Board of Trustees
Teaching and Learning Committee
Wednesday, May 1st, 2024 – 12:00 PM

This meeting will occur at the Lincoln Center (1325 Poplar St., Helena, MT. 59601) and via Microsoft Teams.

To participate remotely, please use this link on Microsoft Teams:

Click here to join the meeting

AGENDA

I.   CALL TO ORDER / INTRODUCTIONS

II.   REVIEW OF AGENDA

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT
      This is the time for comment on public matters that are not on the agenda. Public matters do not include any pending legal matters, private personnel issues, or private student issues. Please do not attempt to address such issues at this time or you will be ruled out of order. The Board cannot enter into a discussion during General Public Comment.

IV.   REVIEW OF MINUTES
      Review of 04.03.24 Teaching & Learning Committee Meeting Minutes

V.   ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION
      A.   Comprehensive District Literacy Plan

VI.   BOARD COMMENTS

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The Helena Public Schools educate, engage, and empower each student to maximize his or her individual potential with the knowledge, skills and character essential to being a responsible citizen and life-long learner.

Board of Trustees
Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting
Wednesday, April 3rd, 2024
12:00pm
Lincoln Center & TEAMS

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Trustees:	*Others:*
Jennifer McKee, Vice Chair	Rex Weltz, Superintendent
Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Chair	Jane Shawn, HEA President
Linda Cleatus, Trustee	Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent
	Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
	Melissa Romano-Lehman, Instructional Coach
	Joslyn Davidson, Curriculum Director
	Abby Kuhl, Instructional Coach
	Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant
	Karen Ogden, Communications Officer
	Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director
	Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology
	Online Guest of the Public

I.   CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS
     The meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m. by Vice Chair, Jennifer McKee.

II. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT
     There was no general public comment.

III. REVIEW OF AGENDA
No changes were requested to the agenda.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
The committee reviewed and approved the minutes from the 3.6.24 Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting.

V. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

A. Week of the Young Child & Early Literature Program
Chief of Staff Barb Ridgway presented information regarding *Week of the Young Child & Early Literature Program.* Early Literacy Targeted Intervention is a result of HB 352 (now MCA § 20-7-1801 -20-7-1804), and states that a district can but is not required to offer an early literacy intervention program. The Board has determined it will offer the following Early Literacy Targeted Intervention Program(s) for an eligible child:

- A full-time classroom based program for eligible children who are four (4) years of age or older on or before September 10 of the year in which the children are to participate in the program and are not entering and have not completed kindergarten. A parent/guardian may enroll an eligible child in a full-time classroom-based program on a part-time basis. The classroom-based program must align with developmentally appropriate early education learning standards determined by the Board of Public Education. Students must qualify based on an approved screening tool. The program includes requirements for ongoing evaluation of student progress and will utilize evaluation results to tailor instruction to each student's needs. Districts will receive full or half-time ANB for each eligible student served-paid in arrears. The District will start the program this fall.

- A jumpstart program for eligible children who are aged five years of age or older on or before September 10 of the year in which the children are to participate in the program and who have not yet completed 3rd grade. The jumpstart program shall occur during the time between the end of one school calendar year and the start of the next school calendar year as determined by the Board preceding a child's entry into kindergarten, 1st grade, 2nd grade, or 3rd grade. The jumpstart program shall be at least 4 weeks in duration and provide at least 120 instructional hours and be aligned to the framework determined by the Board of Public Education. The jumpstart program shall be designed in a manner to increase the likelihood of a child being evaluated at the end of the ensuring school year to be at or above a trajectory leading to reading proficiency at the end of 3rd grade. Districts will receive .25 ANB for each eligible student served-paid in arrears. The District hopes to launch this program in the summer of 2025.

The committee discussed a third option which is a home-based program that the district will not be doing. Ms. Ridgway shared that as the District prepares to launch the Early Literature Program there are many things that must be done including selecting a screening assessment, determining sites, purchasing curriculum, preparing classrooms, hiring teachers and para educators, and staff development for ELTI educators. Ms. Ridgway shared that to qualify for the programs students must be 4 years old by September 10, parents must provide written authorization for any students to be screened, students must be screened using an approved assessment to determine if they would benefit from the program, students must be below the established cut score, and the assessment/screener must be administered in April, May, or June. Students arriving after June 30 are not eligible. A student determined to be eligible in another District is not necessarily eligible in our District and each District determines its own eligibility. Students on an existing IEP must be assessed using the District selected screening/assessment tool. Ms. Ridgway shared the upcoming screening dates and locations with the Teaching and Learning Committee. Ms. Ridgway discussed that in preparing for Summer Jumpstart intervention eligible students only count towards ANB, OPI criteria states that in order to qualify for funding for the 2024 summer program it must begin after July 1, 2024, per OPI summer Jumpstart programs in future years will be able to begin in June and receive funding, and qualified 4-year-olds, Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade students can attend Jumpstart. As stated before, our District hopes to launch the Jumpstart program in the summer of 2025. Ms. Ridgway answered any questions the Teaching and Learning Committee had regarding the Early Literature Program.

Ms. Ridgway moved on to share some of the activities occurring in the district for the Week of the Young Child.
- Jim Darcy Family Fun Mixer, April 8th, 4:00 p.m.
- Bryant Storytime & Treats, April 9th, 2:50 p.m.
- Warren Storytime, Tour, Q&A, & Treats, April 10th, 2:30 p.m.
- Central Storytime with The Principal, April 10th, 2:30 p.m
- Kessler Storytime With the Principal, April 10th, 2:30 p.m.
- Four Georgians Storytime with The Principal, April 11th, 1:45 p.m.
- Hawthorne Buddy Reading, Tour, & Treats, April 11th, 2:45 p.m.
- Broadwater Storytime & Play, April 11th, 2:45 p.m.
- Rossiter Short Film, Games, Q&A, April 11th ,5:30 p.m.
- Smith Storytime, April 12th, 1:00 p.m.
- Jefferson Storytime With the Principal, April 12th, 2:30 p.m.

In Addition to screening for the Early Literacy Targeted Intervention Program during the Week of the Young Child, the District also focused on incoming 2024-2025 Kindergarten students who have preregistered, and every child received a welcome letter and a school water bottle sticker. Parents received a link to the school newsletter and the Superintendent's newsletter, and all were invited to attend the Week of the Young Child activities at their school.

B. <u>Eureka Training Update</u>

Ms. Melissa Romano-Lehman, Instructional Coach, gave an update on Eureka Training in the District. Ms. Romano-Lehman met with the PD reps from Eureka and identified a reasonable opportunity to get at least one person from each building trained before the June opportunities. There will be a six-hour virtual training on April 9th and this session provides teachers with a process for practice with effective planning and instruction using the curriculum materials. This will be a *Train the Trainer Model* and a group they can work with to support teachers as they work through the new resource next year. On April 11th there will be *Lead Training* which is a one-day session designed for K-9 District and school leaders. It provides an introduction to the EM2 curriculum for instructional leaders and prepares them to support teachers with early implementation. On June 10th and 11th, they will offer initial training for all K-2 and 3-5 teachers and paras who wish to attend. This training will be offered again in August during the week of the 19th. Ms. Romano-Lehman answered any questions the Teaching and Learning Committee had regarding the upcoming Eureka Training.

C. <u>MAST and Charter Schools Update</u>

Superintendent Rex Weltz gave an update on MAST and Charter Schools. There is a new statewide assessment called MAST that will be replacing SBAC testing beginning the 2024/2025 school year. Other Districts have piloted the program and have voiced what is working well and what is not working. Our District met with three representatives from the Office of Public Instruction (OPI), and we were able to ask questions and voice our concerns. Superintendent Weltz stated that OPI is offering webinars regarding MAST which will give people opportunities to learn more information, voice what their concerns might be, and to provide other feedback. Superintendent Weltz answered any questions the Teaching and Learning Committee had about the MAST assessment and moved on to give an update on charter schools. There are disagreements between Montana's Board of Public Education and the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) about who is responsible to oversee the opening of the charter schools and questions about funding so there is a lot of confusion for school districts about which direction they need to take to move forward with this process. The Montana Quality Education Coalition (MQEC) has filed a suit against OPI in an effort to get the judge to rule on who has the authority to oversee the opening of the charter schools, so we are waiting to see what that decision is before we can move forward. Superintendent Weltz answered any questions the Teaching and Learning Committee had regarding the charter schools update.

The Teaching and Learning Committee concluded the meeting with a brief summary provided by Human Resources Director Keri Mizel sharing some of the district data for absences and vacancies for teachers and paraprofessional positions. Ms. Mizel stated this data may be helpful as we are looking at the overall picture and how we are trying to figure out staffing models and how we recruit and retain staff in our District.

VI.   BOARD COMMENTS
       There were no further board comments.

VII. ADJOURNMENT
       The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 p.m. by Vice Chair Jennifer McKee.

your Helena Public Schools
···a great place to learn

Literacy Plan
COMPREHENSIVE PReK-12

DRAFT: Revised April 2024

Comprehensive Literacy Plan

In HSD's Comprehensive Literacy Plan, a robust **Instructional Framework** guides teachers in delivering effective instruction to students, ensuring comprehensive literacy development. **Curriculum & Instruction** are carefully designed to align with educational standards and cater to students' diverse learning needs. An **Intervention Plan** is implemented to provide targeted support for students requiring additional assistance, utilizing strategies such as tiered interventions and collaborative decision-making. **Benchmark Data** is collected to assess student progress and inform instructional decisions, while **Progress Monitoring** ensures that interventions are effective, and that students are making academic gains. An **Action Plan** is developed based on data analysis to adjust instruction and support strategies as needed. Regular **Walk-Throughs** are conducted to observe teaching practices, provide feedback, and foster a culture of continuous improvement. **Professional Development** opportunities are offered to educators to enhance their literacy instruction skills and stay updated on best practices. **Family Engagement** initiatives are encouraged to involve families in their child's literacy journey, creating a collaborative partnership between home and school to support student learning and success.
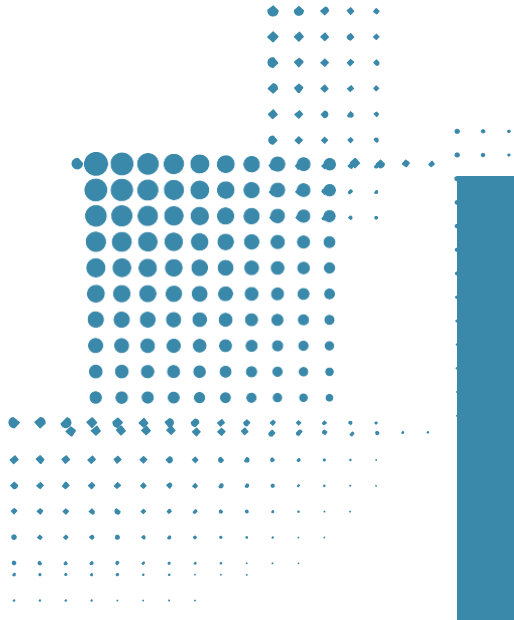
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04 [**Intervention Plan**](#)

The Helena School District integrates WIN, PLC, and MTSS, all of which offer a comprehensive approach to boost students' academic success by implementing evaluation, tiered interventions, collaborative decision-making, and progress monitoring.

05 [**Action Plan**](#)

Each school in the Helena School District, with guidance from its SLT, creates an action plan, identifies specific goals, steps, and timelines to achieve school or district wide goals in a systematic and organized manner.

06 [**School Leadership Team (SLT)**](#)

In Helena School District, the SLT aims to improve school effectiveness and student learning through strategic guidance, collaboration, and a shared vision.

07 [**Walkthroughs**](#)

Walkthroughs promote continuous improvement by encouraging reflection, collaboration, ongoing development, and growth within the Helena School District.

08 [**Professional Development**](#)

Professional development in the Helena School District is crucial for educators' growth, providing them with skills to enhance teaching methods and positively impact students.

09 [**Family Engagement**](#)

The Helena School District is committed to fostering a culture of collaboration between families, schools, and the community to support student success and well-being.

01 Instructional Framework

An instructional framework serves as a structured approach to effectively guiding teaching and learning processes in classroom instruction (Riddile, 2019). By following an instructional framework, teachers can create a supportive and engaging learning environment, cater to diverse student needs, and promote academic growth.

In Helena School District (HSD), the instructional framework LEARN is designed to provide a comprehensive approach to classroom instruction, encompassing various key elements to enhance student learning. This acronym encapsulates the core components of effective teaching and learning, emphasizing the importance of student understanding, teacher engagement strategies, interdisciplinary skill application, reflection on learning, and recognition of the need for next steps.

The LEARN framework is adaptable to accommodate the unique needs and priorities of individual schools, allowing for customization while retaining its fundamental principles of effective pedagogy. This flexibility empowers schools to tailor the framework to align with their educational goals specified in their action plans and student population, ensuring that it remains relevant and impactful. Customized frameworks can be found here. By incorporating the essential elements of best practices, schools can enhance student learning, foster academic growth, and create a supportive educational environment tailored to their school needs and instructional goals (Marzano et al., 2013).

> *Maximizing learning time is one of the most effective means for increasing student achievement.*
>
> –Mel Riddile

The utilization of the LEARN framework within HSD exemplifies a commitment to enhancing teaching practices and student learning outcomes. By embedding core principles of effective pedagogy, fostering student understanding, and encouraging reflective teaching approaches, educators cultivate an environment where academic growth and achievement flourish (Hattie, 2023). The adaptability and customization offered by the LEARN framework empower schools to tailor instructional strategies to meet the diverse needs of their student body, resulting in an impactful educational journey for all stakeholders.

More information on each aspect of the PreK-5 and 6-12 LEARN frameworks is available here. These documents include details to enhance comprehension of the essential elements linked to the framework's components. Each vital component includes research that supports the use of the instructional practice, a rationale for the component's significance, a concise overview of how teachers and students can employ the instructional practice, and an implementation checklist.

HSD PreK-5 INSTRUCTIONAL FRAMEWORK

ensuring all our students

L E A R N

Students understand the Learning Target(s), Success Criteria, & Agenda for the lesson

- ☐ Posting/referring to an Agenda and Learning Target(s)
- ☐ Incorporating a bell ringer

Teachers use Engagement Strategies throughout the lesson

- ☐ Opportunities to Respond OTR
  - Think, Pair, Share
  - Talking Chips
  - Turn & Talk
  - Pax Sticks/Cold Call
  - Choral Response
- ☐ I do, We do, You do
- ☐ Clear Signaling
- ☐ Perky Pace
- ☐ Variety of Lesson Delivery

Teachers will help students Apply Interdisciplinary Skills & Strategies

- ☐ Close reading
- ☐ Annotation
- ☐ Summary
- ☐ Notetaking
- ☐ Discussion
- ☐ Written response
- ☐ Vocabulary
- ☐ Text features
- ☐ Thinking charts

Teachers will help students Reflect on the Learning Target(s) & Success Criteria

- ☐ Lesson Closure
  - Review learning target
  - Incorporating an exit ticket/closing activity
  - Provide a formative assessment/check for understanding
  - Allow for student self-reflection

Teachers will Notice the Need for

- ☐ Next Steps
  - Enrichment,
  - Reinforcement,
  - Remediation (differentiation)

HSD 6-12 INSTRUCTIONAL FRAMEWORK

ensuring all our students

L E A R N

Teachers will LEAN into each LESSON BEGINNING by

- greeting students at the door
- incorporating a bell ringer
- posting an agenda
- posting a learning target

Teachers will EMPLOY INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

- varying teaching and learning approaches
- chunking the lesson
- explicitly instructing and modeling
- being clear
- questioning and providing opportunities to respond
- providing scaffolds
- providing feedback

Teachers will help students APPLY DISCIPLINARY SKILLS and STRATEGIES

- close reading
- annotation
- summary
- notetaking
- discussion
- writing
- vocabulary
- metacognition
- activating prior knowledge

Teachers will REACH EVERYONE by

- building classroom community
- having high expectations
- being credible
- offering praise

Teachers will NAVIGATE each LESSON ENDING by

- incorporating an exit ticket/closing activity
- providing a formative assessment/check for understanding
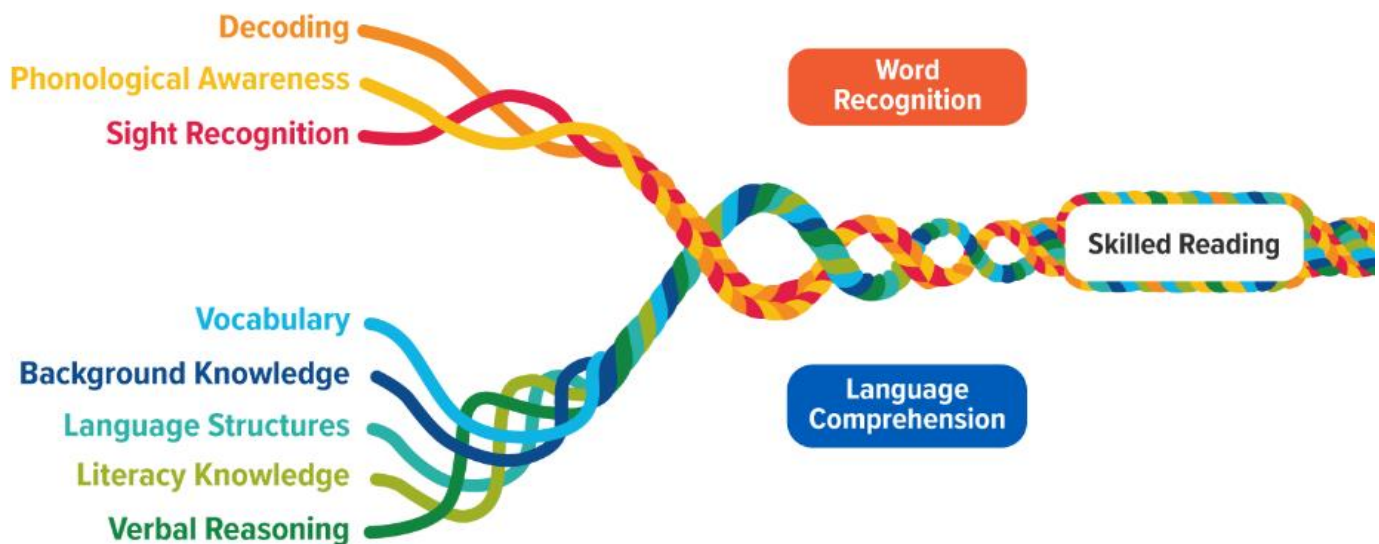- giving students a positive send-off

02 Curriculum and Instruction

Scarborough's Reading Rope

The Reading Rope serves as a symbolic depiction of the intricate process of reading, featuring two primary elements: the "language comprehension" strand and the "word recognition" strand. The language comprehension strand involves the meaning of words and sentences, while the word recognition strand involves decoding and identifying words. Although standards for each reading component are present in all grades from kindergarten through fifth grade, the instructional focus shifts across grade levels as students advance toward mastery. This shift is not about achieving balance or equal time allocation for each component, but rather a transition in emphasis on specific skill progressions. These two strands are interconnected, representing the skills essential for proficient reading. As readers progress, they strengthen both strands, leading to enhanced reading comprehension and fluency.

At the secondary level, emphasis is placed on the "language comprehension" strand of the rope. While students who do not demonstrate reading comprehension with grade level text can focus on the "word recognition" strand, most literacy instruction is centered on advanced word study and fluency, activating and building background knowledge, and understanding complex language and text structures. More information about Scarborough's Rope can be found here.

The Reading Rope

- Decoding
- Phonological Awareness
- Sight Recognition

Word Recognition

Skilled Reading

- Vocabulary
- Background Knowledge
- Language Structures
- Literacy Knowledge
- Verbal Reasoning

Language Comprehension

Modified from Scarborough, H. S. (2001). Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis)abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice. In S. Neuman & D. Dickinson (Eds.), Handbook for research in early literacy. New York, NY: Guilford Press

Quality Instruction

Quality literacy instruction involves explicit and systematic teaching methods that provide structured and targeted support for students. Explicit instruction involves clearly stating learning objectives, modeling skills, and providing guided practice, while systematic instruction ensures that skills are sequenced and taught in a logical progression to build students' proficiency over time (Cole, 2023). The HSD has implemented the use of Side-by-Side Consulting Routine Cards to support explicit literacy instruction in grades PreK-5. In grades 6-12, literacy instruction is disciplinary in nature: students learn strategies to read, write about, and discuss pieces of text specific to all academic content areas.

Standards

Literacy typically encompasses decoding, oral reading fluency, reading comprehension, language, writing, and spelling. These components are reflected in Montana's English Language Arts & Literacy Standards from kindergarten through grade 12 and the Montana Early Learning Standards. Aligning literacy instruction with the Montana Literacy Content Standards provides educators with a clear framework for developing students' reading and writing abilities. These standards outline the essential skills and knowledge that students should acquire at each grade level, guiding educators in designing targeted instruction to meet these benchmarks (MT OPI, 2011). HSD has identified essential standards according to the following three characteristics:

1. Does it have endurance? 2. Does it have leverage? 3. Does it develop readiness for the next level of learning? The HSD essential standards for K-5 are listed on the trimester success criteria documents on SharePoint, while the essential standards for 6-12 are listed on each school's curriculum page.

Identifying Essential Standards

1. Does it have endurance? → 2. Does it have leverage? → 3. Does it develop readiness for the next level of learning? → Essential Standard
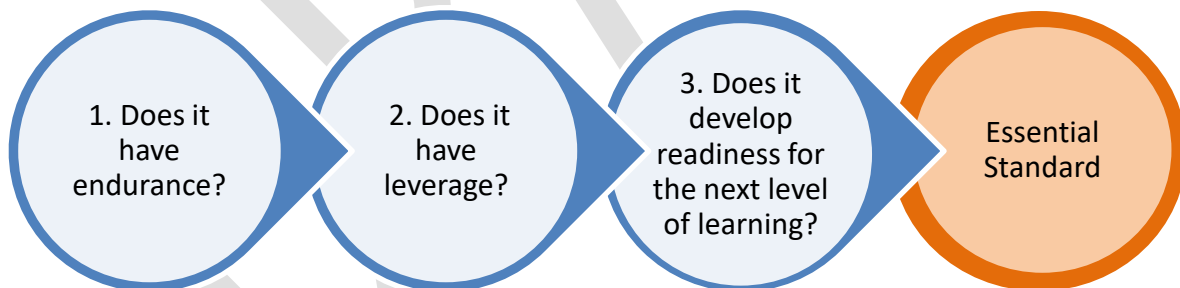
Evidence Based Curriculum

HSD has implemented evidence based instructional materials and strategies that have been rigorously researched and proven to be effective. Evidence-based practices are grounded in practical evidence and research, offering educators a reliable approach to delivering high-quality literacy instruction that aligns with the best pedagogical practices. The following pages include a brief explanation of the literacy resources used by the HSD and their associated evidence. For more information about the process for implementing curriculum, see the Board Policy for Curriculum Development and Content here.

Helena School District Resources (PreK-12)

Resource	Purpose	Source Type	Grade	Suggested Group Level	Tier
Into Reading	Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, Grammar, Comprehension	HMH Ed and Physical Copies, Student Books, Manual	K - 5	Core	1
Heggerty	Phonemic Awareness	Manual	PreK- 2	Core	1
Handwriting Without Tears	Handwriting	Online Manual (Clever), Workbooks	PreK-1	Core	1
Bridge-the-Gap	Phonemic Awareness	Manual	3, 4, 5	Groups A & B	2/3
Core Knowledge	Comprehension, Vocabulary, Speaking & Listening	Student Books, Manual	K-5	Group C & D	2/3
Fly Leaf	Phonics	Decodable Student Books, Manual	K, 1, 2, 3	K Group C & D 1 Groups A-C 2-3 Group A-B	2/3
Rigby Reader	Fluency, Comprehension, Vocabulary	Leveled Student Books, Manual HMH Ed and Physical Copies	K - 5	K-1 Group D 2-3 Group C-D 4-5 Group B-D	2/3
Blend-It-Books	Phonics	Decodable Student Books HMH Ed	PreK-2	PreK-K Group D 1 Group A-C 2 Group A-B	2/3
Start Right Readers	Phonics, High Frequency Words, Fluency	Student Books, Manual HMH Ed and Physical Copies	K, 1, 2	Core	1
Read & Response Journals	Comprehension, Vocabulary, Writing	Workbooks, Manuals HMH Ed and Physical Copies	K-5	K-1 Group B-C 2-5 Group A-B	2/3
Word Study Studio	Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, HFW, Fluency	HMH Ed	K-5	Groups A-B	2/3
Table-Top Mini Lessons (EL)	English Language Development, Vocabulary,	HMH Ed and Physical Copies	K-5	ELL Groups A-B	2/3
Reader's Theatre	Fluency	HMH Ed (Literacy Centers)	1-5	Groups B-D	2/3
Differentiated Spelling	Spelling	HMH Ed	K-5	Groups A-D	2/3
Book Clubs	Fluency, Comprehension, Vocabulary	HMH Ed	1-5	Groups B-D	2
Advanced Word Study	Multisyllabic Phonics and Morphology	Mississippi Dept. of Ed (Sharepoint) *free*	3-5	Groups B-D	2
Florida Center for Reading Research Games	PA, PH, HFW, Comprehension, Vocab,	FCRR (Sharepoint) *free*	preK-5	Groups A-D	2/3
Common Lit	Fluency, Vocabulary, Comprehension, Writing	Online *free*	6-12	Supplemental	1
Collections	Fluency, Vocabulary, Grammar, Comprehension, Writing	HMH Ed, Student Books and online component	9-12	Core	1
Read 180	Vocabulary, Comprehension, Fluency, Spelling, Writing	HMH Ed, online component	9-12	Core intervention	2/3
Creative Curriculum	Physical, Language, Social-Emotional, Cognitive, Literacy, Math, Science, Social Studies, Art	Manual and teacher materials	preK	Core	1

For more information, see the Evidence Based Curriculum here.

03 Assessment & Data

In HSD, data and assessments play a crucial role in understanding student progress, identifying areas of improvement, and guiding instructional decisions. Educators utilize various types of assessments to gather information about student learning and growth including Benchmark Assessments, Screeners, Diagnostic Assessments, and Progress Monitoring.

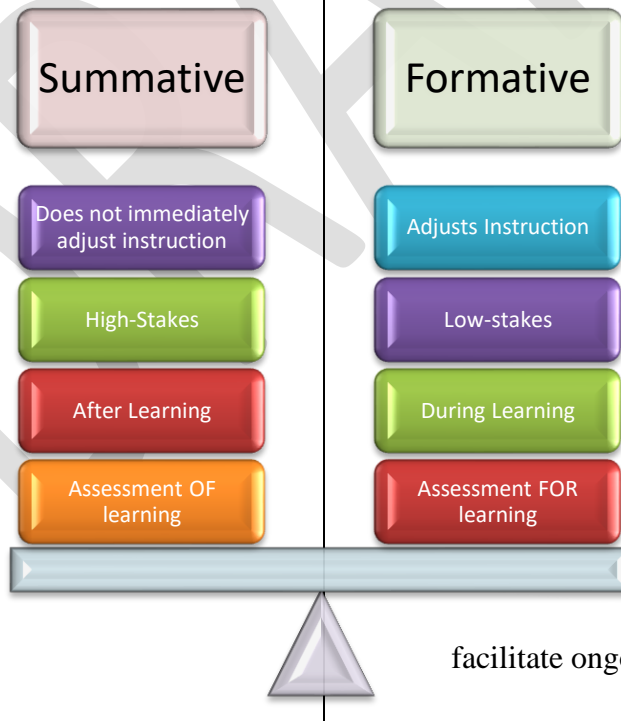**Summative vs. Formative Assessments**

In HSD, the use of summative and formative assessments is essential to ensure effective teaching and meaningful student learning outcomes. Summative assessments help educators evaluate students' overall mastery of content and skills at the end of a learning period, while formative assessments provide valuable insights into student progress, thus informing instructional decisions in real-time. By utilizing a balanced approach to assessment, educators can tailor their teaching methods to meet the diverse needs of students and support continuous growth and improvement.

WHAT HAVE STUDENTS LEARNED?

Summative assessments aim to determine the knowledge that students have gained by the end of a learning period and answer the question, *"What have students learned?"* These assessments, typically high-stakes, assess students' mastery of specific content or skills and certify their proficiency and overall achievement. Examples of summative assessments within HSD include common assessments and culminating projects or presentations. Additionally, assessments such as i-Ready and Acadience, which evaluate students based on grade-level standards, can also be considered as summative assessments.

HOW ARE STUDENTS PROGRESSING TOWARDS THE OBJECTIVES?

Formative assessments are conducted during instruction to monitor student progress, provide feedback, and guide teaching and learning strategies to answer the question, *"How are students progressing towards the learning objectives?"* These assessments are low-stakes and focus on identifying students' strengths and areas of improvement in real-time. Examples of summative assessments in the HSD include quizzes, exit tickets, teacher observations, and classroom work. The primary goal of formative assessments is to inform instructional decisions, support student learning, and facilitate ongoing improvement.

Summative	Formative
Does not immediately adjust instruction	Adjusts Instruction
High-Stakes	Low-stakes
After Learning	During Learning
Assessment OF learning	Assessment FOR learning

While summative assessments evaluate student achievement at the end of a learning period, formative assessments are used throughout instruction to support student progress and guide teaching strategies. Both types of assessments play a crucial role in assessing student learning and informing instructional practices.

Helena School District Assessments			
Assessment	**Purpose**	**Assessment**	**Purpose**
i-Ready	Identifies students' reading abilities in the sub-domain levels of Vocabulary and Comprehension. Used as an initial sort for WIN groupings. 2-5, 6-11 Benchmark Assessment	**SBAC/ MAST**	3-8 State mandated standardized assessment used as a common accountability score for each district in state and federal reporting.
Acadience	Identifies students' reading abilities in the sub-domain levels of phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency. Used as an initial sort for WIN groupings. K-1 Benchmark Assessment	**i-Ready Growth Monitoring**	2-5, 6-11 Provides students with growth targets to aim for in support with reaching proficiency. Monitors students' progress towards those growth targets.
Into Reading Common Assessments	Common summative assessment given at the conclusion of each module (or week for 3rd grade) covering the priority standards taught in each module.	**i-Ready Standard Mastery**	2-5, 6-11 Evaluates students' mastery of selected standards in Vocabulary and Comprehension.
Core Phonics	Identifies students' phonics skill development.	**CogAT**	Measures students' academic aptitude and gifted abilities. Given to every 2nd grader.
Heggerty/ Bridge the Gap	Identifies students' phonemic awareness skill development.	**AMSA/MSAA**	Alternative state assessment for students with significant cognitive impairments.
ORF	Identifies students' fluency and accuracy development.		
Pre-ACT	Identifies students' reading abilities. 10 Benchmark Assessment	**ACT**	11 state mandated standardized assessment that identifies students' reading and writing abilities. Used as a common accountability score for each district in state and federal reporting.
Dial-4	Pre K assessment of knowledge of letter and words and ability to solve problems (oral language).	**Acadience PELI**	Acadience assessment for preschool early literacy indicators including alphabet knowledge, vocabulary, oral language, comprehension, and phonological awareness.
WIDA	Language proficiency assessment for ELL students.	**Teaching Strategies GOLD (TSG)**	PreK observational assessment on developmental objectives.

Benchmark Assessments

District-wide benchmark assessments are vital tools used three times a year to gauge students' grade-level proficiency and growth in academic skills. Helena elementary schools use Acadience (PreK-1st) and i-Ready (2nd- 5th) as benchmark assessments, while Helena middle and high schools use i-Ready (6th -11th). These assessments, administered across the entire district, provide valuable insights into student achievement and progress, allowing educators to make informed decisions about curriculum planning and instructional strategies. By measuring both

grade-level proficiency and individual student growth, district-wide benchmark assessments play a crucial role in promoting accountability, identifying areas for improvement, and ultimately enhancing student learning outcomes across the school system.

Benchmark Windows	Benchmark Data	Data Usage
Benchmark windows are established district wide at the start of each school year. These windows are two weeks long and occur three times a year, in the fall, winter, and spring. Assessment Calendar	Within two weeks of the conclusion of the benchmark window, data is compiled and shared with all stakeholders (teachers, administrators, families, and school board). HSD Assessment Data	Data is used to make informed decisions of instructional needs including PD, resources, and initial sorting of WIN groups. Individual schools and the district as a whole use the Benchmark data to make Action Plan goals.

Screeners

Screeners are valuable tools in Helena elementary schools' assessments that serve as initial diagnostic assessments to identify students' strengths and areas for improvement. These assessments are administered to all students and provide educators with valuable insights into students' skills. By using screeners, teachers can effectively tailor instruction to meet the diverse needs of students, differentiate learning experiences, and provide targeted interventions early on to support student success. In HSD, the initial screeners used are the Benchmark Assessments (i-Ready, Acadience, Dial-4, and Reading Inventory). These screeners serve as the district dyslexia screener and play a crucial role in informing instructional planning, identifying at-risk students, and promoting a proactive approach to addressing learning gaps in elementary education.

Diagnostic Assessments

Diagnostic assessments are given to students who perform below grade level expectations on the screeners or if the teacher wants to dive deeper into their skill development level. Diagnostics are used to determine needed intervention and identify what students need to learn. They provide detailed insights into students' individual strengths, weaknesses, and learning needs. These assessments are designed to evaluate students' specific skills and knowledge at the beginning of a learning period to inform instructional planning and intervention strategies. By conducting diagnostic assessments, educators can identify gaps in understanding, tailor instruction to meet students' unique learning requirements, and set targeted goals for academic growth. Diagnostic Assessments used in HSD include the Core Phonics Survey, Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Assessment, Into Reading Oral Reading Fluency Assessment, and Reading Inventory, and Teaching Strategies GOLD. *For more information about the use of assessments and, see "Gathering Data" and "Data Informed Decisions on pages 17 and 19.* With these diagnostic assessments, elementary educators can create

Data Driven Instruction
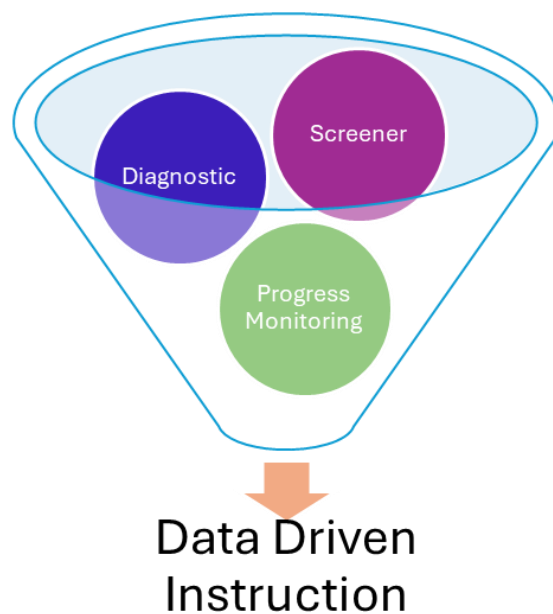
By leveraging various forms of assessment data and using it strategically to guide instruction, educators in schools can foster a supportive learning environment that maximizes student growth and achievement.

personalized learning experiences, support student progress, and foster a data-informed approach to teaching that maximizes student success.

Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring is a valuable practice in Helena schools that involves regularly assessing students' academic growth and performance over time. This ongoing assessment process allows educators to track individual student progress, identify areas of improvement, and make data-driven instructional decisions. By measuring student achievement at regular intervals, teachers can effectively adjust teaching strategies, provide targeted interventions, and support student development towards academic goals. Progress monitoring in HSD may include Acadience PM, i-Ready Growth Monitoring, i-Ready Standard Mastery, Read 180, TSG, and specifically developed progress monitoring tools using a PDSA. *For more information about PDSAs see "WIN Groups" on* *.* Progress monitoring frequency is dependent on student and teacher need. Tier 1 students are progress monitored twice a year between benchmarks. Tier 2 and 3 students are progress monitored every 2-6 weeks, dependent on their PDSA cycle. Progress monitoring in Helena plays a crucial role in promoting accountability, fostering a culture of continuous improvement, and ensuring that every student receives the necessary support to thrive academically.

Using Data to Drive Instruction

Analyzing assessment data allows educators to make informed instructional decisions. By identifying trends, patterns, and individual student needs, teachers can tailor their teaching strategies to better support student learning. Teachers collaborate to interpret data during PLCs. *For more information about PLCs, see* Data-driven instruction helps ensure that instruction is targeted, differentiated, and responsive to the diverse needs of students.

Strategies for Using Data Effectively:

Set Clear Goals	Collect the Right Data	Analyze Data Regularly	Collaborate (PLC)	Communicate Findings
Define specific learning objectives and outcomes that data will help measure.	Ensure that data collected aligns with the learning goals and objectives.	Consistently review and analyze data to identify trends, patterns, and areas of improvement.	Work with colleagues to interpret data, share best practices, and collaborate on intervention strategies.	Share data insights with students, parents, and stakeholders to foster collaborative approach to student success.

Benefits of Using Data in Instruction:

Incorporating data-driven strategies into teaching practices allows educators to tailor their instruction to meet the unique needs of each student. By analyzing student performance data, educators can identify areas of strength and weakness, enabling them to provide targeted interventions and personalized learning experiences. This proactive approach not only enhances academic growth but also fosters a sense of inclusivity and equity within the classroom by ensuring that every student has the opportunity to succeed. Ultimately, data-driven instruction creates a more engaging, responsive, and student-centered learning environment that empowers learners to reach their full potential.

Personalized Learning

- Data allows educators to create personalized learning experiences for each student based on their individual strengths and weaknesses.

Targeted Interventions

- By analyzing data, teachers can identify students who may need additional support or interventions to help them succeed academically.

Monitor Progress

- Data helps educators track student progress over time, allowing them to adjust instruction as needed to ensure continous growth.

Evidence-Based Decision Making

- Using data enables educators to make informed decisions about instructional strategies, curriculum design, and resource allocation.

┌──┐
│04│ Intervention Plan
└──┘

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) serves as a structure for educators to collaborate and provide interventions that ensures all students have fair access and opportunities to meet academic standards. An intervention plan within MTSS consists of several crucial components to address the diverse needs of students and promote their academic success including gathering data, tiered interventions, team-based decision making, and progress monitoring.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

Characteristics of the Three- Tiered Literacy Model of MTSS		
	Tier 1 Instruction	**Tier 1 Instruction PLUS Tier 2 intervention**	**Tier 1 Instruction PLUS Tier 3 Intervention**
Description	Core structured literacy curriculum and instruction	Structured literacy intervention targeting students' specific reading concerns	Individualized plan to intensify and coordinate structured literacy intervention
Who Receives	All Students	Some Students Those who are at risk or haven't responded to effective Tier 1 instruction	Few Students with significant reading difficulties or those who haven't responded to effective Tier 1 and Tier 2 instruction.
Ideal Group Sizes	Whole class	Small Groups (5-7 students)	Small Groups (3-5 students) or Individual dependent on student need
Time	Minimum of 60-90 minutes every day	30 minutes three to five times per week in addition to Tier 1 instruction	30 minutes every day in addition to Tier 1 instruction
Assessment	Benchmark Assessments three times per year	Progress monitoring at least every 4-6 weeks in addition to Benchmark Assessments three times per year	Progress Monitoring at least every other week in addition to Benchmark Assessments three times per year

Modified from: Brown-Chidsey, R. (2016). *Practical handbook of multi-tiered systems of support.* The Guilford Press.

The next step of the intervention plan is tiered interventions (school specific MTSS pyramids can be found [here]). These interventions are structured in tiers or levels of support, with each tier offering varying levels of intensity based on student response to intervention (Brown-Chidsey, 2016). Tier 1 interventions are provided to all students as part of their regular instruction, while Tier 2 interventions target students who require more targeted support. For students who continue to struggle, Tier 3 interventions are implemented, providing intensive, individualized support. A critical component of each tier is progress monitoring. Regular monitoring of students' progress allows educators to assess the effectiveness of interventions and make data-informed decisions about the next steps. Progress monitoring ensures

that interventions are responsive to students' evolving needs and that adjustments can be made promptly. *For a list of available resources for each tier, see the Helena School District Resources Table on* [page 10](#).

Gathering Data (K-5)

The foundation of an intervention plan lies in the assessment of students' academic abilities and areas of need. Educators gather data through various assessments to identify students who may require additional support to meet learning goals. This data-driven approach allows for targeted interventions tailored to students' specific needs. HSD utilizes the Literacy Assessment Decision Tree to decide which assessments to conduct on students, aiming to collect valuable data that will assist in implementing an intervention plan effectively. Educators and stakeholders may use resources outside the decision tree as necessary to gain a clear understanding of students' strengths and areas of needed improvement.

K-5 HSD Literacy Assessment Decision Tree

Was the student's performance at grade level on the Benchmark Assessment?

- NO
  - 3rd–5th
    - Administer ORF
      - Accuracy? (+95%)
        - YES
          - Fluency?
            - YES → See Grade Level Flowchart and Focus Folder for instructional groupings
            - NO → Administer Core Phonics Survey
        - NO → Administer Core Phonics Survey
  - K–2nd
    - Intensive → Administer Haggerty Assessment
    - Strategic → Administer Core Phonics Survey
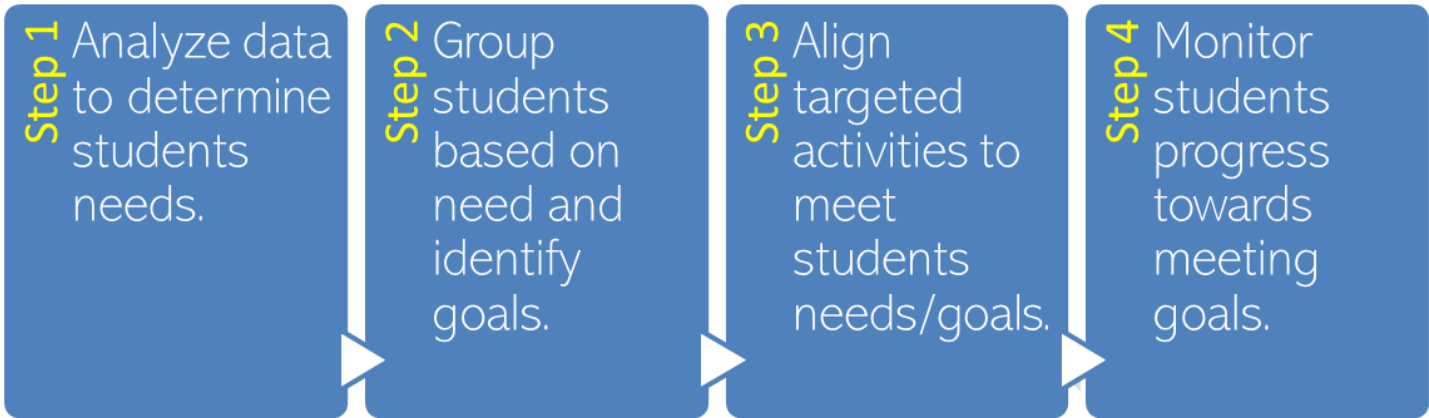- YES
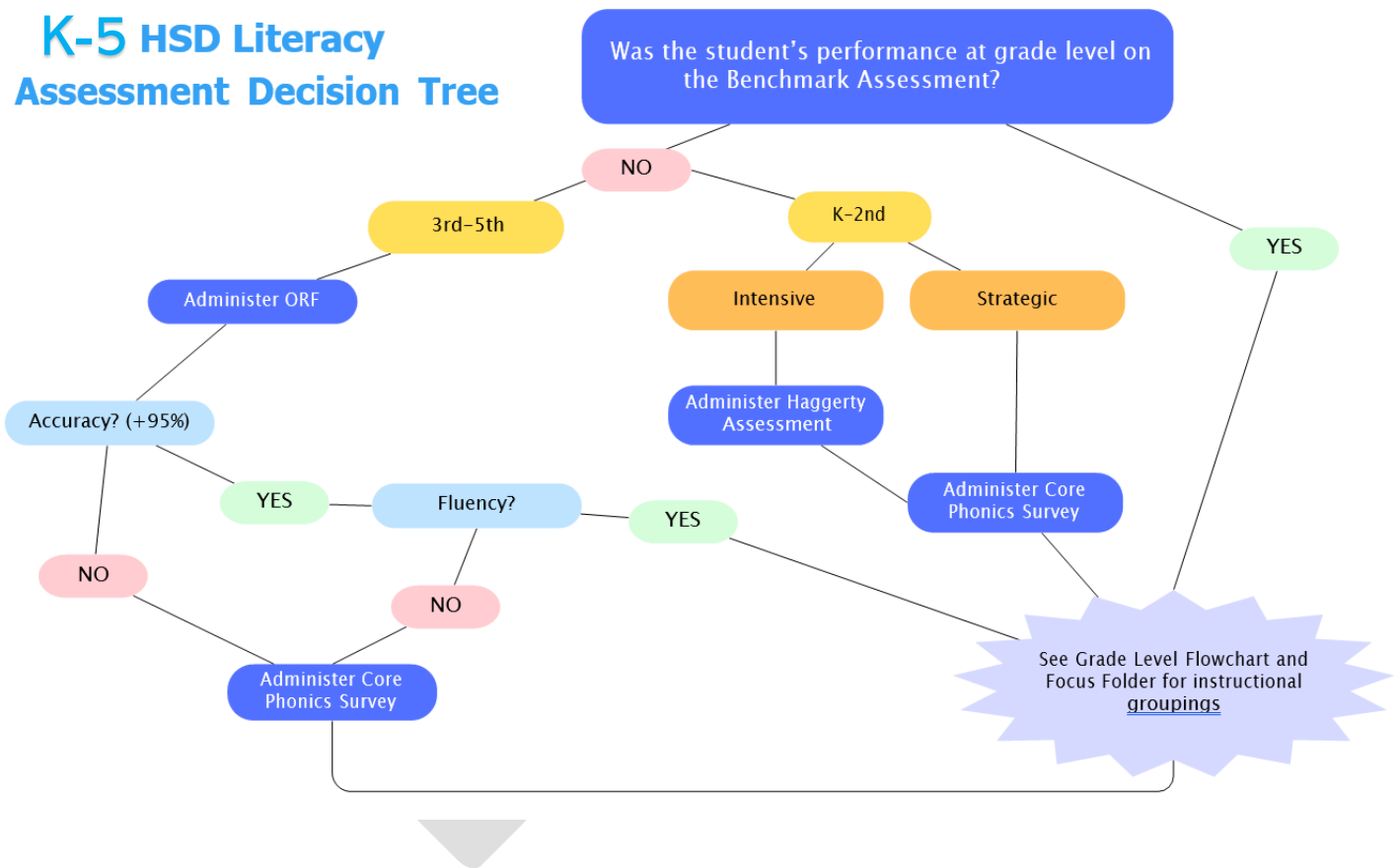
WIN Groups

In conjunction with MTSS, HSD enhances personalized literacy instruction at the pre K-5 level through What I Need (WIN) Groups. WIN is a continuous cycle of progress for all students to achieve their literacy growth.

WIN Process

Step 1 Analyze data to determine students needs.	**Step 2** Group students based on need and identify goals.	**Step 3** Align targeted activities to meet students needs/goals.	**Step 4** Monitor students progress towards meeting goals.

Initially, the educational team, including teachers, support staff, coaches, and administrators, organizes students into groups based on data analysis, which may involve the use of flowcharts (PreK, K-1 and 2-5), and sets group goals. Specific activities are selected to aid students in advancing towards their learning targets. The team might utilize focus sheets to pinpoint potential activities that can assist students in reaching their goals. A PDSA (Plan, Do, Study, Act) approach is employed to outline WIN group instruction and monitor each group's progress. Following the PDSA cycle (occurring every 2, 4, or 6 weeks), the educational team reassesses students' needs and adjusts WIN groups accordingly. Many of these resources are derived from Tina Pelletier and Debbie Hunsaker's work in *How do I plan and teach reading groups* (2016).

What I Need Groups (WIN)	
WIN is…	**WIN is not…**
☑ Data Driven	☒ Core Lesson
☑ Targeted Skills	☒ Homework Help
☑ Direct Instruction	☒ Worksheets
☑ Based on Student Need	☒ Silent Reading
	☒ Whole Class
☑ Skill Based Groups	

Show is one option of a PDSA. Multiple options of PDSAs are available on SharePoint.

Data Informed Decisions (6-12)

At the secondary level (grades 6-12), Tier 2 interventions focus on teaching specific skills that help readers understand and engage with content at their grade level. Typically involving small student groups, Tier 2 support is offered in addition to the core Tier 1 instruction. These interventions are tailored to address students' reading needs based on their data, covering areas such as decoding, vocabulary, language structures, background knowledge, listening comprehension, and reading comprehension. In contrast, Tier 3 interventions provide intensive, personalized literacy instruction for students significantly below grade-level reading standards.

Teachers and administrators from each building define a formal process or pathway for how students with literacy skill gaps will access Tier 2 or Teir 3 intervention. The process includes:
- ☐ How students will be identified as having skill gaps
- ☐ How students will be matched to available interventions
- ☐ How student progress will be monitored
- ☐ How decisions will be made about intensifying support
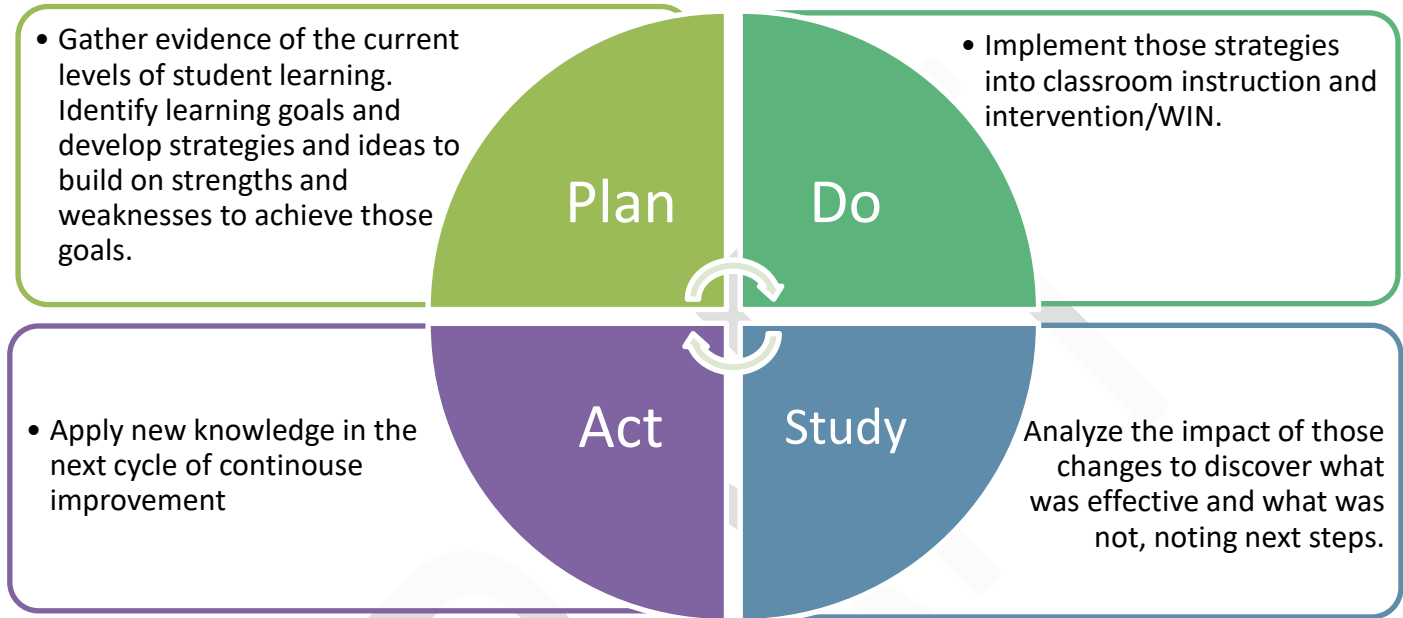- ☐ How schoolwide resources will be identified and allocated

Shown is an example of a middle school ELA pathway. More 6-12 ELA pathways/flowcharts can be found here.
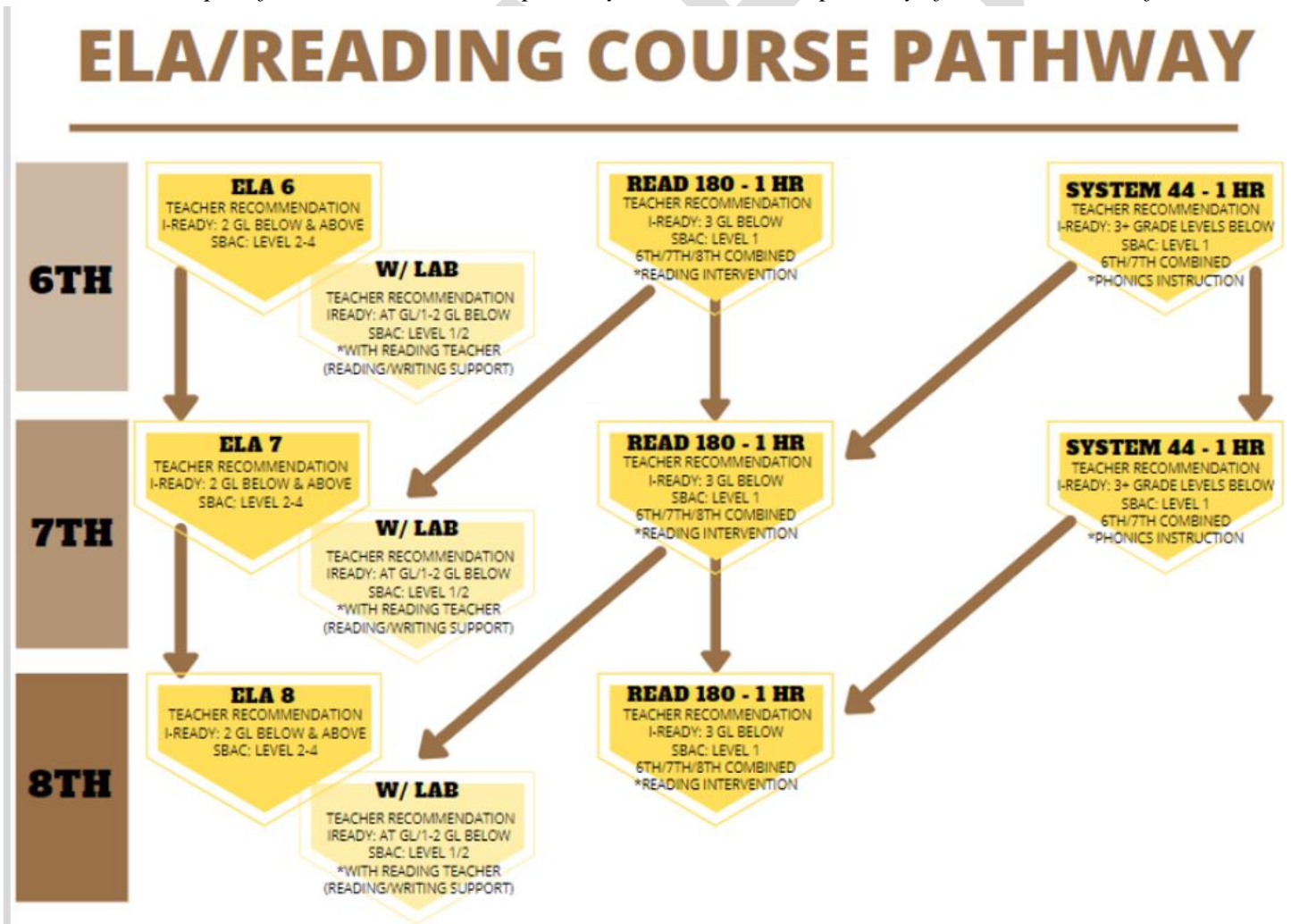
Professional Learning Communities (PLC)

PLC is an ongoing process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve (DuFour et al., 2010). A PLC is composed of a collaborative team including teachers, specialists, counselors, coaches, and administrators who work interdependently to achieve common goals for which members are mutually accountable. PLC is committed to continuous improvement and is constantly searching for better ways to achieve goals and ensure students learn.
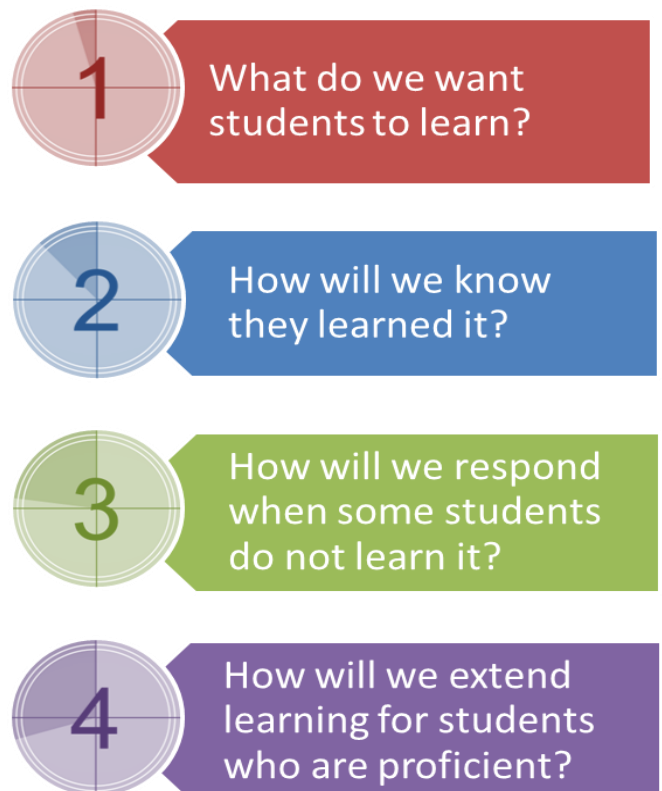
PLC Model of Continuous Improvement

- Gather evidence of the current levels of student learning. Identify learning goals and develop strategies and ideas to build on strengths and weaknesses to achieve those goals.

Plan

- Implement those strategies into classroom instruction and intervention/WIN.

Do

- Apply new knowledge in the next cycle of continouse improvement

Act

Study

Analyze the impact of those changes to discover what was effective and what was not, noting next steps.

Modified from: Hyson, et.al.. (2020). *The data-driven school: Collaborating to improve student outcomes*. The Guilford Press.

The 4 Critical Questions

In the Helena schools, PLC teams work together during weekly PLC meetings to analyze data, design interventions, and monitor student progress. At the PLC meeting, educators collectively reflect on the four Critical Questions. PLC teams prioritize the four Critical Questions as they serve as the foundation for effective teaching and learning practices (Eaker & Keating, 2012). By clearly defining learning goals, assessing student understanding, strategizing interventions for struggling students, and providing enrichment for proficient learners, educators ensure comprehensive support and learning for all students. Addressing these questions guides PLC teams in making data-informed decisions, enhancing collaboration, and ultimately improving student outcomes. By pooling their expertise and resources, the team can create comprehensive intervention plans that address the needs of students using data driven decisions.

1 What do we want students to learn?

2 How will we know they learned it?

3 How will we respond when some students do not learn it?

4 How will we extend learning for students who are proficient?

PLC teams meet every Monday that school is in session from 2:40 to 3:40 for collaborative work aimed at enhancing professional growth and student learning. These meetings are flexible and collaborative to provide educators with opportunities for learning and sharing best practices that will impact students' growth.

Building Level PLC Meetings

The first Monday of each month that school is in session is designated for building level PLC meetings. Led by the School Leadership Team (SLT), these meetings focus on staff professional development (PD) based on insights gathered from walkthroughs and various data sources. The PD content may encompass aspects of the instructional framework, pedagogical strategies, or data analysis to connect best practices and achieve high levels of learning for students and adults (Eaker & Keating, 2012). The SLT determines the scheduling of these meetings and for whom the meetings are appropriate. *For more information about SLT,* *.*
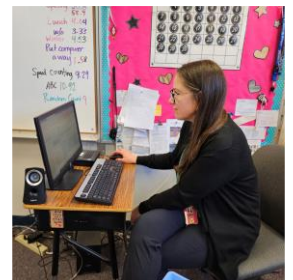

1st Monday
- Whole School PLC

2nd Monday
- Specialists, Grade Band opportunities

3rd & 4th Monday
- Grade/Content Teams

Specialist Collaboration and Grade Band PLCs

During the second Monday PLC meetings, specialists such as counselors, nurses, music, library, and physical education (PE) teachers collaborate with departments colleagues. Also, during the 2nd Monday, Grade band PLCs for K-2nd and 3rd -5th are available through Teams for cross district collaboration and PD. Specialists in grades 6-12 may collaborate on subsequent Mondays as well.

Grade Level and Content Teams

Student achievement is supported when grade-level or content-area teams share and discuss data (Hyson et al., 2020). The team works to make this time relevant, focused, and collaborative to support student achievement while being flexible to serve the needs and diverse goals of our professionals. This process aligns with the Professional Growth Model, guiding teams to set goals, establish timelines, and maintain a shared agenda/notes. The documentation generated is shared with PLC members and building administration to facilitate, review, and implement necessary provisions needed to support student achievement.

Optional Professional Development Opportunities

Optional professional development may be offered during Monday PLC meetings when identified as essential by the building SLT, district incentives, or principal priorities. These additional opportunities aim to further support educator growth and student success. *For more information about PLCs, see the PLC Handbook.*

05 Action Plan

Creating comprehensive school and district action plans are essential for fostering continuous improvement in HSD. The Action Plans outline specific objectives, goals, and strategies to support instructional effectiveness in a continuous improvement cycle. The Action Plan is developed at the start of each school year and monitored or adjusted as needed throughout the year.

The district action plan, informed by district-wide data and incentives, is shared with all stakeholders, including the school board, teachers, administrators, and the community annually. Essential for ensuring consistency and alignment in literacy instruction across all Helena District schools, this plan promotes best practices, addresses systemic challenges, and fosters collaboration to enhance literacy skills district-wide. An updated district Action Plan can be found on the district curriculum and instruction website.

With the goals of the district wide action plan in mind, individual schools create their own action plan. This plan is developed using school specific data and goals identified by the School Leadership Team (SLT). The school action plan drives school wide PLCs in a process of continuous improvement. By having a school action plan in place, educators can identify areas for improvement and implement evidence-based strategies to enhance reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. In addition to school and district action plans, some PLC teams may create an action plan specific to their grade level goals and objectives for continuous improvement.

ACTION PLAN
Sample School
Sample Year

SMART Goal #1: By the end of the year, 80% or more students will meet their growth goal as measured by the iReady Reading Benchmark.

Sub-Goal(s): 1. Educators use explicit and systematic instruction in lesson plans following the instructional framework 80% of the time as measured by walk through data. 2. All grade levels will run WIN groups 4/5 days during the normal week.

Action Steps	Resources	Who	When	Notes
Whole School PLC reviewing the instructional framework	LEARN Framework	Coach, SLT, Principal	Oct. 1 2:40-3:40	Meet next Thursday to plan PD. All staff will attend PD.
Weekly Walk-Throughs	Walk-thorugh	Princpal, Coach	Oct 1-31	SLT Team will review Walk-Through data and decide on topic for Nov's PD.

SMART Goal #2:

Sub-Goal(s):

Action Steps	Resources	Who	When	Notes

Shown is an example of what an Action Plan could look like.

Components of a School and District Action Plan:

1. **Needs Assessment:** Conduct a thorough analysis of current literacy levels among students to identify strengths, challenges, and areas for improvement. Use data from benchmark assessments, other assessments, the walkthrough tool, Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA), and observations to inform the development of the action plan.

2. **Goal Setting:** Create clearly defined goals and objectives as determined from the needs assessment and related to instructional support and professional development. These goals should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART). The number of goals on the action plan may depend on the identified needs of the school and district.

3. **Action Steps:** Develop steps necessary to reach the identified goals. Identified steps address the diverse needs of educators within the school and district. Action steps should be clearly defined and include person(s) responsible, resources needed, and an estimated timeline.

4. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Establish mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating progress towards the goals outlined in the action plan. This may involve regular data analysis with SLT meetings to ensure alignment with objectives. *For more information about SLT, see .*

5. **Collaboration and Communication:** Foster collaboration among stakeholders, including teachers, administrators, parents, and community members. Communication may happen at staff meetings, building work sessions, or during school wide PLC. Effective communication strategies ensure that all parties are informed and engaged in the implementation of the action plan.
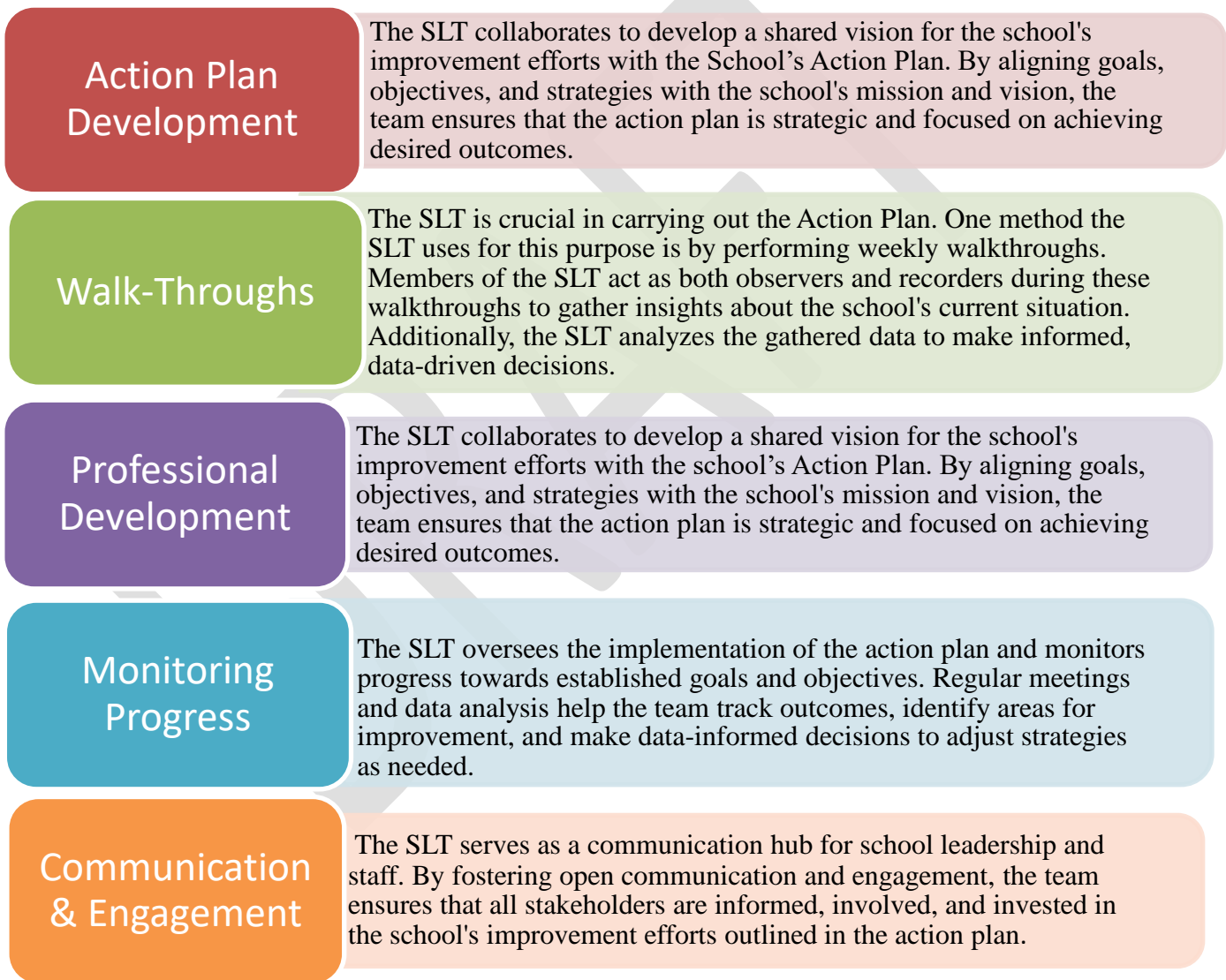

"Goals are pure fantasy…

unless you have a specific plan to achieve them."

–Stephen Covey

06 School Leadership Team (SLT)

At every Helena school, a School Leadership Team (SLT) is formed, and may be include teacher representatives from all areas, counselor, coach, and principal. The main objective of the SLT is to enhance the effectiveness of a school by providing strategic guidance, promoting collaboration, and fostering a shared vision for improvement. The team meets monthly to oversee the school's advancement towards the goals on the Action Plan and determine necessary action steps to achieve these goals, to review school wide data from benchmark assessments and the walkthrough tool, and to organize monthly Professional Learning Community (PLC) Professional Development sessions based on needs identified from the data,

Components of the SLT

Action Plan Development	The SLT collaborates to develop a shared vision for the school's improvement efforts with the School's Action Plan. By aligning goals, objectives, and strategies with the school's mission and vision, the team ensures that the action plan is strategic and focused on achieving desired outcomes.
Walk-Throughs	The SLT is crucial in carrying out the Action Plan. One method the SLT uses for this purpose is by performing weekly walkthroughs. Members of the SLT act as both observers and recorders during these walkthroughs to gather insights about the school's current situation. Additionally, the SLT analyzes the gathered data to make informed, data-driven decisions.
Professional Development	The SLT collaborates to develop a shared vision for the school's improvement efforts with the school's Action Plan. By aligning goals, objectives, and strategies with the school's mission and vision, the team ensures that the action plan is strategic and focused on achieving desired outcomes.
Monitoring Progress	The SLT oversees the implementation of the action plan and monitors progress towards established goals and objectives. Regular meetings and data analysis help the team track outcomes, identify areas for improvement, and make data-informed decisions to adjust strategies as needed.
Communication & Engagement	The SLT serves as a communication hub for school leadership and staff. By fostering open communication and engagement, the team ensures that all stakeholders are informed, involved, and invested in the school's improvement efforts outlined in the action plan.

By leveraging the expertise, collaboration, and strategic leadership of a School Leadership Team, schools can enhance the implementation of their action plan, drive continuous improvement, and create a positive impact on student learning outcomes and overall school success.

07 Walk-Throughs

The purpose of the Walk-Through Tool is to provide a brief, structured, and non-evaluative method for observing classroom instruction to provide a clear view of the current reality of the school's instructional practices. This tool allows administrators, instructional leaders, and educators to conduct focused observations, identifying successful instructional practices and areas for improvement within the school environment.

The Walkthrough-Tool Template utilized by HSD (HSD) serves as an exemplar of a school's Walk-Through Tool, aligning with the Instructional Framework. For more information about the components of the instructional framework, see page 5. Each school should modify and customize the Walk-through Template to suit their specific requirements and align with school wide instructional goals as identified on the school's action plan. *For more information about Action Plans see page 22*.

Utilizing the Walk-through Tool involves a collaborative effort. Principals, coaches, and teachers all conduct walkthroughs. These walkthroughs are concise, with the observer spending 5-10 minutes in each classroom examining items outlined in the Walk-through Tool. Right after the observation, the observer utilizes the Walk-Through Tool to record the observed and missed components. Walk-throughs are conducted regularly and at different times to collect sufficient data for an accurate depiction of the school's instructional practices.

The data collected through the Walk-Through Tool is carefully reviewed by the School Leadership Team (SLT). The data analysis of the Walk-Through Tool enables the SLT to pinpoint the school's instructional strengths and areas in need of improvement, establishing comprehensive school-wide goals and PD based on the identified data. The SLT then shares this data and goals with the school staff, facilitating the implementation of targeted professional development opportunities geared towards achieving the school-wide objectives as indication on the school's action plan. For more information about SLT, see page 24.

By offering specific feedback, educators can gain valuable insights into their teaching strategies, student engagement, and classroom management, ultimately leading to professional growth and enhanced instructional effectiveness. The Walk-Through Tool serves as a supportive mechanism for continuous improvement, fostering a culture of reflection, collaboration, ongoing development, and continuous growth within the school community.
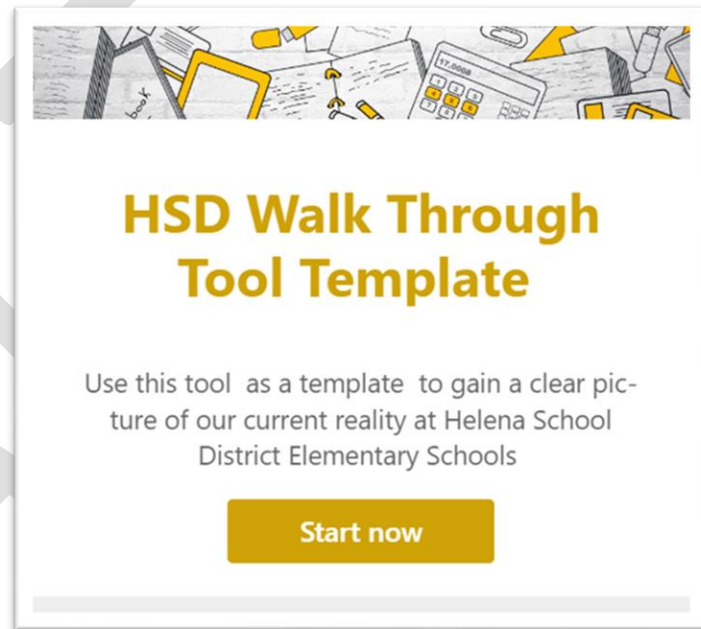
1. Subject

- [ ] ELA
- [ ] Math
- [ ] Science
- [ ] Social Studies
- [ ] Writing
- [ ] Art
- [ ] PE
- [ ] Music
- [ ] Library
- [ ] Other

2. Grade(s)

- [ ] K
- [ ] 1
- [ ] 2
- [ ] 3
- [ ] 4
- [ ] 5

L: Students understand the LEARNING TARGETS, SUCCESS CRITERIA, & AGENDA for the lesson.

3. Agenda is posted and referred to during the lesson

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No
- ( ) Not Observed

4. Success Criteria and/or Learning Targets are posted and referred to during lesson and connects to standards

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No
- ( ) Not Observed

5. Lesson started with a Bell Ringer that is connected to lessons objectives, learning target, success criteria, or prerequisite skill.

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No
- ( ) Not Observed

E: Teachers use ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES throughout the lesson

6. Learning Approach used (check all that apply)

- [ ] Whole Group
- [ ] Small Group
- [ ] Guided Practice
- [ ] Stations
- [ ] Partners
- [ ] Independent
- [ ] Assessment
- [ ] Teacher using Technology
- [ ] Students Using Technology

7. Student Engagement

- [ ] +90% (Nearly Everyone)
- [ ] 80-90% (Most)
- [ ] Lesson than 80% (Few)

8. Content Delivery used (check all that apply)

- [ ] Teacher to student
- [ ] Student to Student
- [ ] Student to Teacher

9. Engagement Strategy used (Check all the Apply)

- [ ] Think, Pair, Share
- [ ] Talking Chips
- [ ] Turn & Talk
- [ ] Pax Sticks/ Cold Call
- [ ] Choral Response
- [ ] I do, We do, You Do
- [ ] Clear Signaling
- [ ] Perky Pace
- [ ] Raised Hands

A: Teachers will help students APPLY INTERDISCIPLINARY SKILLS & STRATEGIES

10. Interdisciplinary Skills & Strategies used (check all the apply)

☐ Close Reading

☐ Annotation

☐ Summary

☐ Notetaking

☐ Discussion

☐ Written Response

☐ Vocabulary

☐ Text Features

☐ Thinking Charts

R: Teachers will help students REFLECT ON THE LEARNING TARGETS & SUCCESS CRITERIA

11. Reviewed Learning Targets/Success Criteria

○ Yes

○ No

○ Not Observed

12. Exit Ticket/Closing Activity is connected to Learning Targets/Success Criteria and is used to provided a check for understanding

○ Yes

○ No

○ Not Observed

13. Students self-reflect on their progress towards lessons learning targets and success criteria.

○ Yes

○ No

○ Not Observed

| Back | Submit |

08 Professional Development

Professional development (PD) is essential in fostering the ongoing growth and development of educators within Helena's schools. It equips teachers with the essential knowledge and skills needed to elevate their teaching methods, leading to positive impacts on the students they educate. Effective professional development is centered on improving educational practices that align with the growth goals of the district, school, and individual educators. By focusing on enhancing teaching practices through quality professional development, educators can continuously strive to improve their instruction, benefiting both their professional growth and the academic success of their students.

Stages of Professional Development

HSD's PD plan covers the three stages of professional development: orientation, integration, and refinement (Glickman, et.al, 2013). In the **orientation stage**, educators receive rudimentary knowledge on a specific topic. This stage is usually a meeting or workshop with a presenter. In the Helena district, this stage of PD happens during the summer trainings, monthly PLC PD, and through PIR opportunities. During the **integration stage**, teachers receive support with implementation of skills or concepts. This is accomplished through visiting an expert teacher, watching a model lesson, or evaluating their own implementation through observational data or video. The integration stage often includes the support of an instructional coach with coaching cycles. During this stage, teachers gain confidence by integrating the new knowledge into their classrooms and practicing self-reflection. Finally in the **refinement stage**, teachers move from basic competence to expert. It is in this stage that the skills or concepts of the PD have been fully integrated into the teachers' instructional practice and have reached the optimal level for student learning. When a teacher has met this stage of PD, they often become facilitators and help others reach the refinement stage, while continuing to make their own professional growth.
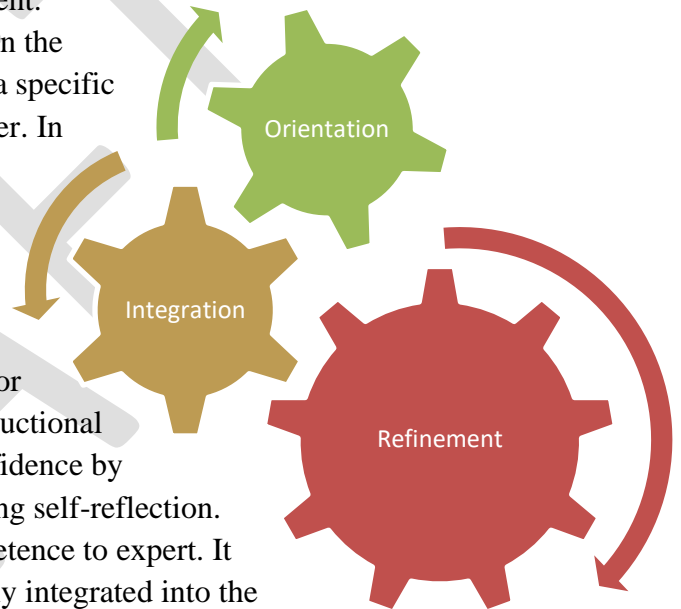
PD Opportunities for Helena Educators

Weekly Professional Learning Communities (PLCs):
PLCs bring teachers together to collaborate, share best practices, and discuss student learning data. It fosters a culture of collaboration and collective responsibility among educators. By participating in PLCs every Monday from 2:40-3:40, teachers can reflect on their teaching strategies, learn from each other, and improve student outcomes. *For more information about PLCs see *.

Monthly Building PLC/PD:
On the initial Monday of every month, a dedicated time slot is allocated for building level Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). These PLC sessions are specifically designed for staff data review and professional development, with topics and activities determined by the School Leadership Team (SLT) in alignment with the school's goals outlined in the Action Plan. This structured approach ensures that educators

have a regular opportunity to engage in collaborative learning, share best practices, and work towards achieving the school's overarching objectives through targeted professional development. *For more information about PLCs see* page 20*, SLT* see page 24 *and Action Plans* see page 22.

Pupil-Instruction-Related (PIR):

PIR days are designated for educators to engage in instructional training and professional development activities, along with other relevant in-service training opportunities. In the Helena district, every full-time educator is required to fulfill 18 hours of choice PIR each year. A diverse range of PIR options is accessible, allowing educators to select training sessions aligned with their personal goals from an approved catalog on Frontline Professional Growth. PIR opportunities include the annual MEA conference in October.

Grade Band and Grade Level/Content Area PLCs:

Grade Band PLCs (K-2 and 3-5) and Grade Level/Content Area PLCs allow teachers within the same grade band or course to come together to discuss curriculum, student progress, and instructional strategies. These meetings help ensure alignment in teaching practices across the district, leading to a more cohesive learning experience for students. Topics for the grade band meetings are determined based on district goals, current needs, and teacher's input. Opportunities for grade-band meetings are available on the second Monday of each month from 2:40-3:4

Professional Development is the difference between teaching for ten years and teaching one year- ten times.

Job-Embedded Professional Development (Coaches and Mentors):

Engaging in job-embedded professional development entails collaborating with instructional coaches or mentor teachers who offer tailored assistance to teachers as they strive to reach their individual goals. These coaches observe educators in their teaching environments, deliver constructive feedback, demonstrate effective teaching techniques, and provide ongoing guidance for enhancement. Teachers have the opportunity to visit others' classrooms, enabling them to gain fresh perspectives and valuable insights into various teaching approaches. Through job-embedded PD, educators can promptly integrate best practices into their teaching methodologies, promoting a culture of peer learning and fostering continuous professional growth.

Summer Trainings:

Summer professional development for literacy instruction in HSD is a valuable opportunity for educators to engage in intensive learning, reflection, and planning to enhance their teaching practices. This dedicated time away from regular classroom responsibilities allows teachers to explore new resources, align their instruction with curriculum standards, and build a professional learning community focused on literacy education. By

participating in summer PD, educators can stay current with best practices, collaborate with peers, and prepare to implement innovative literacy strategies that will benefit student learning outcomes in the upcoming school year.

Grade-Level Conversations:

In HSD, an administrator or administrators are designated for each grade level to take the lead in facilitating discussions for that specific grade. These discussions, tailored to each grade level, cover a range of topics such as scope and sequence, assessments, standards, and curriculum. Grade-level conversations take place through an email chain, on TEAMs and, when feasible and needed, may also occur face-to-face to ensure effective communication and collaboration among educators.

On-Boarding:

Educator onboarding before the school year starts aims to familiarize teachers with the school's culture, provide training on curriculum and policies, facilitate relationship-building among staff, clarify expectations, and establish procedures. In HSD, all educators participate in onboarding at their buildings lead by their principal during the two days prior to when students start school. This process sets the stage for a successful academic year by ensuring educators are prepared, informed, and supported in their roles.

New Professionalism Monies:

Each year, HSD uses a formula based on the number of educators in the district and their salaries to allocate funding for educators' professional growth. Any educator who wants to attend workshops, conferences, or other professional development opportunities can apply for New Professionalism dollars.

Professional development in HSD, including monthly PLCs, PIR, grade band meetings, and job-embedded PD, is essential for promoting teacher growth, improving instructional practices, and ultimately enhancing student achievement. By investing in ongoing professional development opportunities, HSD can create a supportive environment where educators thrive and students succeed.

09 Family Engagement

HSD is committed to fostering a culture of collaboration between families, schools, and the community to support student success and well-being. Family engagement plays a crucial role in a child's educational journey, fostering a strong partnership between home and school to support student success. In HSD, comprehensive Family Engagement Plan is designed to actively involve parents and guardians in their child's learning process.

HSD Family Engagement Plan includes:

Communication Strategies: Utilizing multiple platforms to keep families informed about school events, student progress, and ways to support learning at home.

Family Workshops: Offering workshops on topics like literacy strategies and understanding standards to empower families in their role as educational partners.

Family Nights: Hosting Family Nights focused on different academic subjects, providing families with strategies to support learning at home.

Parent-Teacher Conferences: Providing opportunities for in-depth discussions about student progress, goal-setting, and strategies for academic improvement.

Progress Reports: Providing detailed feedback tofamilies on a student's progress towards mastering specific learning standards at the conclusion of each trimester.

Volunteer Opportunities: Inviting families to participate in school activities, classroom events, to strengthen the school community.

Parent Council: Promoting a Parent Council to gather feedback, input, and suggestions from families on school initiatives and activities.

Home Learning Resources: Sharing resources, tips, and tools for families to engage in meaningful learning activities with their child at home.

IEFA Events: School communities come togethter to learn about Montana's native culture with games, food, literature, art, and other fun activities.

FASA Night: The highschools host a night for families and students to support the completion of their FASA.

PreK/Kindergarten Visits: Kindergartners and families meet with their teacher prior to the start of school to answer any questions or concerns and build relationships.

Open House: Each school hosts an open house for families to see their students classroom and meet their teacher.

HSD has embraced the importance of tailoring Family Engagement Plans to meet the unique needs of their communities, fostering a sense of inclusivity and partnership. By customizing engagement strategies, the schools effectively address the specific challenges and opportunities present within their student body and families. This personalized approach allows schools to create meaningful connections, provide targeted support, and establish a collaborative environment where families feel valued, involved, and empowered in supporting their child's academic journey. Through this personalized Family Engagement Plan, schools can strengthen relationships, enhance communication, and ultimately contribute to improved student achievement and overall school success.

Every school develops its own family engagement schedule that integrates HSD Family Engagement Plan. The school's plan is embedded in their action plan as a necessary component of accreditation. Each school aims to host a monthly family engagement event to promote a collaborative atmosphere between the school and the family community.

School Family Engagement Calendar (sample)			
August	Back to School Night (Open House) Kindergarten Home Visits	February	Conferences
September	Conferences Family Math Night	March	Trimester 2 SBG Reports IEFA Night
October	Halloween Carnival	April	Family STEM Night
November	Trimester 1 SBG Reports	May	Art Gala
December	Winter Program	June	Trimester 3 SBG Reports
January	Family Literacy Night		

Shown is an example of what a school's family engagement calendar could look like.

By implementing a well-rounded Family Engagement Plan, HSD schools can enhance student achievement, promote a positive school climate, and establish a collaborative partnership between educators and families to support the holistic development of every child.

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