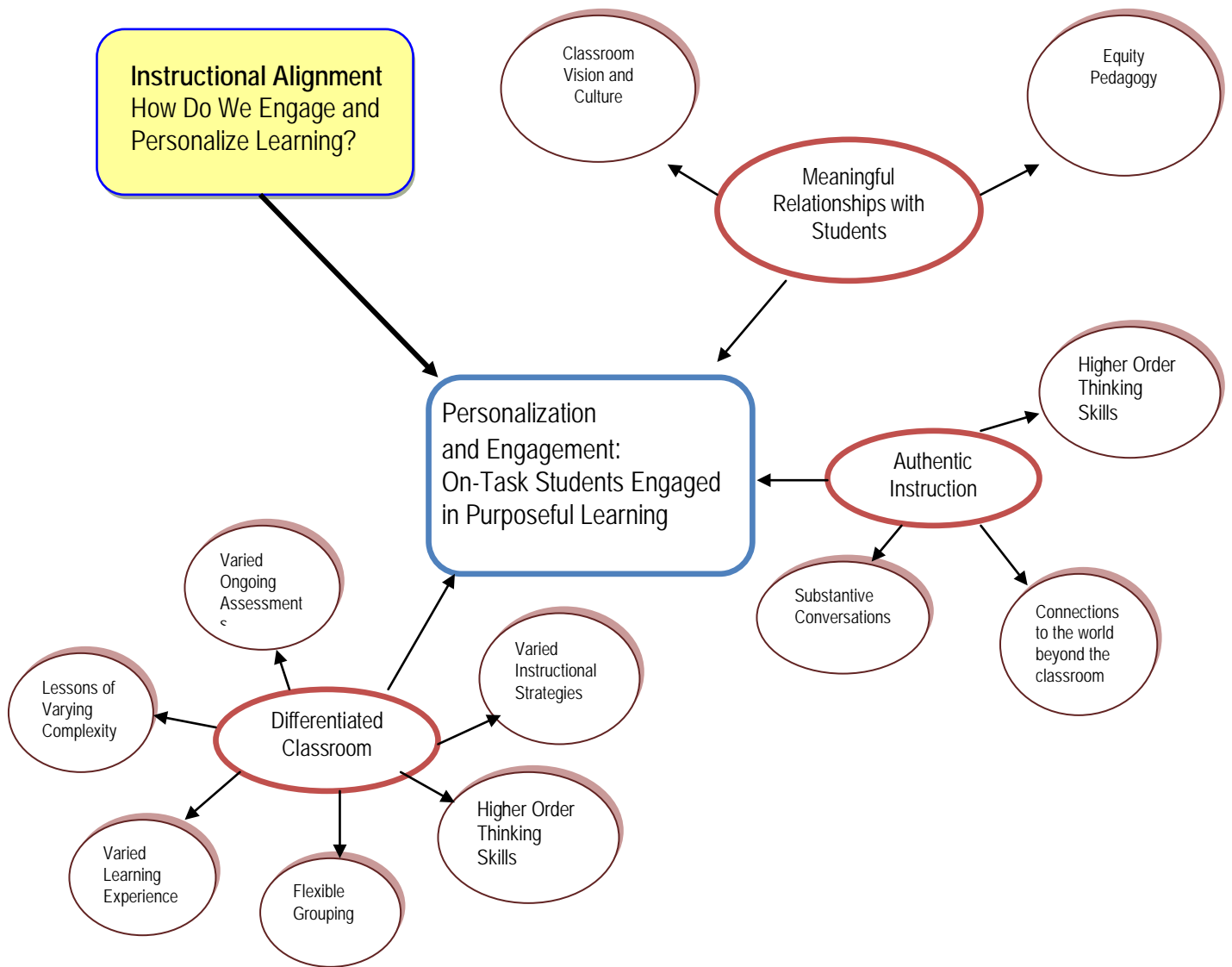
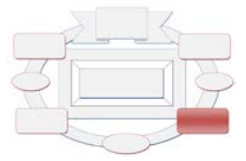
- Support teachers in their journey in implementing the Personalization initiative in order to increase student learning
- Collaborate with administrators on implementation progress and needs
- Collaborate with PLC and other teacher leaders throughout the district to reflect for action
- Determine professional learning needs

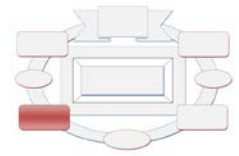
Administrators

- Balance pressure and support of teachers in implementing the Personalization initiative in order to increase student learning
- Collaborate with teacher leaders on implementation progress and needs
- Determine professional learning needs

Coordinators

- Balance pressure and support of teachers in implementing the Personalization initiative in order to increase student learning
- Determine professional learning needs
- Collaborate with LTA members on implementation progress and needs





Results-Response Continuous Improvement Process Spring Lake Park Schools

Purpose of the Results-Response Continuous Improvement Process

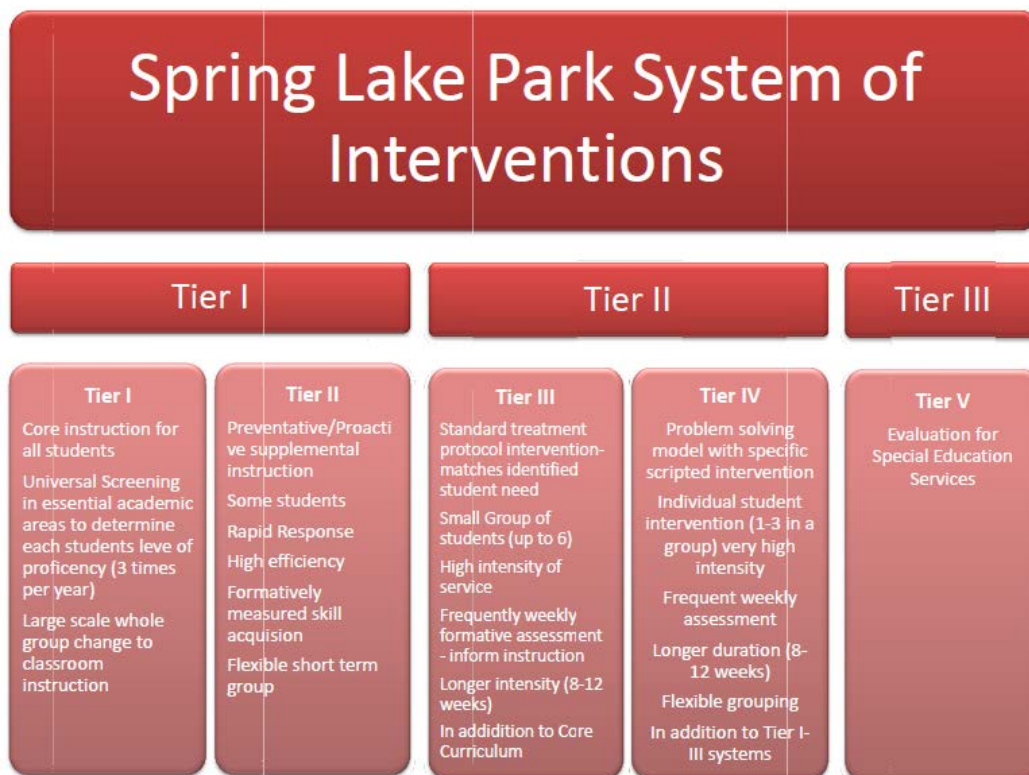
Assure that a consistent step by step response process is in place in all buildings that provides a foundation of curriculum, instruction, and school organization that has a high probability of improving student learning. This process will raise our highest levels of learning while narrowing the gap between our highest and lowest achieving students.

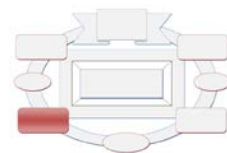
Assumptions and Beliefs that Guide Our Work

- A five-tiered model is in place in all buildings and it contains more intensive interventions as the students move through tiers
- Teachers are implementing differentiated instruction to assure student learning
- Teams work in a collaborative model to ensure acceleration of student learning
- Universal screenings are used to determine student placement in tiers
- Students are formatively assessed with increasing intensity as they move to higher levels in the system of intervention.
- Multiple causal factors are studied before an intervention is proposed
- The System of Intervention is a process to improve student achievement and accelerate learning and not a method of identifying students for special education services
- Data drives both the selection of interventions and success criteria
- Interventions are implemented and monitored for fidelity as judged by an assigned person or group
- Our System of Intervention will only be successful with highly effective core instruction
- All students will learn
- We are responsible for the learning of all students
- Culturally responsive instruction must occur in all classrooms
- We must assure that race is no longer a predictor of success
- We must determine the root cause of student's barriers to success

Results-Response Continuous Improvement Process: System and Key Process Overview

Each school's Continuous Improvement Plan will have identified as a priority the implementation of the System of Intervention identifying the Short (30 days), intermediate (60-90 days), and long term (year) desired results.





Systems, Structure and Organizational Support

- The definition of an intervention is clearly understood
- Professional learning and resources are available to assure successful implementation of the System of Intervention
- Data must be available, attainable, and drive instruction
- Universal screening, progress monitoring, and success criteria are standard practices
- Checks are in place to assure fidelity of implementation
- A process is in place for recording and accessing intervention documentation through the student information system

Leadership: Roles and Responsibilities

Each building should identify people to fill the following key roles and define the work of those roles.

Systems Coordinator/Team and/or Consultant(s)

- Schedule meetings
- Facilitate meetings
- Monitor data
- Document interventions and results
- Trains interventionist in implementation of intervention
- Check fidelity of intervention
- Tracks progress of intervention
- Models interventions

Problem Solving Team

- Consistent core members as identified by building
- Knowledge of a variety of evidence based interventions

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Austin Independent School District. Austin, TX.
 Brazosport Independent School District. Brazosport, TX.
 Edina Public Schools. Edina, MN.
 Eden Prairie School District. Eden Prairie, MN.
 Fairfax County Schools. Fairfax, VA.
 Olentangy School District. Olentangy, OH.
 Lakeville School District. Lakeville, MN.
 Northern Lights School District. Lac La Beche, Alberta, Canada.
 Poway Unified School District, San Diego, CA
 Roseville Area Schools. Roseville, MN.
 Rockwood School District. Eureka, MO.
 North St. Paul – Maplewood – Oakdale Schools. North St. Paul, MN.
 Chaska School District. Chaska, MN.
 Mounds View School District. Roseville, MN.
 Rochester Public Schools. Rochester, MN.
 Wayzata Public Schools. Wayzata, MN.
 Webster Groves School District. Webster Groves, KS.
 White Bear Lake Area Schools. White Bear Lake, MN.
 Hilliard City Schools. Hilliard, OH.

