



North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI) are accreditation divisions of AdvancED.

Standards Assessment Report

Leyden Community HS District 212

3400 N Rose Street Franklin Park, Illinois 60131-2184

Prepared for the AdvancED Quality Assurance Review

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Standards Assessment Report

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Introduction & Purpose of the Report

Introduction

Purpose of the Report

The Standards Assessment Report is designed to serve as a valuable self-assessment and as a tool to help school systems prepare for their Quality Assurance Review. The report is based on the AdvancED standards, which serve as the foundation of the accreditation process. In order to earn and maintain accreditation, school systems must meet the AdvancED standards, engage in a process of continuous improvement, and demonstrate quality assurance through internal and external review.

The Standards Assessment Report engages the school system in an in-depth assessment of each of the seven AdvancED standards. In completing the report, the school system identifies the data, information, evidence, and documented results that validate that it is meeting each standard. This self assessment helps the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

The Standards Assessment Report also serves as the primary resource for the Quality Assurance Review Team, which uses the report to prepare for the visit to the school system. The team uses insights gathered from the report and information obtained during the on-site visit to provide feedback to the school system and to make an accreditation recommendation.

Structure of the Report

The Standards Assessment Report includes four sections: 1) a review of each standard; 2) a description of the school system's methods for quality assurance; 3) optional online peer-to-peer submission; and 4) conclusion.

The review of each standard is divided into three components: 1) the Indicators rubric; 2) focus questions; and 3) overall assessment rubric. The Indicators rubric enables the school system to assess the degree to which practices and/or processes are in place that indicate adherence to the standard and Indicators. For each Indicator, the school system may check if the practices and/or processes are highly functional, operational, emerging, or not evident. The school system should use the rubric as an opportunity to ask itself challenging questions and to respond with accurate answers geared toward self-improvement. After completing the rubric, the school system can quickly see areas of strength and opportunity. The section asks, "To what degree are the noted practices/processes in place?"

The focus questions allow the school system to expand on and think more deeply about the responses to the Indicators rubric. The focus questions provide an opportunity for the school system to describe the systematic and systemic processes that are in place to support its ability to meet the Indicators. The section asks, "How are the practices/processes implemented?"

The overall assessment describes how well the school system and its schools are implementing practices and/or processes and the impact these practices and/or processes have on student results and overall school effectiveness. The overall assessment helps the school system judge where it is in relation to each standard. The "operational" level is required in order to demonstrate meeting the standard. The section asks, "How well are we meeting the standard overall?"

The description of the school system's methods for quality assurance should include an overview of the practices and methods the school system uses to monitor and document improvement, provide meaningful feedback and support across the district, ensure that the AdvancED standards are met and strengthened, and regularly collect, use, and communicate results.

The optional peer-to-peer submission section asks the school system to share an effective practice. The submission allows the school system to highlight a practice that it feels is indicative of the quality work occurring across the system and its schools. The review team may refer to the practice and use it as the basis for identifying other successful practices occurring in the school system. In addition, the practice is included in the online AdvancED Resource Network where it can be accessed by other AdvancED schools and school systems.

The conclusion provides an opportunity for the district to share final insights and information.

Completion and Submission of the Report

This Standards Assessment Report is to be completed by the school system between six months and six weeks prior to hosting a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) visit. It is strongly recommended that a wide and broad cross-section of the school system's community participate in completing this report. The report will become the basis of the Quality Assurance Review Team's review.

Directions for Completing the Report

Follow the instructions to complete each section of the report. Be thorough and concise in your answers, focusing on quality and depth over quantity.

Demographics

# Elementary Schools:	0
# Middle Schools:	0
# High Schools:	2
# Other:	0
Grade(s):	9, 10, 11, 12
Enrollment:	3424

Executive Summary

Please provide an overview of the school system's profile. Please include:

- The school system's vision and goals;
- A description of the programs and services (including number and type of schools) under the jurisdiction of the system;
- Demographic information about school system's community;
- A summary of student performance across the system;
- An overview of any major trends or issues impacting the school system; and
- A summary of the major strengths and needs of the school system.

Executive Summary of the School System Profile: *Leyden High School District 212*

Vision, Mission, and Goals

Vision: Committed to Excellence

Mission: Leyden District 212 supports a community of lifelong learners who prepare for global change, respect diversity, accept personal responsibility, and pursue a sense of fulfillment.

Leyden's vision and mission are displayed with pride throughout the district: in classrooms, meeting rooms, offices ... anywhere that Leyden stakeholders gather in the spirit of building and sustaining our educational community.

Goals: (1) To enable all Leyden students the ability to develop literacy skills needed to become independent and self-directed learners in all disciplines.

(2) To increase the capacity for Leyden students, teachers, parents and administrators to accept responsibility for increased student achievement.

Description of Programs and Services

Leyden High School District 212 offers a comprehensive curriculum at 2 four-year campuses, East Leyden High School in Franklin Park and West Leyden High School in Northlake. A broad range of courses in both the core and elective areas are provided at three challenge levels (College Prep, Honors, Advanced Placement) across 13 academic departments. To earn the 21 credits required for graduation, students establish and adjust four-year plans with their guidance counselors to maximize their preparation for entry into post-secondary education, the work force, or the military.

Both Leyden campus facilities are maintained and upgraded regularly to support state-of-art curricular and co-curricular district programs. Most classrooms in the district are considered 'smart' in that they are equipped with computer and audiovisual equipment that allows instructors to teach with a wide variety of media. These include DVD and VHS playback, PowerPoint presentations, and streaming video, all displayed through permanently placed data projectors. Athletic facilities include field houses, ancillary gyms, dance studios, swimming pools, weight training/fitness facilities, tennis courts, and adjacent fields for football, baseball, soccer and track & field.

Leyden is proud of a number of programs that have grown under the leadership of committed faculty members and enriched by community partnerships. Students from the Art Department excel at college competitions in the 2-D and 3-D arts. Programs in Career Technical Education prepare students in culinary, automotive, construction, machine tooling -- to mention only a few. CTE has over 414 active business partners and hosts an enormously successful annual Career Fair. The Fine Arts program -- which includes choral and instrumental music, dance, and theater -- showcases talents of our students while routinely taking competitive honors in the state of Illinois.

Special programs that integrate academic and social goals have been developed and implemented at Leyden over time, as we continue to grow our culture of achievement. A prime example is ACCESS -- A Caring Community Empowering Student Success. Carefully researched and developed to meet local needs, ACCESS was launched in 2005 to help Leyden freshmen make a smooth transition to high school academically, socially, and emotionally. ACCESS is a place for freshmen to develop a small community of friends within the larger community of Leyden High School. Through the ACCESS program, faculty advisors and upperclassmen mentors help freshmen develop better study skills, achieve greater academic success, develop interpersonal skills, explore career options and develop friendships with a wide variety of classmates. Through their ACCESS advisory, students will learn how to use the school resources, find help when they need it, become more involved in school activities, plan for the future and feel that they are part of the Leyden community. A full description of the ACCESS program can be found in the artifacts sections of Standard 7.

An ever-increasing array of options exists for students through club membership. The offerings for 2009-2010 include: Academic Team, Anime, Art Club, BBQ Club, Bookworms, Bowling Club, Chamber Singers, Cheerleaders, Chess, Class Clubs, Color Guard, Computer/Internet Club, Ecology Club, Future Business Leaders of America, F.C.C.L.A., Fashion Club, Fern Awards, First Ending, Foreign Exchange Club, French Club, French Honor Society, Future Educators of America, Gardening Club, Grace Notes, History Honor Society, If It Has Wheels, Interact (Rotary), International Thespian Society, Italian Club, Italian Honor Society, Jazz Band, Jazz Ensemble, Key Club, "L" Club, Leyden Sports Academy, Leydenettes Pom Pon Squad, Marching Band, Math Team, Model U.N., National Honor Society, National Technical Honor Society, Newspaper, Orchestras, Outdoor Adventure Club, Peer Leaders, Peer Mediation, Photo Club, Polish Club, Presentation Club, Principia, Prizewrite, Recycling Club, Ripple Effect, S.A.D.D., Safe Celebration, S.E.T.A., S.H.A.R.E., S.A.G.A., Skate Club, Ski Club, Snowball, Social Club, Spanish Club, Spanish Honor Society, Special Olympics, Speech Team, Student Council, Student Leaders, Theater Guild, Unresolved, Urban Adventure Club, V.I.C.A., Video Game Club, Wrestling Boosters, and Youth in Government.

With the broad range of opportunities made available to our students, the Leyden High School district enjoys full support of our community. A foundation of trust has been built on firm actions that nurture, challenge, support, and inspires our students.

Community Demographics

The Leyden High Schools serve 3,424 students in grades 9-12 in the west suburban Chicago communities of Franklin Park, Northlake, Schiller Park, Rosemont, River Grove, and Melrose Park. Students’ home campuses are either East Leyden High School (enrollment of 1,778) or West Leyden High School (enrollment of 1,646). The student population of the Leyden High School district is 41% White, 51.1% Hispanic, 0.2% Native American, 1.8% Black, 2.9% Asian, and 2.9% Multiracial. The district attendance rate is 92.7%, the mobility rate is 10.6%, the dropout rate is 3.1%, the low-income rate is 19.7%, and the graduation rate is 86.6%. The following chart highlights the population, median income, and educational and unemployment levels for residents over the age of 25:

City/Village	Population	Median Income	HS Ed	BA Ed	Mast/Prof	Unemployment
Franklin Park	17,965	55,492	67.2	11.3	3.1	6.9
Northlake	11,462	57,534	66.9	7.7	2.6	6.2
Schiller Park	11,850	49,425	72.5	14.4	4.7	5.3
Rosemont	3,929	41,200	72.9	17.5	5.9	2.6
River Grove	9,992	47,603	77.3	14.3	3.9	4.9
Melrose Park	21,853	48,362	60.7	9.6	4.2	6

To summarize, the communities served by the Leyden district are small to mid-sized with median incomes ranging from the low 40s to the mid 50s. Although the high school graduation rate of residents is in the 60s and 70s, many fewer residents have experiences at colleges and universities.

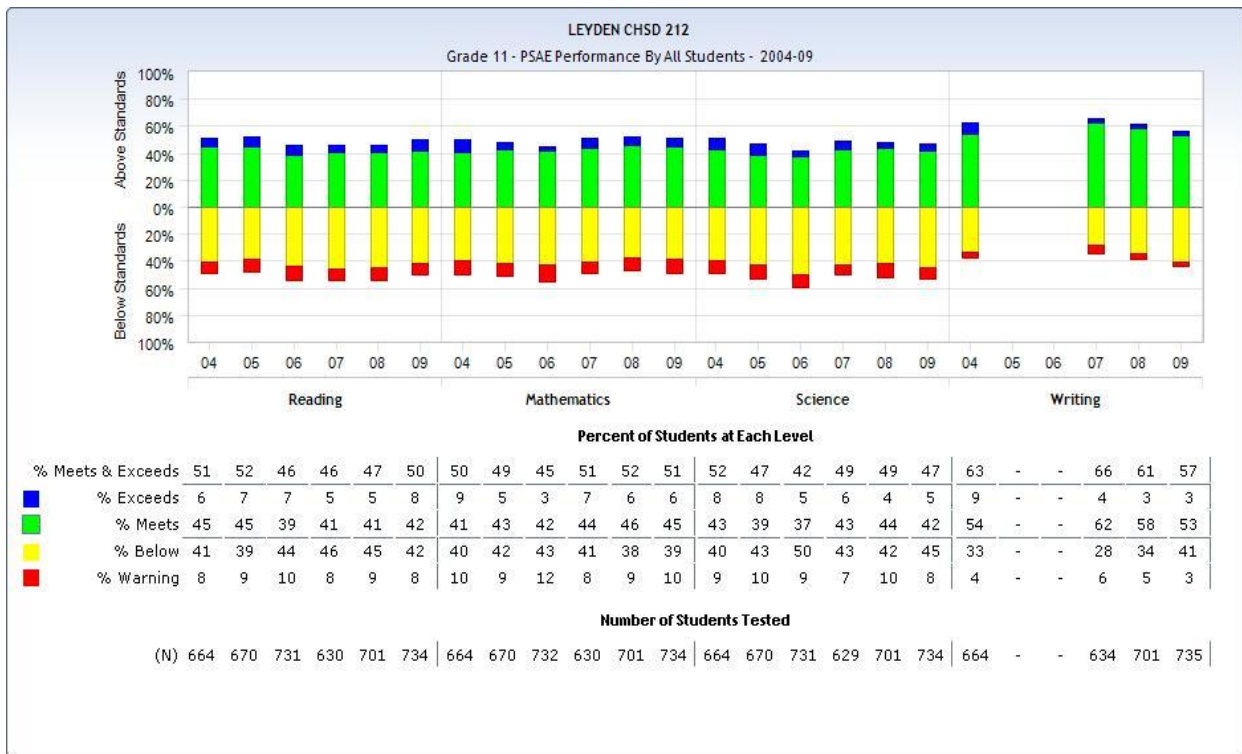
Summary of Student Performance

The academic success of all students is the most important goal at Leyden High School District 212. Progress of individuals is monitored through tracking procedures using the EPAS series of assessments. Explore testing of students during their 8th grade year at our partner schools provides baseline performance data and assists in the placing of incoming students into their freshman classes. The PLAN test is given at the sophomore year, followed in the junior year by the ACT. Newly developing procedures for Response to Intervention are in progress to make the analysis of these and other data points a reliable process upon which to base shifts of services to the entire school population.

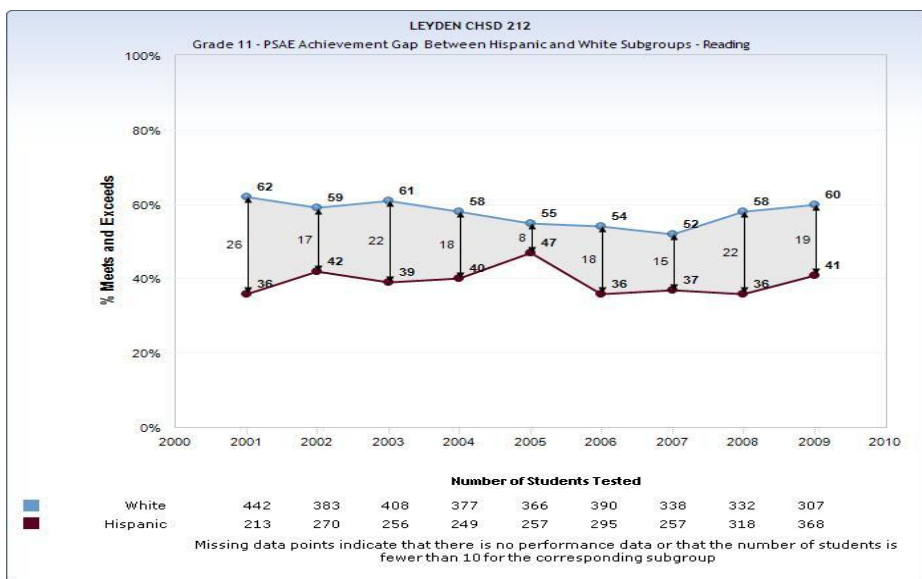
At a glance, Leyden’s performance on Grade 11 state assessments have been relatively consistent from 2001-2009. Achievement gap information available through the Interactive Report Card has been helpful in determination of specific overall achievement gaps for Hispanics, Low Income students, and most significantly Students with Disabilities. All faculty members are engaged at the building and department level in an examination of dips and rises, seeking to understand the connections of classroom practice to improved test results.

Attachments in our artifacts files show the depth of faculty involvement and highlight results obtained, for example, from a district-wide emphasis on WorkKeys improvements.

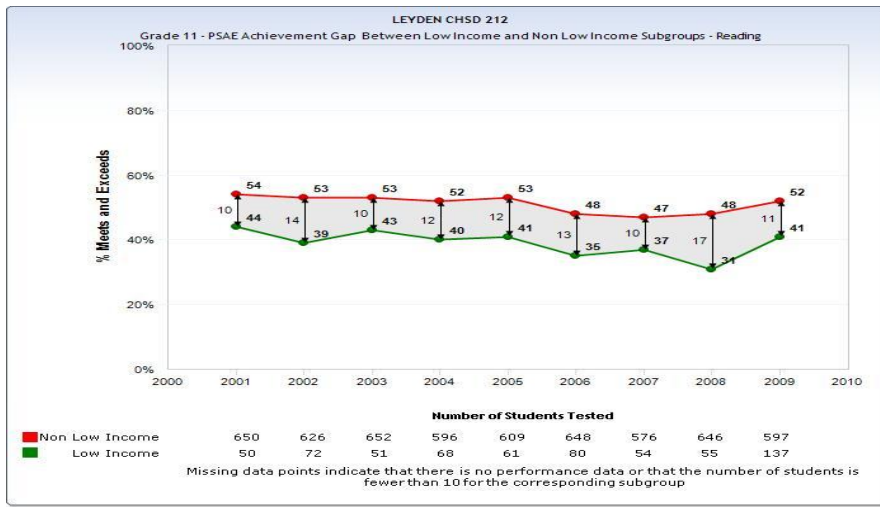
Achievement Gap Groups



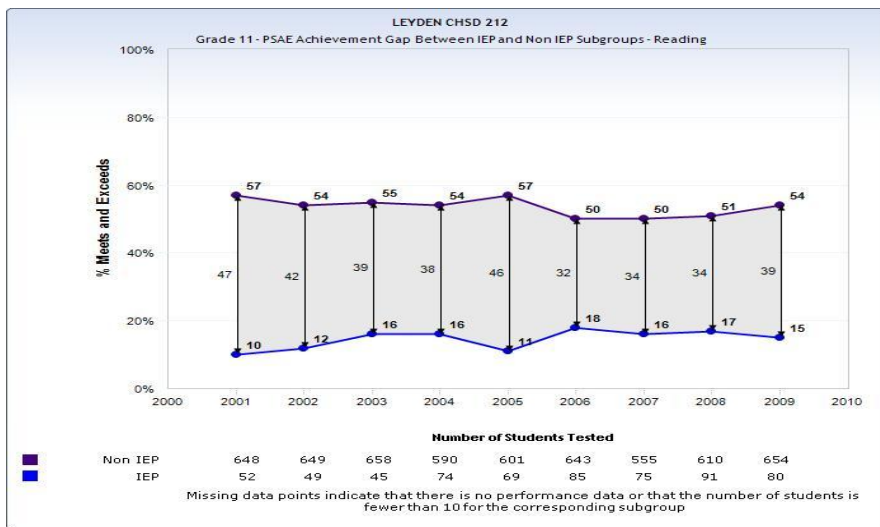
Disparity: Hispanic vs. White



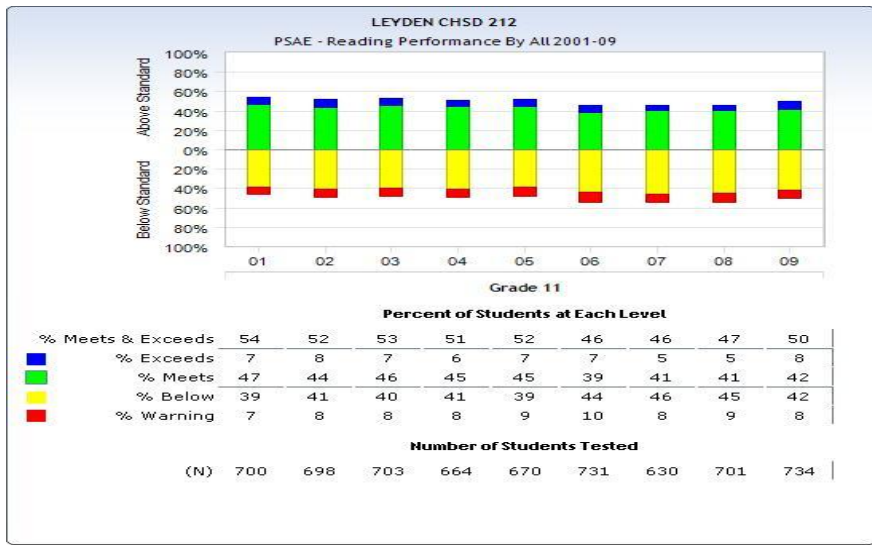
Disparity: Low Income vs. Non Low Income



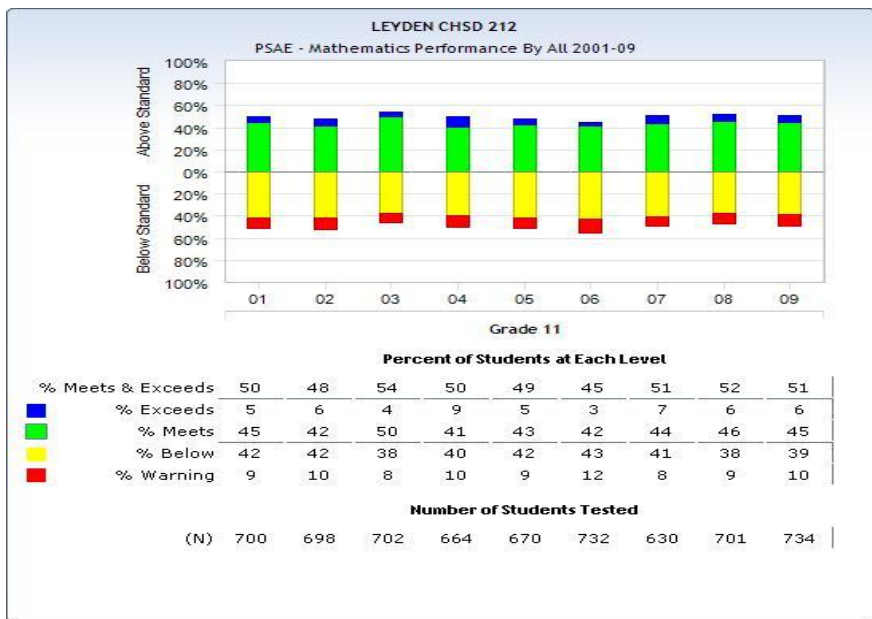
Disparity: IEP Students vs. Non IEP Students



Eight-Year Trends: PSAE Reading and Mathematics

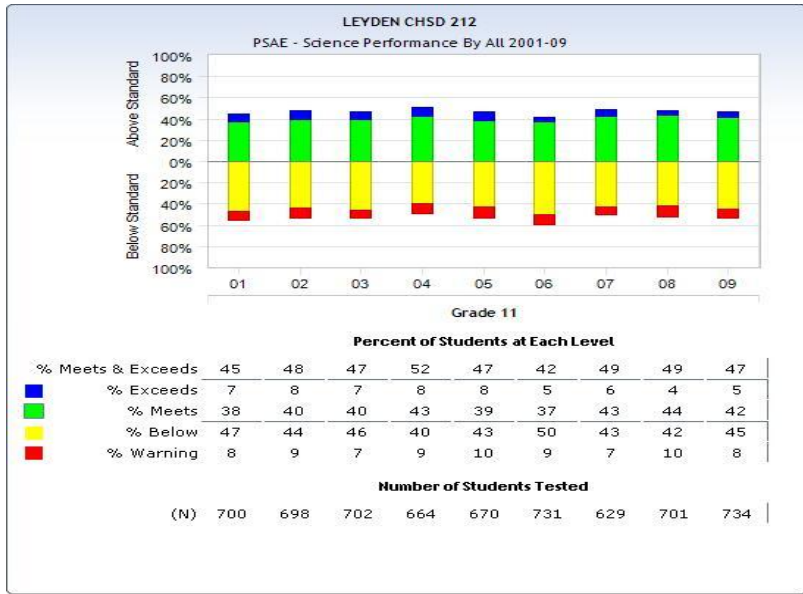


Reading
2001-2009

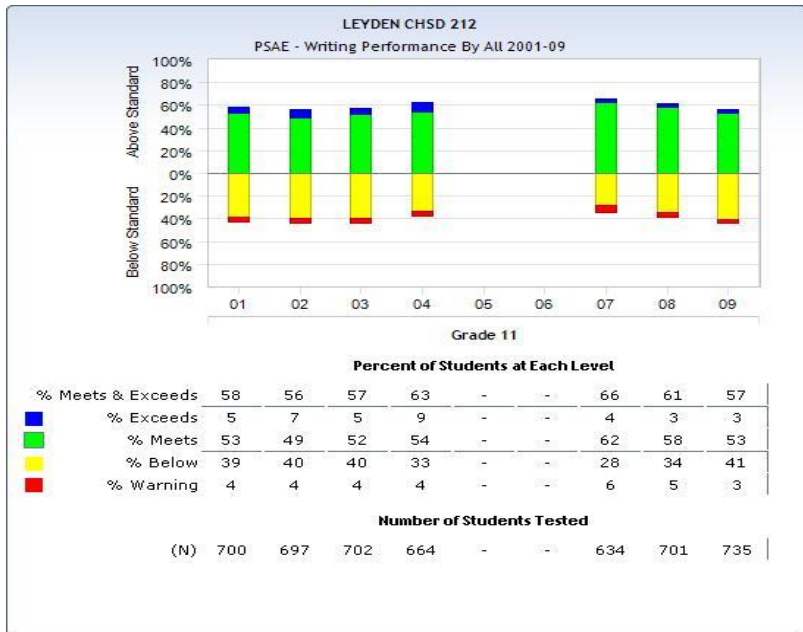


Math
2001-2009

Eight-Year Trends: Science and Writing



Science
2001-2009



Writing
2001-2009

AYP Status: District Report Card 2009

**Adequate Yearly Progress Report 2009
LEYDEN CHSD 212**

Is this District making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)? No	Has this District been identified for District Improvement according to the AYP specifications of the federal No Child Left Behind Act? Yes
Is this District making AYP in Reading? No	2009-10 Federal Improvement Status Corrective Action Year 2
Is this District making AYP in Mathematics? No	2009-10 State Improvement Status Academic Watch Status Year 3

Student Groups	Percentage Tested on State Tests				Percent Meeting/Exceeding Standards*						Other Indicators			
	Reading		Mathematics		Reading			Mathematics			Attendance Rate		Graduation Rate	
	%	Met AYP	%	Met AYP	%	Safe** Harbor Target	Met AYP	%	Safe** Harbor Target	Met AYP	%	Met AYP	%	Met AYP
State AYP Minimum Target	95.0		95.0		70.0			70.0			90.0		78.0	
All	99.5	Yes	99.5	Yes	50.8		No	52.1		No			86.6	
White	99.1	Yes	99.1	Yes	59.9	62.5	No	65.5	67.2	Yes			90.3	
Black														
Hispanic	99.7	Yes	99.7	Yes	42.0	42.7	Yes	39.2	47.7	No			82.4	
Asian/Pacific Islander														
Native American														
Multiracial/Ethnic														
LEP														
Students with Disabilities	97.9	Yes	97.9	Yes	23.9	30.6	No	20.5	20.4	No			73.8	
Economically Disadvantaged														

Major Trends Impacting the School System

Difficult financial times bring a good deal of stress to students and their families as they meet challenges of affording necessities of life. Lost jobs or reduced hours of work have intensified the strain on family budgets.

The number of low-income families served by the free and reduced lunch program has increased from 10.3% in 2001 to 19.7% in 2009.

We feel ourselves fortunate indeed to have sustained relatively high rates of attendance and graduation. At the same time, our ethnic breakdown has shifted substantially in the White and Hispanic populations. Over the ten-year period of 1999 to 2009, the White student population has decreased from 60.9% to 41%. At the same time, the Hispanic student population has increased from 33.2% to 51.1%. Our challenge in this demographic shift lies in the need to match instructional delivery to entry skill sets and learning styles of a higher at-risk population.

Across the district, we continue to find that students enter high school with severe deficits in both reading and mathematics. The distinct challenge here is to offer a robust high school curriculum to students with marked requisite deficits.

The Leyden district has experienced a relatively large number of retirements over the past ten year. The replacement teachers, though well prepared to begin their careers and eager for the opportunity, require a good deal of staff development to refine skills and reach maximum effectiveness in working with our teenaged population.

Strengths and Needs

Leyden High School District 212's main strength lies in quality, dedication, and commitment of the entire staff. District employees make a commitment to excellence, which guides and directs their actions as individuals and as groups. A strong standards-based curriculum, a robust co-curricular program, well-maintained facilities, a supportive parent base, and strong administrative leadership all contribute to educational opportunities in which we have great pride.

As we have identified in Leyden's latest District Improvement Plan, our data suggests a number of conditions that currently impede greater student achievement. These conditions include:

1. Students enter high school significantly lower than grade level in reading and mathematics.
2. Low-performing students often receive limited support from home for improving their academic performance.
3. Students may have limited awareness of the connections between test score performance and post-secondary goals and aspirations.
4. Faculty members may lack knowledge of the EPAS content and test sequencing, limiting their effectiveness in preparing students in their curricular areas for successful test performance in the state testing program.
5. Remedial reading and math curriculum within the district may lack specific skill building tied to individual students' needs.
6. Faculty members may lack instructional strategies that best address learning goals that are at the same time specific to their learning discipline and supportive of the scope and sequence of colleagues across the curriculum.

7. Targeted assistance may be needed for students whose achievement patterns and prior testing experience indicate an 'at-risk' status for meeting state standards.
8. Parents may benefit from increased support from school to encourage their children to perform their best in school.

To address these needs, we are committed as a staff to establish goals along our path of continuous improvement:

We must (1) renew efforts to encourage parents to support their children at home toward increasing academic achievement, (2) increase student awareness of the importance of good performance on the EPAS series of tests, (3) increase faculty awareness of state test content and format, (4) analyze assessment data carefully to adjust and customize instructional delivery to address demonstrated needs of groups and individuals, (5) examine the enacted curriculum for appropriate scope and sequence, and (6) provide professional development for the faculty to obtain and practice discipline-specific best practices and at the same time coordinate this work to support colleagues across the curriculum.

Standard 1. Vision & Purpose

STANDARD: The system establishes and communicates a shared purpose and direction for improving the performance of students and the effectiveness of the system.

Impact Statement: A system is successful in meeting this standard when it commits to a purpose and direction that is shared system-wide. The leadership establishes expectations for student learning aligned with the system's vision that is supported by system and school personnel and external stakeholders. These expectations serve as the focus for assessing student performance and district effectiveness. The system's vision guides allocations of time and human, material, and fiscal resources.

Indicators Rubric: Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school system. The responses to the rubric should help the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school system's responses to the focus questions.

Indicators Evidence: For each Indicator, click the (Add Evidence) link to provide examples of evidence that support the rubric response.

Definitions of Indicators Rubric:

Not Evident	Little or no evidence exists
Emerging	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
Operational	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
Highly Functional	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

INDICATORS: In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

1.1 Establishes a vision and purpose for the system in collaboration with its stakeholders:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Leadership demonstrates stakeholder support

Mission Statement visible throughout the district

Policies/Procedures manuals/handbooks demonstrating stakeholder involvement in development of mission

Stakeholder perception data used to develop mission

Stakeholders are knowledgeable about vision, mission

Strategic Plans include mission

Vision, mission statements include all elements of stakeholder inclusion

1.2 Communicates the system's vision and purpose to build stakeholder understanding and support:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Handbooks include vision, mission

Meetings incorporate elements of vision, mission

Newsletters include vision, mission

Signage includes vision, mission

Stakeholders are knowledgeable about vision, mission

Website/page includes vision, mission

1.3 Identifies system-wide goals and measures to advance the vision:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

District and school improvement planning incorporates vision, mission

District Improvement Plan includes vision, mission

Goals distributed through publications and communication

Goals that are data-driven and measurable

Stakeholders demonstrate involvement in and knowledge of goal setting

Strategic Plan includes vision, mission

Strategic planning incorporates vision, mission

Other: School Report Card

1.4 Develops and continuously maintains a profile of the system, its students, and the community:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Annual Report Community-based data

District Improvement Plan

District profile is used during parent/community meetings

District profile is used during staff meetings

Newsletters, articles

Publications, brochures, handbooks

Stakeholders demonstrate knowledge of District profile

Other: Superintendent's Newsletter, Principal's Newsletter

1.5 Ensures that the system's vision and purpose guide the teaching and learning process and the strategic direction of schools, departments, and services:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

District and school improvement planning demonstrates alignment with vision, mission

District Curriculum demonstrates alignment with vision, mission

District Improvement Plan demonstrates alignment of vision, mission with teaching and learning

Extra -curricular activities incorporate vision, mission

Policies on instructional practices demonstrate alignment with vision, mission

Policies on lesson plan development and deployment demonstrate alignment with vision, mission

Staff and Parent Handbooks demonstrate alignment of vision, mission with teaching and learning

Strategic Plan demonstrates alignment of vision, mission and teaching and learning

Student report cards demonstrate alignment with vision, mission

1.6 Reviews its vision and purpose systematically and revises them when appropriate:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Agendas, minutes for strategic planning demonstrate review

Strategic Plan demonstrates review

Strategic planning process demonstrates review by stakeholders

Focus Questions:

1. What is the process for establishing and building understanding of and commitment to the vision statement among the school system and its stakeholders?

Leyden has a long established history of doing what is best for our students. This statement is on display in our boardroom and our website—*What's best for the kids?* This guiding principle is the first and last question that we ask ourselves when designing curriculum, evaluating performance, supplementing services, revamping facilities, or hiring new personnel.

When Leyden decided to pursue district accreditation under the new AdvancED standards, the first thing that the School Improvement Team (SIT) did was look at the vision and mission of the school. The vision and mission was meaningful at the time they were developed. However, since the inception of the vision and mission, many things had changed, not only at Leyden, but also in education. For the first time in the history of education, the federal government was mandating school reform legislation—NCLB. This legislation changed the process and focus of education.

The SIT spent a great deal of time searching for the words that captured Leyden's quest to increase student achievement for every student. The process was structured. The team collected data from stakeholders, engaged in lengthy discussions, created graphic organizers to display ideas and thoughts, and finally came to a consensus that Leyden is committed to excellence. Once the vision was established, the mission statement was easy to write.

Leyden's mission is a formal statement of who we are and what we do. We are a community of lifelong learners who prepare for global change, respect diversity, accept personal responsibility, and pursue a sense of fulfillment. Everyone who is part of Leyden is engaged in meeting the essence of its vision and mission statements. As a reminder, the building principals passed out t-shirts with the vision statement to every person who worked at Leyden. They also gave a t-shirt to every student and had them commit to excellence in a visual way—signing a wall at West and writing a letter of personal commitment at East. Each year, incoming freshmen are asked to make a commitment to excellence and are then given a vision statement t-shirt. Part of the freshman ACCESS (A Caring Community Empowering Student Success) curriculum is designed to enhance the meaning of the vision and mission for each freshman at Leyden.

Students, teachers, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, secretaries, and administrators display their commitment to excellence by wearing their t-shirts on school spirit days. When you are in the Leyden community, it is not unusual to see people wearing the Leyden vision statement t-shirt.

In addition to the formal commitment by students and the visual display among the staff, the vision and mission are printed on documents such as the student planner, the course planning handbook, district stationery, newsletters, and student announcements. When the new vision and mission were adopted, the SIT incorporated the faculty's commitment to excellence as part of an institute day theme. The purpose was to link the vision and mission to each member's accountability to our professional learning community. The mission and vision statements are also displayed throughout the district in classrooms, offices, and meeting places. The district recognizes the qualities of the vision and mission statement when celebrating successes of its stakeholders.

2. What is the system's process for maintaining and using information that describes the school system, its programs, services, and schools and their performance?

Leyden models its vision and mission by sharing information with a various stakeholders. At the district-level, the school report card is posted on the Leyden website for all members of the Leyden community. The school report card is shared with the faculty at a general meeting along with an analysis to show gains or gaps compared to previous years. The school report card is mailed to the parents of current students along with a letter to explain facts about the document.

The superintendent mails a quarterly newsletter to every member of the community that provides information about student and faculty successes, new curricular programs, and services. At the building level, the principals mail a newsletter to parents or guardians bi-monthly to share information about student grades, parent-teacher conferences, student successes, upcoming social events, and sports.

Leyden uses the framework of a professional learning community continuously to evaluate its programs, services, and student achievement. The vision and mission statements guide the processes and practices of the professional learning community. The school improvement team designed a school improvement map to display the relationship of its components for student achievement.

Committees at various levels throughout the district are charged with the responsibility to insure that we are meeting the needs for all students. The Administrative Council oversees the work of the other committees in the district; the superintendent then directly communicates with the board. Building committees and faculty committees evaluate data and monitor other programs and services. The parents' clubs, advisory councils, and community members provide feedback at regularly scheduled meetings, upon request, or self-initiated requests. Outside agencies such as the Regional Office of Education conduct compliance reviews. The special education program has a cooperative partnership with the Leyden Special Education Cooperative to insure excellence.

3. How does the leadership ensure that the system's vision, purpose, and goals guide the work of the school system and its schools?

A shared leadership approach ensures that the system's vision and mission are implemented at every level of the school system and its schools. The focus questions of our professional learning community provide structure for curriculum and instruction, assessment, and response to intervention and other supports (refer to document entitled District School Improvement Map). The outcome of accountability among the district administration, building administration, faculty, and students is clearly stated as part of the district's continuous improvement. This same accountability is reflected in the district's school improvement plan that focuses on goals in literacy and critical thinking to increase student achievement in reading and math.

Another feature of the shared leadership model is open communication. Reflective decision-making is supported by a variety of processes and practices for pupil and personnel services, curriculum revision, and day-to-day operations. Faculty, parents, students, and community members are invited to participate in making decisions. Leyden prides itself on having an open-door policy for its stakeholders. Technology has enhanced this process with email and online grade reports.

Making a commitment to excellence infers that the process will seek continuous improvement. Committees such as the school improvement team and the curriculum advisory council provide such a process. These two committees represent faculty from every department. The members have day-to-day contact with other faculty, our students, and

many of our parents. Their input provides a wide scope of opinions about changes and their predicted effects. District and building administrative representation on these committees links critical decision makers in the district.

A structured inservice and staff development calendar is organized by the school improvement team annually to ensure that time for collaboration is provided for faculty to work on district initiatives for school improvement. The calendar depicts department meeting dates, literacy meeting dates, district events, and institute days. Department chairs are responsible to organize department and team inservice activities and record minutes for the weekly inservice. Department chairs meet every other week to discuss topics for inservice and staff development. Additional dates for literacy training are part of the process.

The Student Services Department and building administrators make sure that students and parents understand their role in the educational process by having parent meetings and special class-level assemblies to explain the meaning of standardized tests and their results. The ultimate goal of these practices is to ensure that parents and students understand the importance of high school achievement and its relationship to opportunities for postsecondary schooling and training.

When deemed necessary, ad hoc committees are organized. One example is the Alternative Pathways Committee. The committee was formed to investigate better ways to meet the needs of our students. The recommendations of this committee were piloted and are now being implemented to provide instructional and social supports for credit recovery, the pregnant mothers program, and students with extreme social emotional needs.

4. What process is used to ensure that the vision and purpose of the school system remain current and aligned with the system's expectations in support of student learning and the effectiveness of the school system and its schools?

The Leyden district has processes to constantly review student learning and the effectiveness of its initiatives. The guiding questions of our professional learning community—What are students learning? How do we know students are learning? and What do we do when students are not learning? ensure that we are meeting the needs of our students.

Our union contract supports the establishment of a Student Instructional Assistance Steering Committee (SIASC) to ensure that current practices maintain overall effectiveness within the district. Curriculum is based on research and best practices. Department chairs are responsible to have course objectives, sequences of instruction, and assessments that are aligned to standards. In addition, department chairs are responsible to make sure that each course has common assessments whose results are analyzed by teachers to improve instruction.

A literacy director and literacy coaches work with department chairs and teachers to ensure that lesson planning includes research-based strategies for content literacy. Teachers develop SMART goals to measure student achievement. SMART goal results are gathered each semester and are analyzed by teachers and their chairs.

The student management system provides information for students and parents to keep them informed about the student's educational experiences. Real time attendance and grades are online. Student results on standardized tests and practice tests are online. Students also have access to a variety of educational and career exploration tools on the Media Center website.

Keeping the vision and mission as the focus of all practices and processes gives our district the ability to understand the population that we serve. Having a board that represents our community assures that our practices and policies are current and that they meet the expectations of all our stakeholders.

Overall Assessment:

Highly Functional: The school system has achieved a wide commitment by all groups of stakeholders to a shared purpose and direction. The system and its schools have clearly defined expectations for student learning aligned with the system's vision that is fully supported by system and school personnel and external stakeholders. These expectations serve as the focus for assessing student performance, system and school effectiveness. The vision guides allocations of time and human, material, and fiscal resources.

Standard 2. Governance & Leadership

STANDARD: The system provides governance and leadership that promote student performance and system effectiveness.

Impact Statement: A system is successful in meeting this standard when it has leaders who are advocates for the system's vision and improvement efforts. The leaders provide direction and allocate resources to implement curricular and co-curricular programs that enable students to achieve expectations for their learning. Leaders function with clearly defined authority and responsibility and encourage collaboration and shared responsibility for system and school improvement among stakeholders. The system's policies, procedures, and organizational conditions ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for innovation.

Indicators Rubric: Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school system. The responses to the rubric should help the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school system's responses to the focus questions.

Indicators Evidence: For each Indicator, click the (Add Evidence) link to provide examples of evidence that support the rubric response.

Definitions of Indicators Rubric:

Not Evident	Little or no evidence exists
Emerging	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
Operational	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
Highly Functional	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

INDICATORS: In fulfillment of this standard, the system operates under the jurisdiction of a governing authority that:

2.1 Establishes and communicates policies and procedures that provide for the effective operation of the system :

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Agendas, minutes of governing authority meetings

District-wide Staff and/or student handbooks

Governance Policy handbooks: board, district, school

Governing authority affirms understanding of their role in the operation of the school/district

Local, state, and federal policy handbooks

Organizational chart

Procedural policies: emergencies, contact information, calling tree, discipline, due process, logistics, placement and transfer

Staff and students affirm their understanding of emergency and operational procedures

Stakeholders affirm understanding of operational procedures

Students and staff affirm their understanding of discipline policies and due process

2.2 Recognizes and preserves the executive, administrative, and leadership authority of the administrative head of the system:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

District staff are knowledgeable about leadership prerogatives

District staff are knowledgeable about organizational chart

District staff demonstrate knowledge about due process

Governing Board Policies demonstrate leadership prerogatives

Organizational chart

Policies demonstrate protocols for remediation and due process

Roles and responsibilities of governing board, advisory councils, and ad hoc committees are clearly outlined

Succession plan demonstrates leadership transitions

2.3 Ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws, standards, and regulations:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

District staff are knowledgeable about curriculum standards

District staff demonstrates knowledge and use of curriculum standards in the teaching and learning process

District staff responsible for the implementation of state and/or federal programs are knowledgeable about compliance

Documentation of adherence to ethical business practices

Documentation of compliance with all regulations regarding copyright law, intellectual property, and international restrictions

Documentation of State and Federal Compliances and Assurances, including NCLB/Title I, EEO, Title IX

Documentation of utilization of all requirement elements of curriculum standards

Documentation with all regulations that apply to accreditation by NCA CASI, SACS CASI, or AdvancED

Stakeholders affirm compliance with Equal Employment Opportunity practices and procedures

Stakeholders affirm compliance with ethical business practices

Stakeholders are involved in the establishment and monitoring of adherence to all regulations

2.4 Implements policies and procedures that provide for the orientation and training of the governing board:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

District staff and governing board members affirm their knowledge of governing board policies and procedures

District staff and governing board members affirm their participation in orientation and training

Policies and procedures for governing board training and orientation

Roles and responsibilities of governing board, advisory councils, and ad hoc committees are clearly outlined

2.5 Builds public support, secures sufficient resources, and acts as a steward of the system's resources:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Documentation of adherence to ethical business practices

Policies and procedures for fiscal planning: short-term and long-range

Stakeholders affirm compliance with Equal Employment Opportunity practices and procedures

Stakeholders affirm compliance with ethical business practices

Other: Staff Compliance Form from County Offices

2.6 Maintains access to legal counsel to advise or obtain information about legal requirements and obligations:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

District staff are knowledgeable about due process and complaint resolution

District staff are knowledgeable about access to legal counsel

Documentation of access to legal counsel

Documentation of resolutions of any complaints

Staff and students affirm their involvement in the accreditation process

2.7 Maintains adequate insurance or equivalent resources to protect its financial stability and administrative operations:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

District staff affirm knowledge and support for the district's fiscal responsibility

District staff affirm knowledge of district's insurance carrier, policies, and procedures

Policies and procedures for investments

Policies and procedures for protecting assets and financial resources

Other: Thompson Steel Annex

INDICATORS: In fulfillment of this standard, the system has leadership that:

2.8 Provides for systematic analysis and review of student performance and school and system effectiveness :

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Advisory Committee: agenda, minutes

District staff affirm the use of student performance and organizational effectiveness data for planning

District Staff meetings: agenda, minutes, decision points

Evaluation results: professional development, efficiency, effectiveness, instructional programming, etc.

Record of student performance data analysis

Staff and students affirm their involvement in the accreditation process

Student database management system

Student performance data are used during district staff meetings

Student performance data are used for extra-curricular planning

Student performance database for formative assessments

Other: PSAE Participation Other: SMART Goals

2.9 Creates and supports collaborative networks of stakeholders to support system programs:
Operational

Evidence Provided:

Accreditation team members are representative of staff and students

Artifacts displayed throughout the district demonstrate inclusion of all stakeholder communities

Calendar, agendas, minutes of stakeholder meetings

Committee members are representative of all stakeholder groups

Parent/community compacts

Policies for staff/student leadership opportunities outside the district environment

Record of Advisory Committees: calendars, membership, minutes

Record of co-curricular organizations and activities: calendars, membership, sponsors

Stakeholders affirm a sense of belonging and engagement

Stakeholders affirm that leadership hears and acts upon their suggestions and recommendations

Stakeholders affirm their involvement in a district-wide decision-making process

Stakeholders affirm their involvement in the accreditation process

Stakeholders affirm their involvement on committees

Website provides forum for feedback and dialogue

2.10 Provides direction, assistance, and resources to align, support, and enhance all parts of the system in meeting organizational and student performance goals:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Budget reflects allocation of support for student performance targets

District staff are knowledgeable about student performance targets

District staff are knowledgeable about the alignment of resources to support student performance

Guidelines outline expectations for instructional standards

Guidelines outline expectations for student performance

Organizational chart reflects allocation of support for student performance targets

Policies demonstrate established student performance targets, measures, and strategies

Other: Formal and Informal Classroom Observations

2.11 Provides internal and external stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Accreditation team members are representative of stakeholder groups

Calendar, agendas, minutes of stakeholder meetings

Committee members are representative of all stakeholder groups

Parent/community compacts

Policies and procedures established for the inclusion of all stakeholders into appropriate district-wide decision making processes

Stakeholders affirm their involvement in a district-wide decision-making process

Stakeholders affirm their involvement on committees

Other: Advisory Councils, Interact Club, Rotary Top Ten Banquet

2.12 Assesses and addresses community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Artifacts displayed throughout the district demonstrate inclusion of all stakeholder communities

Record of Advisory Committees: calendars, membership, minutes

Stakeholders affirm their satisfaction with their level of involvement

Other: Superintendent's Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast, Cooperative Education Employer Appreciation Luncheon

2.13 Implements an evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel:
Operational

Evidence Provided:

District staff are knowledgeable about access to and participation in a professional growth program

District staff are knowledgeable about the criteria, timeline, process, procedures, and dispositions by which they will be evaluated

Documentation of salary schedules

Handbooks demonstrate staff evaluation system

New staff orientation materials

Policies demonstrate evaluation criteria, timelines, and termination processes Policies demonstrate professional growth opportunities

Professional development plan for all staff

Other: Department Travel Budgets Other: Leyden University, West 40

Focus Questions:

1. What is the process for establishing, communicating, and implementing policies and procedures for the effective operation of the school system and its schools?

Leyden has procedures and processes in place that allow for the establishment, communication, and implementation of policies for effective operation of the system and its schools. Keeping in mind that Leyden operates as a professional learning community, committees are designed to review and make recommendations on policies and procedures.

With curriculum-related procedures, the Curriculum Advisory Council (CAC) plays an initial role in gathering input and making recommendations about new courses, significant changes in course content, alignment of curriculum, student ranking, grade weighting, and student grade classification. After this step, the info is routed to the Department Chairs, which allows for additional sharing and input among the departments. In addition, CAC members are encouraged to seek department input at weekly inservice as discussion is occurring regarding the curriculum topics at hand.

Running parallel to the CAC, the Administrative Council (AC) discusses the same topics and gives its input as to how the change or recommendation will impact day-to-day operations, staffing, and other resources.

The final step in the process before implementation is approval by the board. The changes or recommendations are presented at an open board meeting. The board usually discusses the presentation and then votes on the changes or recommendation.

Faculty and staff have input regarding the day-to-day operations of the school by serving on the Operations Advisory Committee (OAC). Its membership also includes administrators. Members are selected by their peers to represent them on issues such as parking, lighting, cafeteria services, building conditions, etc. The OAC meets monthly.

The Discipline Committee is comprised of the building deans, parent representatives, and student representatives. All faculty are invited to the meetings. The committee meets to review the Code of Conduct.

The School Improvement Team (SIT) is a selected group of volunteer faculty who meet monthly to insure credibility of the school improvement process. The SIT is actively involved in providing input for district institute days and all-school initiative inservices.

The SIT has a rich history as it evolved from a grassroots initiative by the faculty to find better ways to increase student achievement. The group called themselves Support the Core. When Leyden became better engaged in the process under NCA and then AdvancED, the NCA steering committee and Support the Core renamed themselves the School Improvement Team. The SIT is organized under the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction (ASCI). At the beginning of the school improvement cycle, the ASCI solicits membership via email to all faculty who then are self-nominated. The Administrative Council selects the team to insure that it is representative of all curricular areas. The SIT members are responsible to represent their department at the meetings—this includes certified and non-certified staff.

SIT members are actively involved in the accreditation process and are encouraged to participate in related school improvement opportunities by attending conferences or volunteering to be a member of an NCA review team.

Documents and tools that communicate these policies and procedures to impacted populations include the following:

- Code of Conduct
- Student planner
- Superintendent's newsletter
- Progress reports
- District mailings
- Minutes from the different committees (CAC, OAC, AC, Discipline Committee)
- Established meeting dates for different committees
- Alert Now (emergency phone contact system)
- Global Compliance Network

In summary, Leyden provides a great deal of transparency in each step as input is sought from a variety of populations to make the best decisions for the district as a whole to insure that we are meeting our vision and mission.

2. What process does the system's leadership use to evaluate system effectiveness and its impact on student performance?

Since the inception of current school reform and the adoption of the accreditation process, the interpretation of data has come to play a major role in evaluating student performance and program effectiveness. To assure excellence, the focus on using data to make decisions within the district continues to grow. Implementation of research-based

programs is a priority. Evaluation processes that reflect this review of data in determining the effectiveness of various programs include the following:

- ACT's Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) is one example of monitoring student performance. EPAS provides the platform to focus on specific areas of growth or concerns for individual students and groups of students.
- Mastery Manager provides faculty with the ability to evaluate data at a macro and micro level. This tool will continue to expand the ways in which teachers are able to analyze data and increase student achievement.
- The district student management system, eSchool, gives teachers, administrators, support staff, parents, and students up-to-date information about grades, standardized tests, special education information, medical information, student success plans, attendance, transcripts, standardized test history, financial obligations, and contact information. The technology director and his staff have training videos for staff members to use the various features of the system. eSchool is a real time tool to communicate assignments and grades with students and parents. Teachers can also use eSchool to review reading and math scores of their students as they plan lessons.
- Online surveys are used to gather constituent feedback such as the literacy survey, technology survey, and calendar survey.
- Staff evaluations for tenured and non-tenured staff include criteria for school improvement goals and implementation of school improvement initiatives. All staff are required to complete a reflection of their teaching as part of the formal evaluation process.
- The SIT focuses on data-driven initiatives. The SIT has made literacy one of its primary avenues for student growth across the curriculum. The literacy goal is the convergence of the Best Practices in Reading and critical thinking within content areas. Review of the effectiveness of this initiative is based on both formative and summative assessments although some subjective evaluation will also play a role. The district's leaders value input from the SIT. Some major changes system-wide that have been recommended by the SIT include weekly inservice for teacher collaboration and the formation of the literacy director, the literacy coaches, and department literacy liaisons.

3. In what ways are stakeholders, including system and school staff, given opportunities to provide leadership and to contribute to the decision-making process?

Leyden's belief that we are a community of learners invokes the assurance that stakeholders have access to membership in numerous committees. These committees provide stakeholders with the opportunity to have input in decisions that affect them, their community, or their children. Within each committee, persons may seek a leadership role. Most of the committees have open membership; some may include a monetary contribution for membership. Others include a nomination and election or selection process.

Examples of open membership committees would include the Parents Club and student co-curricular clubs; the Parents Club does request a \$5 membership fee that is used to fund some of its programs. The Parents Club meets with the building principals regularly to discuss upcoming events and local social issues. Student co-curricular clubs give students an opportunity to lead a small or large club, plan and implement activities or events, work with teachers outside of the classroom, and meet other students.

Student Council, OAC, and CAC are committees where members are self-nominated and then elected by peers. The student council elected leaders and members are responsible to coordinate many activities in the district including homecoming activities, class-levels competitions, spirit days, and student elections. The building principals also seek the Student Council's input for curriculum and operations. Elected members to the OAC give input regarding the day-to-day operations of the buildings in the district; the CAC give input regarding district curricular decisions.

SIT members are self-nominated and then selected by the administration. This group is responsible for input regarding accreditation and student success initiatives. Two faculty are appointed as co-chairs of this committee; they report to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction (ASCI). Members of the CAC and SIT play a major role in keeping the essence of the professional learning committee active.

Department chairs are appointed annually by the district administration after completing a self-evaluation and administrative evaluation. Department chairs are leaders of academic departments. They are instrumental in the implementation of school initiatives, direct instruction, and assessment of student achievement. Department chairs report to the ASCI and building principals. In addition, the department chairs provide formative and summative evaluations of certified staff to the administration and summative evaluations of non-certified staff to the district office manager.

Faculty at-large are given opportunities for leadership and decision-making input by serving on various committees such as the discipline committee, interview teams, new teacher mentoring, parents club, and summer curriculum project teams. Teachers may also apply for an individual summer curriculum project to improve instruction.

Furthermore, ad hoc committees are formed the need arises. Members of these committees are chosen based on their involvement with the topic at hand and the need for input from the impacted populations.

4. What policies and processes are in place to ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for innovation?

Within the district, there are policies and processes that address the needs of all learners while maintaining adherence to a quality education—the focus of the district vision and mission. To ensure equity of learning opportunities, all departments have aligned their curriculum to state standards and are in the process of aligning them to College and Career Readiness standards. The goal is to have course work and assessments aligned to the standards. Incoming students are placed into classes based on their test scores in reading and math. After freshman placement, students have an opportunity for open enrollment. This allows successful students to move from level to level.

Leyden hosts a summer academy program for students who score significantly low in reading and math on their placement exam. This program is extended during the freshman year in English, math, social studies, and science. Students who do not meet the expectations of the freshman academy program have further assistance in sophomore level academy classes.

Highly qualified teachers who work closely with content teachers in regular education instruct special education students. The special education teachers collaborate with regular education teachers during inservice to insure the content equity. Common assessments are shared among the teachers as well. Leyden hosts a regional special education program at the West campus for LIFE and Bridge students. A shared-leadership approach is collaborated with the Leyden Area Special Education Cooperative.

Students with limited English participate in Limited English Proficiency classes where highly qualified teachers address their academic and cultural needs.

Students who are not academically successful have opportunities for additional support through guided study, an after-school program for students who have failed one or more core classes. Freshman who are not academically successful have success plans that are coordinated among counselors, ACCESS advisors, and teachers.

Progress reports and report cards are mailed home every six weeks to inform parents of their student's success. Parents may be requested to contact teachers if their child has unsatisfactory performance. Classroom teachers are required to contact parents of students who are in jeopardy of failing. Parents of students with multiple failures are contacted by the school administration to collaborate on student success. Interpreters are available daily for teachers to communicate with parents who do not speak English.

Per board policy, all publications need to address non-discriminatory language by including the following statement:

Leyden High School District 212 is an equal opportunity institution, committed to compliance with all applicable state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination. This includes prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, order of protection status, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, homelessness and marital/parental status, including pregnancy.

The parent and student handbooks include policies and processes to address complaints. The Code of Conduct stipulates specific details regarding conduct, grading, attendance, and reporting. During the first Institute, teachers are given procedures to act as mandated reporters. Certified and non-certified staff are required to complete modules using the Global Compliance Network that are related to their job at Leyden.

The school district shows its commitment to excellence by supporting innovative ways to deliver a quality education to its students. The district has continued to establish policies and process to expand opportunities for students to increase achievement. An ad hoc committee was formed to pursue alternative paths to graduation. The committee reviewed programs that Leyden had established such as Maple Park (alternative school) and LAMP (Leyden Academic Mothers Program). Then the committee researched other paths to graduation. The result was a summer pilot program for credit recovery that included online course work. This was followed up with an after school credit recovery online program. The result is the board's approval for online credit recovery during the normal school day beginning 2010 – 2011 school year. Another innovative program was an agreement with Harbor Academy for students with social emotional needs beyond the scope of what we could offer at our home campuses.

Professional development opportunities exist at the building, district, state, and national levels for staff to enrich their professional experience. Each department has a budget for professional staff development and travel. The district provides substitutes for classes when teachers attend professional development activities. Leyden also has an excellent working relationship with West 40 for administrative academy classes and enrichment classes.

Proposals for summer curriculum development are encouraged by the administration. Upon acceptance, teachers have an opportunity to engage in dialogue with other colleagues to improve and enhance curricula. Faculty who earn a rating of 'excellent' may also participate in an alternative evaluation process that seeks innovation.

Leaders at Leyden welcome new ideas. Countless programs and practices started as an idea and have become part of the institution's climate. Some examples are Support the Core, student of the month, 6-week progress reports, spirit Fridays, SAFE celebration, Fern Awards, PSAE day activities for 9th and 10th graders, St. Baldrick's, faculty football and basketball competition, and Junior Olympics. Leyden's long history is dotted with innovations of its members.

Overall Assessment:

Operational: The school system has leaders who are advocates for the system's vision and improvement efforts. The leaders provide direction and systematically allocate resources to implement curricular and co-curricular programs that enable students to achieve expectations for their learning. Leaders encourage collaboration and shared responsibility for system and school improvement among stakeholders. The system's policies, procedures, and organizational conditions ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for innovation. While these processes and conditions are being implemented, the implementation is not systemic across the system, and the results are varied.

Standard 3. Teaching & Learning

STANDARD: The system provides research-based curriculum and instructional methods that facilitate achievement for all students.

Impact Statement: Impact Statement: A system is successful in meeting this standard when it implements a curriculum based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning that provides opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The system ensures that teachers use proven instructional practices that actively engage students in the learning process; provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real world situations; and give students feedback to improve their performance.

Indicators Rubric: Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school system. The responses to the rubric should help the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school system's responses to the focus questions.

Indicators Evidence: For each Indicator, click the (Add Evidence) link to provide examples of evidence that support the rubric response.

Definitions of Indicators Rubric:

Not Evident	Little or no evidence exists
Emerging	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
Operational	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
Highly Functional	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

INDICATORS: In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

3.1 Develops, articulates, and coordinates curriculum based on clearly- defined expectations for student learning, including essential knowledge and skills:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Communication of NCLB performance targets

Curriculum pacing guides

District provides guidelines for lesson plan development that include learning objectives

District staff can articulate student learning expectations

District staff/others meet regularly to discuss student progress and remediation

District staff/others meetings highlight discussions of student learning expectations

District-wide curriculum committee: review cycle, adoption/approval policies/criteria, membership District-wide master schedule; hours of instruction Formative assessments: quarterlies, etc.

Policies on grading criteria Policy on credit requirements for program completion

Staff can articulate curriculum sequencing and grouping

Student Handbook outlines student learning expectations

Students affirm their knowledge of what is expected of them

Syllabi or course catalogues

Textbooks and text selection criteria are aligned to learning goals, curriculum

3.2 Establishes expectations and supports student engagement in the learning process, including opportunities for students to explore application of higher order thinking skills and investigate new approaches to applying their learning:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Course syllabi outlining criteria for student involvement

Samples of student work Student discussion groups

Student mentoring programs

Students affirm their involvement in their own learning

3.3 Ensures that system-wide curricular and instructional decisions are based on data and research at all levels:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Assessment data

District staff/others can identify research used to align instruction

District staff/others meet to analyze data and align instruction

District staff/others meetings regularly include data analysis

Grade reports

Professional development calendar and topics

Surveys

Transcripts, certificates

3.4 Supports instruction that is research-based and reflective of best practice:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Agendas, minutes of staff/grade level/department/program meetings

District staff/others meet to share best practices

District staff/others meetings regularly include discussions about effective instructional design and delivery

Guidance on lesson plan development

Professional development plans

Professional learning opportunities focus on best practice instruction

Professional organization membership

Student display of project-based learning opportunities

Other: Professional Development section in the library

3.5 Supports a curriculum that challenges and meets the needs of each student, reflects a commitment to equity, and demonstrates an appreciation of diversity:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Curriculum includes attention to diversity

District staff are knowledgeable about state and national curriculum standards

Graduation requirements

Master schedule

Policies that reflect attention to issues of equity

Promotion, graduation criteria

Standards-based curriculum: state and national standards

Students affirm that there are opportunities to excel

3.6 Allocates and protects instructional time to support student learning:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Instructional calendar: days, hours Lesson plans are followed during teacher absence

Master schedule

Policies and guidelines that demonstrate that all program requirements are met

Policies demonstrate that substitute teachers are responsible for delivery instruction

Staff affirm that their instructional time is protected

There are few instructional interruptions: PA system, visitors, etc.

3.7 Maintains articulation among and between all levels of schooling to monitor student performance and ensure readiness for future schooling or employment:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Agendas, minutes of staff meetings indicating vertical and horizontal articulation

Articulation agreements between agencies

Content-specific staff are knowledgeable about each other's course syllabus

Policies and guidelines granting dual-credit, transfer of credit

Transition policies

Other: Curriculum Advisory Council Other: Summer Academy

3.8 Supports the implementation of interventions to help students meet expectations for student learning :

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

After-school programs

Counseling programs: curriculum, schedules, staffing

District staff affirm that there are multiple opportunities for students to get support Individualized Development/Career Plans

Online support

Policies for student orientation, interventions, remediation

Students affirm that they have opportunities to get support for their school experience

3.9 Maintains a system-wide climate that supports student learning:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Curriculum reflects attention to issues of school climate

Database of student behavioral incidents

District staff affirm that they are involved in promoting positive school climate

District staff/others meetings provide time for discussions about climate

Parents/community indicate that the school/district focuses on positive school/district climate

Peer intervention programs; peer counseling

Policies for student behavior, remediation, due process, appeals

Reward system for positive behavior

Stakeholder satisfaction survey data

3.10 Ensures that curriculum is reviewed and revised at regular intervals:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Budget allocating appropriate funds for media services

Calendar and schedule of media services to students

District staff affirm the use of media services in the development of curriculum and instructional programs

Facilities map indicating media services location

Labor agreement that outlines media services responsibilities

Media services staff demonstrate the use media resources to support student achievement Staffing chart demonstrating allocation of appropriate media staff

Other: Mastery Manager, SIT Minutes, Department Meeting Minutes, Curriculum Projects

3.11 Coordinates and ensures ready access to instructional technology, information and media services, and materials needed for effective instruction:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Budget allocating appropriate funds for technology - software, hardware, and infrastructure

Calendar and schedule of technology services to students

District staff affirm that technology supports their curriculum and instructional programs

Facilities map indicating technology services/lab

Staffing chart demonstrating allocation of appropriate technology staff

Students and staff affirm that technology is embedded within the teaching and learning process

Technology staff/services demonstrate their involvement in support of student achievement

Other: Master Calendar, Class Schedule

Focus Questions:

1. How does the system ensure the alignment and articulation of curriculum, instructional strategies, and assessments in support of the expectations for student learning?

The district relies on department chairpersons to oversee, monitor, and evaluate the curriculum implemented in each department. Expectations are conveyed to the department chairs through Department Chair meetings and strategy sessions with the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. Data are gathered through standardized test scores, local assessments and anecdotal evidence. Curriculum is aligned to meet the needs of the students while reflecting state standards as well as College Readiness Standards or National Standards. Subject teams are provided time during weekly inservice meetings to develop and plan units of study. Summer curriculum projects are used by the subject teams to work on long-term planning that will guide the course for the following school year.

Final exams are given each semester with the students' answers processed with Mastery Manager. Subject teams or the department chairperson select and run reports. Many courses with common formative assessments also use this service to track student success. Tracking the mastery of selected standards is an option with Mastery Manager. This is a long-term goal for all courses across the curriculum.

Faculty are also encouraged to attend professional workshops and conferences that support the goals of the district, especially in literacy and critical thinking. Local workshops would include those offered by West 40. Teams of faculty have attended national conferences for staff development, technology, and academic content.

The Curriculum Advisory Committee meets to discuss new course proposals and the impact the offering will have on the established courses. New courses and re-sequencing of offerings is also discussed by the Administrative Council as well as by the Department Chairs.

Finally, the department chairpersons are charged with monitoring the curriculum. Informal classroom visits, subject team meetings, and formal observations allow the chair to ensure alignment and implementation of the curriculum in the classroom. The district's teacher evaluation plan includes the teacher's adherence to the developed curriculum and use of instructional strategies to help all students.

2. In what ways does the system promote and support the implementation of research-based instructional strategies, innovations, and activities that facilitate achievement for all students?

In its pursuit to meet the tenets of the district's vision and mission for all students, the district seeks input from all stakeholders for ways to promote and support implementation processes. Institute days are designed to introduce and reinforce curricular initiatives by the district. Outside experts as well as homegrown experts facilitate general sessions and breakout sessions at the institutes. Leyden has embraced a literacy initiative that has combined outside expertise with the expertise of the district literacy team. The team is a centralized group of reading experts that work across the curriculum customizing literacy strategies per subject area. Individual, as well as subject teams, arrange time with the literacy team to help guide the development of lessons that support literacy and promote the students' reading skills.

Four inservice days have been designated as literacy days that incorporate the on-going projects per department per subject team. Literacy liaisons from each department are trained to become the "go to" resource in each area of instruction. Their continuous training gives them the expertise to deliver a common message of the initiative. The liaisons also work with their department peers to implement the instructional strategies that have been grouped in a literacy toolbox. This toolbox of strategies is research-based, and these strategies are being taught across the district.

Inservice days are also designated for curricular work by the subject teams. During this time assessments are created, audited, and evaluated. Mastery Manager is used to gather and process information about student performance on standardized and local assessments. Information is turned back to the classroom teacher and time is provided for teachers to disaggregate the data in meaningful ways.

New teachers at Leyden undergo new teacher training where they are assigned to a mentor. They and their mentors attend follow-up meetings during their initial years at Leyden. Literacy training done through pullout time familiarizes teachers with strategies that are expected to be used in the classroom. The district provides subs for teachers who attend training sessions.

Day-to-day monitoring of the strategies is the responsibility of the department chair. The literacy team has a website where teachers can share and use instructional materials such as graphic organizers. Within the departments, chairs encourage teachers to share lesson plans and the results of the plans. Some teachers have started to team teach to improve instruction. Other teachers informally visit each other's classes to watch practices. The department chairperson incorporates a teacher's support of the district's initiatives into the teacher evaluation. Teachers are evaluated in both formative and summative evaluations for fulfilling professional responsibilities as established by the district.

3. What processes are implemented to ensure that all staff members are well-prepared to support and implement the district's expectations for student learning?

The district seeks the most highly qualified teachers by attending a wide variety of job fairs at state universities. The Leyden administrators also participate in a local job fair that is a cooperative effort among the suburban school districts in our area. The interviewing process for new staff includes peer faculty, department chairs, and multiple levels of administrators to insure that we hire the best teachers. The district provides a compensation and benefits package that is competitive. The reputation of the district as being fair and equitable attracts an excellent staff. Leyden expects its staff to work hard to meet essence of the districts' vision and mission – a commitment to excellence for all students to ensure that they are ready to be successful when they graduate from Leyden.

Leyden's new teacher orientation introduces the teacher to the district's expectations both in and out of the classroom. Student classroom management, literacy strategies, grading, and best practices are covered during this time together with administrators. Mentor teachers and district technology representatives are there to assist the new teachers.

Institute Days are used to provide teachers with new information, reinforce district expectations, and provide time for the teachers to incorporate new materials into their lessons. Inservice time is used for curricular work and district/department initiatives. Department chairs meet with district and building administrators every two weeks to discuss and refine the direction being taken by the district and to share implementation of district initiatives.

Leyden University offers teachers the ability to learn new strategies and develop skills for use with their students. In-district credit is issued to teachers for their successful completion of these courses. The district encourages teachers to attend professional conferences and workshops. Department chairpersons monitor and identify teachers for professional travel.

4. How does the system ensure that all students and staff have access to comprehensive information, instructional technology, and media services?

Before students enter Leyden as a freshman, an extensive welcoming process begins when they are in the eighth grade; this includes students taking a placement exam. The results of the placement exam are shared with incoming students and their parents at an event called, The Taste of East and The Taste of West. At this January event, students and their parents meet the administrators, their counselors, department chairs of the core subjects, elective department chairs, and representatives of the athletic department. This event provides them with information about the comprehensive offering of classes at Leyden so they have a better understanding of their class-level placement.

Each year as part of the registration process, every student and parent is issued a handbook that includes information about daily operations, media services, and technology access. Students and parents jointly read and sign a technology agreement. Students receive a formal introduction to technology in ACCESS and Computer Literacy, a required course for graduation. An introduction to media services is delivered in ACCESS, Computer Literacy, and English class.

All parents and students have access to updated grades, attendance, reference resources, school information, and events through the Home Access Center on the district's website. The district website also allows access to staff email, the Media Center collections, and other data resources.

Both schools have multiple computer labs and Media Center workstations that students can use during and after the school day; the Media Centers have extended hours five days a week. The Media Centers are staffed to assist both students and faculty for research and resources. The Media Center website provides students and teachers with access

to databases, search engines, and library catalogs for use in and out of the district. Numerous textbooks have online resources available to teachers and students.

Teachers are issued laptops to access school-wide email for communication among staff and parents. Teachers maintain grades, attendance, and student comments on eSchool, our district student management system. eSchool also maintains current comprehensive information about students including demographics, standardized test scores, student success plans, and special education accommodations.

The district has installed projection units in all of its classrooms for use with district issued laptops assigned to the staff. Individual departments have planned and budgeted for additional technological equipment. This may include Elmos, SMART boards, Mobi units, laptop carts, Qwizdom, DVD players, and other technology requested by the individual teacher. The newest program for credit recovery uses online curriculum from e2020, Excel High School, and the Illinois Virtual School.

Overall Assessment:

Operational: The school system implements a curriculum based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning that provides opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The system demonstrates evidence of alignment between the curriculum and instructional practices with systematic implementation across the system. Teachers use proven instructional practices that actively engage students in the learning process. Teachers provide frequent opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real world situations. Teachers give students regular feedback to improve their performance.

Standard 4. Documenting & Using Results

STANDARD: The system enacts a comprehensive assessment system that monitors and documents performance and uses these results to improve student performance and system effectiveness.

Impact Statement: A school system is successful in meeting this standard when it uses a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly-defined performance measures. The assessment system is used to assess student performance on expectations for student learning, identify gaps between expectations for student learning and student performance, evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, and determine interventions to improve student performance. The assessment system yields timely and accurate information that is meaningful and useful to system and school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders in understanding student performance, system and school effectiveness, and the results of improvement efforts.

Indicators Rubric: Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school system. The responses to the rubric should help the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school system's responses to the focus questions.

Indicators Evidence: For each Indicator, click the (Add Evidence) link to provide examples of evidence that support the rubric response.

Definitions of Indicators Rubric:

Not Evident	Little or no evidence exists
Emerging	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
Operational	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
Highly Functional	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

INDICATORS: In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

4.1 Establishes and implements a comprehensive assessment system, aligned with the system's expectations for student learning, that yields information which is reliable, valid, and bias free :
Operational

Evidence Provided:

All stakeholders are knowledgeable about behavioral standards

All stakeholders are knowledgeable about grading and appeals

Assessment system that records multiple assessments

Assessment system that safeguards validity, confidentiality, identification

Calendar of assessment activities

Database that records graduation, completion, GPA, placement, retention rates

District staff use data to inform policies and practice

Policies outline administration of multiple assessments and their purpose

Special database for career preparation, special education, bilingual education programs

Staff affirm the use of multiple measures for student performance

Stakeholders are familiar with the administration and purpose of multiple assessments

Stakeholders are knowledgeable about the assessment schedule

Student/Staff Handbook that outlines grading scales, syllabus criteria, and appeal process

The development and administration of multiple assessments consider limited-language learners, students with disabilities, and multiple learning styles

4.2 Ensures that student assessment data are used to make decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and learning:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Agendas, minutes from staff meetings indicate use of data to drive instructional planning discussions

Agendas, minutes from staff meetings indicate utilization of data systems

Criteria for evaluation of staff performance include the use of data for instructional planning

District staff affirm their understanding of how data are used to evaluate their effectiveness

District staff are knowledgeable about how to use student performance data for the purpose of instructional planning

District staff demonstrate the use of data when planning guidelines for instruction, through vertical and horizontal articulation

District staff meet regularly to discuss student work

District staff utilize assessment data for the purpose of instructional and program planning

Examples of student work are prominently displayed

Staff Handbook outlines expectations about the use of student performance data for instructional planning

Student performance data reports, charts, graphs indicate system-wide use of data for instructional planning

Students affirm knowledge about their learning expectations

4.3 Conducts a systematic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness, including support systems, and uses the results to improve student and system performance:

Emerging

Evidence Provided:

Data from community/business

Database that records graduation, post-graduate engagement

District staff utilize business and community data to guide program planning

District staff utilize perception data from surveys to guide program planning

Stakeholders affirm their familiarity with student performance and organizational effectiveness

4.4 Provides a system of communication which uses a variety of methods to report student performance and system effectiveness to all stakeholders:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Agendas, minutes from meetings where student performance and school effectiveness were highlighted

Criteria that establishes student performance data as a component of parent-teacher conferences

District staff affirm the use of various communication methods to report student performance

Newsletters demonstrate communication of student performance and school effectiveness

Stakeholders affirm the use of various communication methods to report student performance

4.5 Uses comparison and trend data from comparable school systems to evaluate student performance and system effectiveness:

Not Evident

Evidence Provided:

Agenda, minutes of meetings in which comparative data were highlighted

District staff affirm their involvement in meetings in which comparative data were highlighted

Reports that outline comparable data analysis - across schools, districts, states, nationally

4.6 Demonstrates verifiable growth in student performance that is supported by multiple sources of evidence:

Emerging

Evidence Provided:

Data reports disaggregate student performance growth

Data reports include behavioral and environmental data

Data reports verify growth in student performance

District staff can identify reasons why student performance has increased/decreased

District staff can identify strategies for increasing student performance

4.7 Maintains a secure, accurate, and complete student record system in accordance with state and federal regulations:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

District staff affirm their comfort with the level of data accuracy and security

Policies that outline the conditions for safeguarding and transferring transcripts

Policies that safeguard accuracy and security of all data

Reports that satisfy local, state, and national requirements

Stakeholders are knowledgeable about the conditions under which transcripts are safeguarded and transferred

Stakeholders indicate that they have seen reports that satisfy local, state, and national requirements

Focus Questions:

1. How is the assessment system currently used throughout the school system and its schools to guide analysis of changes in student performance?

Leyden uses EPAS to measure student performance on standardized tests. The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction compiles this performance data and forwards it to the technology department who stores it in the eSchool student management system. This data becomes part of the school improvement plan to measure growth of groups and individual students. The data are shared with the school board, the department chairs, the school improvement team, and the faculty.

Department chairs are charged with the responsibility to discuss the results of local and state assessments with their staff and evaluate ways that they can incorporate the standards to increase student achievement as it relates to these test

scores. Once the student test scores are recorded in their test history in the student management system, all staff members have access to these test scores. In addition, the technology director compiles a data file for each department each semester that includes current semester grades course by course and a complete list of mirror/practice and standardized test scores. Institute days over the past three years have indoctrinated the staff to a better understanding of standardized tests by having the staff actually take parts of the exam. All staff are also involved in school wide testing during PSAE, which includes, not only the mandated tests for juniors, but also mirror and practice exams for ninth and tenth graders.

Day-to-day, Leyden staff utilize eSchool to monitor student performance in the following ways:

- Record student class performance on individual assignments and assessments.
- Use student data to determine whether students require further assistance and/or placement in support interventions. These may include after school studies, the RTI process, and special education services.
- Review individual student data including: EPAS mirror testing scores, Explore scores, PLAN scores, and ACT scores.
- Review group scores to determine correct placement into the core curriculum by through the development of cut scores.

Leyden staff use Mastery Manager to gather results for formative and summative assessments in the following ways:

- Review specific information regarding the progress each student as it relates to content standards. (This is being piloted in the Math Department.)
- Access data about student standardized test performance and use this data to structure instructional practice.
- Access results from common classroom assessments to help curricular teams make decisions about content, delivery, and sequence of skills.

Teachers improve content delivery and analyze daily progress by using informal assessments.

2. What are you doing to ensure that assessment results are timely, relevant, and communicated in a way that can be used by the system, its schools, and stakeholders to aid the performance of individual students?

To ensure that assessment results are timely, relevant, and clearly communicated to stakeholders, Leyden uses the following practices and processes:

- The district utilizes electronic resources, specifically Mastery Manager, to make data available and digestible for teachers. With Mastery Manager, feedback is immediately sent to teachers who can then look at each student's performance. Mirror and practice assessment results are also presented in eSchool so that teachers can access additional student data. Finally, all faculty and administration may use the data request system to find information about students' assessments, demographics, and testing history.
- The district shares information with stakeholders on the website. Information presented includes the school report card, as well as an online grade book, which allows parents to have easy access to their student's data.
- Parents are invited to an open house each year in the fall to learn about each class and its curriculum. Parents are invited to parent-teacher conferences two times per year where they can discuss grades and performance with teachers. Parents may also meet with counselors during the conference time for social and emotional concerns. . Teachers regularly post grades online via the Home Access Center.

- The district uses technology as the vehicle to both retrieve and analyze data for both the school and the individual student.

The increase in the fluidity of data has helped teachers identify student deficiencies, make modifications in the classroom, or seek additional help for the student. Teachers have been trained to use testing data and grades from other courses as minimum performance indicators. This allows teachers to learn more about the student and ways to design interventions that lead to increased achievement. Counselors, teachers, and administrators coordinate this information to develop a student action plan. This comprehensive approach ensures that proper interventions are in place.

3. How are data used to understand and improve overall effectiveness of the school system and its schools?

Explore testing is completed in October of the 8th grade year for potential freshmen. These data are processed and disaggregated to profile the incoming freshmen class. Articulation meetings are held with partner school principals where Explore data reports are prepared and returned. The backward flow of data is used to motivate changes in the schooling the students are experiencing before entering Leyden.

The summer academy program at Leyden uses the results of the incoming freshman Explore test to develop curriculum in math and reading. Results from the summer program are then used to guide the academy programs during the freshman year.

Leyden relies on its online assessment tool, Mastery Manager, to report information about student performance on the Mirror PLAN, Mirror ACT, and Practice WorkKeys exams. The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction disaggregates this data for the core chairs. The core chairs then analyze this data with their teachers to design instruction to meet student deficiencies. Follow-up tests results for common assessments verify whether the students met or did not meet the instructional objectives.

Teachers review assessments to adapt curricular structure and expectations based on the student's knowledge acquisition. The teacher formative and summative evaluation process require that teachers use research-based instructional strategies that address the full range of cognitive levels and that teachers understand and use the results of multiple assessments to guide planning and instruction.

4. How are staff members across the system and its schools trained to understand and use data to impact teaching and learning in the classroom?

Teachers are trained to understand how to interpret and use data during Institute days and inservice. Department chairs are considered leaders in helping staff to interpret and use the results of assessments.

Since the district initially places students into freshman classes using Explore test results, this placement guides a student's educational experiences as they progress to different levels of course work in the curriculum. The focus on reading by the district has introduced teachers to understand the results of the Explore Reading Score. Staff members are able to correlate the scores to corresponding College Readiness Standards for reading. Department chairs are given this data at department chair meetings and then are expected to share the information with their department.

The classroom teacher has access to class lists with standardized test results for each student. Using the College Readiness Standards, the teacher can get a better understanding of where their students are and adjust lesson plans accordingly.

The mirror test results are given to teachers of juniors to guide lesson development to address deficiencies prior to the PSAE spring testing. The data are disaggregated by the College Readiness Standards and subtest components. Juniors take the Practice WorkKeys exam in January, as well. The January WorkKeys scores are compared to the practice test scores that the students took in the spring to measure growth.

The district has focused on ACT WorkKeys to address applied reading and math skills. Practice scores for these exams are stored in eSchool. Teachers can use this additional information to identify their students' progress toward the identified score of "5" for success. Teachers learned about the WorkKeys tests and scores at an Institute day and through inservice activities. The district purchased the web-based version of Key Train for students to use. Key Train is used in Computer Literacy, Consumer Ed, various classes in science and math, and in a variety of Special Education classes. Instruction in Applied Math and Reading for Information is part of the District Improvement Plan.

All teachers in the district has been instructed to use the ACT format for core summative assessments. The technology department provides one-on-one assistance, tutorials, and information sheets to help teachers learn how to use assessment tools. These are available on the website and at Jing.com. Teachers have time during inservice to meet as curricular teams to review data from common assessments to inform practice.

The district requires teachers to use data to guide instruction. Part of the formative and summative teacher evaluation process in standard 3 requires that teachers demonstrate competence in planning and preparing for instruction by using student achievement data, local standards, and the district curriculum in planning for instruction. Departments are accomplishing this goal at different rates. At the minimum, all final exams are graded by Mastery Manager, and reports are returned to teachers who analyze this data to guide instruction.

Overall Assessment:

Operational: The school system uses a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly defined performance measures that yield valid and reliable results. The assessment system is used to assess student performance on expectations for student learning, evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, and determine interventions to improve student performance. The assessment system yields timely and accurate information that is meaningful and useful to system/school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders in understanding student performance, school and system effectiveness, and the results of improvement efforts.

Standard 5. Resource & Support Systems

STANDARD: The system has the resources and services necessary to support its vision and purpose and to ensure achievement for all students.

Impact Statement: A system is successful in meeting this standard when it has sufficient human, material, and fiscal resources to implement a curriculum that: enables students to achieve expectations for student learning, meets special needs, and complies with applicable regulations. The system employs and allocates staff well-qualified for their assignments. The system provides ongoing learning opportunities for all staff to improve their effectiveness. The system ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

Indicators Rubric: Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school system. The responses to the rubric should help the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school system's responses to the focus questions.

Indicators Evidence: For each Indicator, click the (Add Evidence) link to provide examples of evidence that support the rubric response.

Definitions of Indicators Rubric:

Not Evident	Little or no evidence exists
Emerging	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
Operational	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
Highly Functional	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

INDICATORS: Human Resources. In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

5.1 Establishes and implements processes to recruit, employ, retain, and mentor qualified professional and support staff to fulfill assigned roles and responsibilities:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Agendas, minutes, decisions for district and school level IEP meetings

Appropriate space is provided for special need support programs

District staff can affirm that special needs students receive needed support

IEP: Individualized Education Plans Native language usage is evident for the purpose of supporting learning

Personnel policies ensuring appropriate hiring practices

Personnel policies ensuring certification, licensure, evaluation, training

Professional learning opportunities

Program descriptions: Special Needs Populations Schedules: District, School, Extra-Curricular; Transportation

Staff Handbooks

Staff schedules and assignments

Student Handbook

5.2 Establishes and implements a process to assign professional and support staff based on system needs and staff qualifications as may be required by federal and state law and regulations (i.e., professional preparation, ability, knowledge, and experience):

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Labor agreement

Personnel policies ensuring appropriate placement

Personnel policies ensuring certification, licensure, evaluation, training

Policies regarding NCLB highly qualified teachers

Professional learning opportunities

Staff can affirm that they are teaching in their major area of study

Staff Handbook

Staff schedules and assignments

Staffing of both administrative and teaching positions is appropriate and adequate

5.3 Establishes and implements a process to design, evaluate, and improve professional development and ensures participation by all faculty and staff:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Budget demonstrates appropriate allocation for PD Calendar, agenda, summaries of PD opportunities

District monitoring of professional development implementation

District staff are actively engaged in discussions that have resulted from their professional development experience

District staff can affirm their involvement in professional learning opportunities

Evaluation of PD data

Professional development plan

Staff are aware of the requirements for continuous learning

Staff implement effective strategies based on their professional development experience

5.4 Ensures that staff are sufficient in number to meet the vision and purpose of the school system and to meet federal and state law and regulations, if applicable:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Budget demonstrates appropriate allocation for staffing

Class size indicates appropriate and effective support of student learning

Master schedule

Personnel policies and practices

Policies regarding NCLB highly qualified teachers

INDICATORS: Financial Resources. In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

5.5 Engages in long-range budgetary planning and annually budgets sufficient resources to support its educational programs and to implement its plans for improvement:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Annual budget - current, forecasted, fund-equity

Consolidated Application (federal)

Facilities plan - current, future

Facilities protection documentation: insurance, amortization

Fiscal policies: use of all funding, including donations, reserves, discretionary

Infrastructure plans: short and long range

Practices that support appropriate use of allocated funds

Purchasing/replacement policies: adherence to EEO School-level budgets

Space is adequate and appropriate to support student learning

State and Federal program budgets for targeted support

5.6 Ensures that all financial transactions are safeguarded through proper budgetary procedures and audited accounting measures:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Audit reports Fiscal protection plans: insurance

Organizational oversight of fiscal authority Payroll and purchasing policies and processes

Practices that support appropriate use of fiscal resources

Refund policies

Secure management of all fiscal processes

INDICATORS: Physical Resources. In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

5.7 Maintains sites, facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, orderly, and healthy environment:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

All district-wide facilities are properly maintained

Calendar of safety drills: fire, tornado, emergency crisis

Curriculum includes attention to cleanliness and safety

District staff are involved in developing and implementing safety policies

District support staff are knowledgeable about safety policies

District-wide environment is clean and safe

Facilities maintenance reports and plans HAZMAT (hazardous materials): policies and training

Policies and processes regarding safety

Policies and processes related to student/staff injury

Policies regarding dispensing prescription medications

State and Federal regulations regarding special program safety requirements

5.8 Establishes and implements written security and crisis management plans with appropriate training for stakeholders:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Crisis intervention committee

Crisis intervention plan

District staff and students are knowledgeable about emergency procedures

District staff are involved in the crisis intervention team

Emergency procedures

Health support staff are available

Secure record system

Staff Handbook

Student Handbook

Wellness policy

5.9 Implements processes and plans for maintaining and improving sites, facilities, and equipment:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Appropriate district staff affirm their knowledge of the plan for physical asset maintenance and replacement

Physical assets plan: short-term and long-range

Policies and procedures for maintaining and improving physical assets: site facilities, infrastructure, equipment, etc.

5.10 Provides technology infrastructure and equipment that is up-to-date and sufficient to accomplish the system's goals:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

District staff are knowledgeable about the short and long-range plans for maintenance and replacement of technology infrastructure

Policies and procedures for maintaining and improving technology infrastructure: hardware and software

Policies and procedures regarding appropriate internet access

Policies and procedures regarding the purchase of technology tools

Stakeholders are knowledgeable about policies regarding appropriate internet access

INDICATORS: Support Systems. In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

5.11 Provides and coordinates support services that meet the health, counseling, nutrition, safety, cocurricular, transportation, and special learning needs of all students:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Advisory plan and program

Alternative Education Program

District monitors instruction for special needs inclusion

District provides guidelines for classroom instruction that demonstrates variety of instructional methodologies to support all students

District provides guidelines for Response To Intervention program and is demonstrated at classroom level

IEP: committee, minutes, calendar, agenda, sign-in sheets

Individualized Development Plans

Labor agreements demonstrating appropriate special needs staffing

Master schedules demonstrating support for special needs

Policies and procedures that are ADA and IDEA compliant

Policies regarding use of languages other than English for district communication

Professional development calendar and topics

Special Needs Department/Committee

Staff affirm their use of instructional strategies that support special needs inclusion

Staffing of Counseling and Guidance programs

Stakeholder survey data supporting special needs programs

Stakeholders affirm their support for the district's special needs programs

Student referral policies and practices

Student referral process and procedures

Students and staff affirm their understanding of special needs populations

Teacher certification, licensure, etc. supporting special needs

Translated materials demonstrate communication to special needs population

Other: Sheltered Class Schedules

5.12 Provides student support services coordinated with the school, home, and community:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Career Preparation

Department/Committee Community based programs

Curriculum for Career Preparation

District staff affirm that they receive regular training opportunities to support student behavior

District staff are knowledgeable in all aspects of appropriate social/emotional support for student learning behavior

Enrollment data - current status, trends

Guidance and Counseling Department/Committee Job Placement program

Master schedule indicates availability of career preparation

Orientation to Career Preparation programs

Professional development: calendar, topics

Staff assigned to career preparation programs

Stakeholders are supportive of community-based programs to support student engagement

Students are enrolled in career preparation

Students are knowledgeable about career planning programs

Other: Director of Careers, Career Counselors, Advisory Council Memberships, Career Fair and Business Expo, Ask the Expert Day, Administration of the National Career Readiness Certificate

Focus Questions:

1. What is the school system's process for recruitment, induction, placement, development, evaluation, and retention of qualified professional and support staff across the system and its schools?

The Leyden High School District 212 engages in a thorough and on-going process to recruit and retain qualified teachers for our two campuses. These efforts begin annually with the district's participation in local, state, and regional job fairs, at which time we provide promising candidates information about our school and community.

Newly hired teachers participate as a condition of employment in a week long New Teacher Orientation, which offers a detailed introduction to Leyden expectations as determined by board policy and advised by best professional practice. Mentoring of new staff members begins during this week with the assignment of a department mentor and continues during the teachers' first year. Regularly scheduled meetings within departments and at the building level conducted by principals further augment the orientation of teachers.

Through their participation annually in a multi-level program of professional development program, all Leyden faculty members have the opportunity to:

- Refine their professional skills by attending workshops and conferences within and outside the district,
- Engage with colleagues in a variety of Leyden University courses – which offer instruction in topics such as fundamental lesson design, cooperative learning, and the use of technology to support instruction. Participation in this program provides staff members credit on the local salary scale, and
- Pursue action research through collaboration with departmental colleagues.

Leyden's evaluation of professional staff is based on the firm belief that staff evaluation is one of the most effective means of improving instruction. Formative and summative evaluation procedures are based on professional standards and require evaluators – administrators and department chairpersons – to provide an assessment along dimensions specific to job description: professional teaching staff, guidance counselors and social workers, and librarians. An alternative evaluation process is in place for qualified teachers who elect a more peer-intensive examination process.

2. How does the leadership ensure that the allocation of financial resources is supportive of the school system's vision, programs, services, and its plans for continuous improvement?

Budgets at the district and building levels are established from student learning needs for a comprehensive high school. Instructional programs are staffed with highly qualified professional teachers. Material and technological resources are available, and a decision-making structure is clearly in place to solicit needs in a timely fashion to support efficient program planning. The Assistant Superintendent appropriates a budget for summer curriculum development and in-district Leyden University classes.

Department chairs propose budgets to the ASCI who confers with the Chief Financial Officer in distributing allocations that reflect responsible stewardship of the community's financial resources. Although the planning each upcoming year is the predominant governing feature of the budgeting process, a measure of flexibility is applied to address unforeseen emerging needs. Department chairs have access to the district financial management system to maintain their budgets.

Chairs create their own purchase orders. Chairs are the first access point to approve teacher travel for school business and professional growth.

Various state and federal grants are used to ensure quality instruction for special education, limited English proficiency, and career and technical education. An approved technology plan allows the district to receive cost reductions on equipment and technological services.

Student activity accounts give student advisors and student leaders the ability to appropriate funds for special events and co-curricular activities. The building assistant principals approve expenditures from these accounts.

The technology department issues a district laptop equipped with Office 2007, GroupWise, and other instructional software to each teacher. The district maintains and insures the laptops. The technology director maintains a schedule for the replacement of teacher laptops. The technology director also appropriates funds for projection units in every classroom, access to the Internet in every classroom and office, one-on-one computing projects, portable laptop carts, and professional development attendance at various technology-related conferences. The technology director works with the director of careers to replace computer labs purchased with federal and state grants.

Embracing our vision -- Committed to Excellence -- Leyden's Board of Education is guided by its fundamental question: What's Best for the Kids? to support high-quality experiences for the students of District 212.

3. How does the school system ensure, support, and monitor the provision of resource and support services that meet the needs of all students?

The Leyden High School district is structured so administrative and faculty oversight is provided to assure equity for special populations. In 2007, the district hired its first Director of Special Education to oversee programs and services for special needs students. A restructuring of that department has since occurred, which followed a lengthy needs assessment and analysis of the achievement record of students.

The district also employs a Director of ESL/Bilingual Education to ensure compliance with federal mandates and to provide a quality instructional program for students acquiring English as a second language. This director coordinates instructional activities with department chairs in math, science, English, social studies, business education, and physical education/health for Level 2 students. Each year the director coordinates attendance at the local LEP conference for faculty who teach ESL/Bilingual classes.

To demonstrate its belief in the vision and mission, the district also allocates resources to show support for a number of other special populations.

- Two coordinators provide administrative support for ACCESS – a transition program for all freshmen that focuses on study skills, academic monitoring, and social skills development.
- A gifted coordinator works with department chairs to identify and support needs for the enrichment of the core program.
- Two campus-specific activity directors provide coordination of the co-curricular programs for the district.
- A director of careers works with business, family and consumer sciences, and industrial technology departments to coordinate programs. Student services designate a counselor at each building as a career counselor to work with the director of careers on coordinated projects.
- Guided study coordinators at each campus organize an after-school program to provide additional support for students with one or more failures in core subjects.
- Two dean assistants are assigned at each campus to address the needs of students who have disciplinary issues.
- Next year, four faculty will be assigned to credit recovery classes during the school day.

The effectiveness of individual programs and their connectedness is closely monitored and assessed on an ongoing basis by the entire administrative team and designated faculty members.

Overall Assessment:

Operational: The school system has human, material, and fiscal resources to implement a curriculum that enables students to achieve expectations for student learning, to meet special needs, and to comply with applicable regulations. The system employs and allocates staff members who are well qualified for their assignments. The system provides ongoing learning opportunities for all staff to improve their effectiveness, including both professional and support staff. The system ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

Standard 6. Stakeholder Communications & Relationships

STANDARD: The system fosters effective communications and relationships with and among its stakeholders.

Impact Statement: Impact Statement: A system is successful in meeting this standard when it has the understanding, commitment, and support of stakeholders. System and school personnel seek opportunities for collaboration and shared leadership among stakeholders to help students learn and advance improvement efforts.

Indicators Rubric: Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school system. The responses to the rubric should help the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school system's responses to the focus questions.

Indicators Evidence: For each Indicator, click the (Add Evidence) link to provide examples of evidence that support the rubric response.

Definitions of Indicators Rubric:

Not Evident	Little or no evidence exists
Emerging	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
Operational	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
Highly Functional	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

INDICATORS: In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

6.1 Fosters collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Agendas, minutes, calendar of parent meetings

Calendar of events that promote stakeholder involvement

District staff affirm that stakeholders are involved in many aspects of district events, activities, decisions

Internship/partnership agreements with community-based business and agencies

Parents and community members regularly volunteer time in district

Policies regarding suggestions, grievances

Stakeholder survey data

Stakeholders affirm that they are involved in many aspects of district events, activities, decisions

Other: Take Your Parents to School Day, Parent Teacher Conferences, Open House, Returning Scholars Day, Parent-Level Meetings, School Calendar, Student Handbook, Institute Day Surveys

6.2 Uses system-wide strategies to listen to and communicate with stakeholders:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Calendars, agendas, minutes of parent meetings

District Improvement Committee: agendas, minutes, membership

Emails, phone answering system Newsletters, brochures, letters, memos

Parent - Teacher conferences schedule

Policies regarding formal inclusion of stakeholder involvement

Stakeholders affirm they have variety of opportunities to be formally involved in life of district

Steering Committee meetings: agendas, minutes, membership

Web page dedicated to parents/community members

Wide variety of stakeholder communication documents/avenues

Other: Ask the Expert Day, Leyden Manufacturing Renaissance Project, Athletic Director Twitter, Career Fair

Meeting Minutes, SIT Agendae, and Minutes

6.3 Solicits the knowledge and skills of stakeholders to enhance the work of the system:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Advisory Committees Calendar, agendas, minutes, committee membership

District staff affirm that they regularly include community in preparing instructional delivery activities

Policies regarding volunteer involvement

Schedule of volunteer activities

Stakeholder survey data

Stakeholders affirm that their suggestions and recommendations are acted upon

Stakeholders affirm that they are actively involved in providing expertise

Other: Literacy Survey, LASEC Website Link, PPS Minutes, Superintendent Volunteers Breakfast, Volunteers List, Literacy Survey Results, New Calendar Survey Results

6.4 Communicates the expectations for student learning and goals for improvement to all stakeholders:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Brochures, pamphlets

Newsletters about student performance

Online calendar, schedule, and news/updates

Parent -teacher conferences: calendar, procedures, participation data

Parent Handbook

Parents and students are informed and involved in developing individualized learning plans for students

Parents and students are informed and involved in making course selections

Regularly published newsletters to community

Stakeholders affirm that they are knowledgeable about student learning

Student Handbook Other: School Board Minutes Highlighting Student Success, School Website, LASEC Website Link, Newspaper Articles, Parent Handbook, School Report Cards

6.5 Provides information that is meaningful and useful to stakeholders:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Parent -teacher conferences: calendar, procedures, participation data

Policies regarding reporting schedule

Report cards

Other: Philanthropic Activities, Rotary Top 10 Recognition Banquet and Scholarships, Student of the Month, Outstanding CTE Recognition Breakfast, OAC and CAC Agendae and Minutes, Home ACCESS

Focus Questions:

1. How does the school system's leadership ensure that the system and its schools are responsive to community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction?

Leyden's leadership is responsive and aware of the needs of the Leyden community. Leyden engages in communications with its stakeholders at various levels. Students share information with other students on a daily-basis with daily announcements. Administrators post weekly bulletins for certified and non-certified staff. In addition, administrators use podcasts, twitters, and blogs to keep the staff current. Certified and non-certified staff members may also include announcements in the weekly bulletins.

All staff have email accounts on the district email system, GroupWise. Student and parent email addresses are posted on the student information section of eSchool. Parents and staff are encouraged to communicate using email. Students use email and other technological platforms such as Google Docs and nings to submit work to teachers and to engage in collaborative learning.

Progress reports and report cards are sent via traditional mail to parents every six weeks. The reports are generated by using the electronic grade book. All parents have an opportunity to access student's grades and interim progress reports online with eSchool. Parents may sign up for an account at registration, parent-teacher conferences, or by contacting the school.

Each principal mails a newsletter to Leyden families every two months; the newsletters are available in Spanish by request. The superintendent mails a newsletter to all stakeholders quarterly. The newsletters provide a variety of information that includes upcoming events, mandated information, tips for academic success, student success stories, and faculty success stories. Our administration celebrates student successes and faculty accomplishments at scheduled school board meetings. Incoming students and their parents are invited to a special open house, known as the Taste of East and the Taste of West. This event gives our newcomers a chance to walk through the building, meet the staff, and learn about the opportunities that they will have in high school. Leyden also has a transfer student orientation for those who enter our district in the course of the school year.

The Leyden website has become a vital source of communication for all stakeholders. The web page has several drop-down menus to address the various interests of everyone who is part of the community. The director of technology and his staff are sensitive to the critical need for this page to be up to date. Students, parents, alumni, teachers, administrators, community members, professional partners, and business partners can access information on the website. Current and sport events are featured on the website as well. Staff contact information is available to parents, students, and other stakeholders.

Leyden's vision and mission are included on all communications from the student planner to meeting minutes. Staff and students communicate the vision and mission of Leyden in the community by wearing their t-shirts displaying the commitment to excellence logo.

All students and parents receive printed copies of the student and parent handbook. The handbooks include the district's vision and mission statements and information that students and parents need to know about how things work at Leyden such as information about rules and regulations, as well as student and parent rights and responsibilities.

Leyden has an excellent relationship with its community stakeholders. Students participating in Leyden's cooperative education program intern, work, and/or volunteer at various businesses throughout the community. Business partners volunteer to serve on advisory committees and to participate in a variety of student-centered activities throughout the year such as the Annual Career Fair and Business Expo and Ask the Expert Day. Leyden's business partners have been generous to our students. Over the past years, they have hosted field trips and job shadowing experiences and have provided countless dollars for college scholarships and enrichment programs. The Franklin Park Rotary Club awards thousands of dollars in scholarships annually for Leyden's Top Ten Percent students. Retired faculty provide monies for awards and scholarships such as the Fern Awards and Helen St. John Awards. The Wall of Fame program provides a framework for Leyden's most successful alumni to have an active affiliation with Leyden and its current students. Keeping in touch with alumni is important to our district. All seniors take an exit survey that is followed up during the next school year. Various departments keep in touch with alumni through Facebook.

Leyden also has an excellent relationship with its public media. Local reporters and photographers are interested in keeping the public engaged about what is happening at Leyden. Leyden employs a publicist to ensure that it keeps the public informed. The Leyden Parents' Club is not large in number, but huge in spirit. The Parents Club gives awards to Leyden top student performers at the annual award night ceremony. Sales from spirit wear provide much of the revenue for the Parents Club; they have an online store link on the Leyden home page.

The district provides time in the school calendar for teachers to communicate with one another at weekly inservice and quarterly institute days to develop school initiatives. Parents are invited to Leyden for parent-teacher conferences, the honors breakfast, and Take Your Parents to School day. Leyden invites the community in to showcase the hard work and talent of our school in over 96 different co-curricular activities that include clubs and sports.

Staff have formal opportunities to participate in the decision making process through volunteer or appointed memberships in the Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC), the Operational Advisory Committee (OAC), department chair (DC), or School Improvement Team (SIT). Staff are also included on interview teams for building and district personnel and ad hoc committees as needed.

2. What avenues are used to communicate information to stakeholders about the effectiveness of the school system and its schools, including the sharing of student performance results?

The Leyden school district is a foundation for many of our families. Although our district has changed significantly in its diversity over the past few years, the Leyden traditions and cultures have carried through. Much of this is due to the number of ways that the district communicates with its stakeholders. The following lists ways that Leyden communicates information about our schools and students:

Community/Partnerships

- Superintendent's newsletter
- School report card
- School board meetings
- Media reports
- School website

Leyden SAR 2010

- Teacher websites
- Principals' newsletters
- School marquis
- Chamber of Commerce
- Rotary Club
- Public invitations to plays, sporting events, choral performances, and special events

Alumni

- Media reports
- Old Timer's Club
- School website
- Post secondary survey
- Public invitation via the school website to Homecoming

Board

- School report card
- Invitations to plays, sporting events, choral performances, and special events
- Principals and assistant principals podcasts
- School board meetings
- Emergency notification system
- School website
- Teacher websites
- Principals newsletters
- Student newspaper
- Board presentations

Parents/Guardians

- School report card
- District mailings
- School board meetings
- Deans conferences
- Media reports
- Report cards
- Progress reports
- Leyden Area Special Education Cooperative
- ACCESS
- Emergency notification system
- Home Access for eSchool
- School website
- Teacher websites
- Principals newsletters
- Leyden sport twitter
- Public service notifications
- School marquis
- Awards and recognition ceremonies
- Special recognition postcards
- Parent conference notifications

Leyden SAR 2010

- Fall Open House
- Taste of East and Taste of West (January welcome to incoming freshmen)
- Student of the Month breakfasts
- Parents Club
- Email

Faculty and Staff

- School report card
- Principals and assistant principals podcasts
- School board meetings
- Media reports
- Leyden Area Special Education Cooperative
- ACCESS (freshman student orientation program)
- Emergency notification system
- School website
- Teacher websites
- Principals newsletters
- General faculty meetings
- Inservice
- Faculty mail
- eSchool (web-based student management system)
- Groupwise
- Committee work
- Student newspaper
- Summer curriculum projects
- Presentations at Institute Days and inservice
- Minutes for Curriculum Advisory Council, Operations Advisory Council, Department Chairs, and inservice

Students

- School report card
- Progress reports
- Class level meetings
- School board meetings to celebrate successes
- Deans conferences
- Media reports
- School marquis
- Special recognition postcards
- Leyden Area Special Education Cooperative
- ACCESS
- Emergency notification system
- School website
- Teacher websites
- Teacher email
- Student email
- Leyden sport twitter
- Daily announcements
- Student newspaper

- Student information tab on Leyden website
- Home Access for eSchool
- Dean passes
- Student Services passes
- Flyers for social events
- Brochures for college and career information
- Monthly counselor newsletters for juniors and seniors through English classes

Overall Assessment:

Operational: The school system has the understanding, commitment, and support of stakeholders. System and school personnel seek opportunities for collaboration and shared leadership among stakeholders to help students learn and advance improvement efforts and can demonstrate good participation by some stakeholder groups.

Standard 7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

STANDARD: The system establishes, implements, and monitors a continuous process of improvement that focuses on student performance.

Impact Statement: A system is successful in meeting this standard when it implements a collaborative and ongoing process for improvement that aligns the functions of the system with the expectations for student learning. Improvement efforts are sustained and the system and its schools demonstrate progress in improving student performance. New improvement efforts are informed by the results of earlier efforts through analysis of student performance, system effectiveness, and assessment of the improvement process.

Indicators Rubric: Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school system. The responses to the rubric should help the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school system's responses to the focus questions.

Indicators Evidence: For each Indicator, click the (Add Evidence) link to provide examples of evidence that support the rubric response.

Definitions of Indicators Rubric:

Not Evident	Little or no evidence exists
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Operational	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
Highly Functional	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

INDICATORS: In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

7.1 Engages in a continuous process of improvement that articulates the vision and purpose the system is pursuing (Vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, system effectiveness, and the community (Profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (Plan); and documents and uses the results to inform future improvement efforts (Results):

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Continuous Improvement Plan - district and individual schools

District staff affirm their involvement in a specific program that supports continuous improvement

District staff affirm their involvement in continuous improvement committees

Graduation and retention rates

Information/Data system

Postsecondary engagement: employment, college

Professional Development Plan: agenda, topics

Record of student performance improvement efforts

Specific program initiatives to support continuous improvement

Stakeholder survey (satisfaction) data

State/Federal Accountability Plan

7.2 Engages stakeholders in the processes of continuous improvement:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Calendar, agendas, minutes, sign-in sheets demonstrating stakeholder involvement in district and school improvement

District and School Improvement plan indicating membership of committees

Parent compact

Policies, procedures for district and school improvement committee work

Stakeholder survey data demonstrating stakeholder involvement in district and school improvement

Stakeholders affirm their involvement in continuous improvement process

7.3 Ensures that each school's plan for continuous improvement is aligned with the system's vision and expectations for student learning:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Calendar, agendas, minutes of school improvement meetings

Data: student performance, stakeholder opinion are used in development of school improvement plan

District staff affirm their understanding of the impact of programs that support student learning

District staff demonstrate capacity for providing methodologies to increase student performance

School improvement plans demonstrate alignment with district vision, purpose

Staff, students affirm their understanding of student performance targets

Student performance targets are communicated to all stakeholders

Vision, purpose posted in district-wide facilities

7.4 Ensures that each school's plan for continuous improvement includes a focus on increasing learning for all students and closing gaps between current and expected student performance levels:
Operational

Evidence Provided:

District guidelines and professional learning provide strategies for effective instruction for closing achievement gaps

District staff affirm that they regularly use data to inform their practices

District staff affirm their involvement in evaluating the impact of instruction on student growth

District staff meetings regularly use data to inform their discussions and decisions

School improvement plans demonstrate evaluation of goals, objectives, and strategies impact on student growth

7.5 Provides research-based professional development for system and school personnel to help them achieve improvement goals:
Operational

Evidence Provided:

Continuous Improvement Plan - district and individual schools

District staff affirm their involvement in professional learning

Personnel Policies that outline staff evaluation process

Professional Development Plan: agenda, topics

7.6 Monitors and communicates the results of improvement efforts to stakeholders:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

District staff and stakeholders affirm the use of performance data during

Parent-Teacher conferences

Information/Data system

Newsletters, brochures

Parent-Teacher conferences

Staffing assignments support monitoring and reporting of continuous improvement efforts

Stakeholders affirm receipt of district communication regarding improvement efforts

7.7 Evaluates and documents the effectiveness and impact of its continuous process of improvement :

Operational

Evidence Provided:

District and School Improvement Committee meetings: calendar, agenda, minutes, dispositions

District Labor Agreement includes language protecting school improvement planning time

Evaluation of effectiveness of continuous improvement plan and process

Stakeholders affirm knowledge of an evaluation of the district's improvement efforts

7.8 Allocates and protects time for planning and engaging in continuous improvement efforts system-wide:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

District and School Improvement

Committee meetings, calendar, agenda, minutes, dispositions

District staff affirm that time is allocated for improvement planning, implementation, and monitoring

Policies and procedures for engaging in district-wide and individual school improvement

planning, implementation, and monitoring

7.9 Provides direction and assistance to its schools and operational units to support their continuous improvement efforts:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

District and School Improvement Committee meetings, calendar, agenda, minutes, dispositions

District expectations and guidelines for all schools and departments to engage in a continuous improvement process

District staff affirm their knowledge of the district's expectations and guidelines for supporting student performance

Focus Questions:

1. Describe the process for continuous improvement used by the school system and its schools and the impact of this process on student learning and system effectiveness.

Since 2002, the Leyden district has functioned in its philosophy and operational procedures as a Professional Learning Community. With three focus questions in front of all administrators, teachers and staff – what will students learn, how will we know if they are learning, and what will we do when they are not learning – govern the development and advise the inter-relationships of programs and activities to raise student achievement.

The School Improvement Map clearly outlines these connections and concludes with a definitive statement that our district's vision and mission will be achieved only as we accept our accountability for improvement as students, faculty members, and administrators. Considerations of program changes flow through structures designed to see those programs through different lenses. Formal groups, such as the Administrative Council, the Leadership Team, and the Student Instructional Assistance Steering Committee (SIASC), combine decision-making efforts with advisory groups, such as the Curriculum Advisory Council (CAC) and the School Improvement Team (SIT). Although they represent interests of two campuses, all groups are district in their orientation and have the responsibility to create and sustain excellence for the entire Leyden community.

The teacher evaluation process insures that teachers will demonstrate the ability to enhance academic performance and support for and implementation of the school district's school improvement goals by demonstrating the following behaviors and actions:

- Implement strategies supporting student, building, and district goals.
- Use student performance data as a guide for decision making.
- Accept and demonstrate responsibility for creating a classroom culture that supports the learning of every student.
- Create an environment of mutual respect, rapport, and fairness.
- Participate in and contribute to a school culture that focuses on improved student learning.
- Communicate with students, families, colleagues, and communities effectively and accurately.

Teachers also complete a reflection as part of their summative evaluation to answer whether or not they believe they have met the professional standards.

2. What process is used to ensure that the improvement goals reflect student learning needs and are aligned with the vision and purpose of the school system and its schools?

As information about student performance is shared with faculty members, the urgency for the increase in student achievement is further defined at the department level. Each academic department is responsible for establishing, monitoring, and assessing SMART goals for course teams. This detailed process is greatly enhanced by the structural feature that a single chair leads the entire district department over two campuses. This organizational design ensures close alignment of curriculum and a robust assessment of its strengths and limitations.

In its support role, the district's literacy team works closely with chairs and faculty members to refine goals and raise their own capacity to not only deliver instruction that matches learner needs, but also to grow in the skill of making well-reasoned mid-course corrections as data is gathered and examined. The literacy team uses diagnostic test results to guide implementation of research-based literacy strategies and practices in the district. Four inservice meetings are set aside for teachers and literacy liaisons to analyze lesson design and ways to assess student learning as it relates to literacy.

Academic teams develop formative and summative assessments to ensure that students are meeting the expectations of course goals and objectives. District-wide, all departments are required to have common summative assessments. Teachers determine the attainment of course objectives student-by-student by analyzing the results of these assessments. Academic teams rewrite curriculum when deemed necessary.

The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction meets at regular intervals with chairs to review progress toward goals and discuss the effectiveness of mid-course corrections that arise from team collaboration.

3. What process is used to ensure that system and school personnel are provided professional development and technical assistance to implement interventions and achieve improvement goals?

For the last six years, the School Improvement Team (SIT) has set up an inservice and staff development calendar that insures the departments have time to work on all-school initiatives, school business, and academic teamwork. The SIT captured the district processes and practices into a School Improvement Map. The vision, mission, and quest for continuous improvement guide the tools that teachers use to plan, deliver, and evaluate instruction. Institute days are used to provide additional training where it is needed. Professional trainers and speakers have been brought into the district for literacy, questioning techniques, professional learning communities, reading, and critical thinking. The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction (ASCI) monitors the activities of departments through the department chairs and makes determinations regarding staff development needs using their input. In that spirit, the ASCI also approves conference attendance, text materials for courses, and staff participation in out-of-district professional development. The ASCI reviews assessment data that are collected and analyzed initially at the department level. He provides to department course teams disaggregated mirror testing data from sophomore testing that serves as the foundation for third year infusion of needed content and formats into the core department instructional program. In addition, the campus principals provide leadership by supporting effective teaching strategies across the curriculum -- these are reviewed and critiqued during the teacher evaluation cycle for all tenure and non-tenure staff members.

Faculty needs in staff development are met internally in a number of ways. The district's newly formed Literacy Team (one coordinator and two coaches) works closely with department chairs and faculty members in developing capacity for the improvement of instructional design and specifically in the development of effective strategies that promote literacy within specific disciplines. The district's technology department offers daily technical support for individual teacher needs, and a coordinator for staff development in technology meets with teachers across campuses to brainstorm, plan, and implement the effective use of technology to support instruction.

4. How does the leadership ensure that the improvement plan is implemented, monitored, achieved, and communicated to stakeholders?

Formal and informal groups constructed the District Improvement Plan as a document that reflects school improvement practices that have developed through day-to-day planning. Because of its roots in practicality, elements of the plan are readily recognizable to stakeholders of our district because they are in progress.

All stakeholders are made aware of the state testing program PSAE because it involves all levels of the school. Ninth graders take a Mirror PLAN exam; tenth graders take a Mirror ACT and Practice WorkKeys exams. Ninth and tenth graders also participate in activities on day two of PSAE to have a better understanding of what test results mean and how to plan for postsecondary choices. The objective is that students understand the importance of their high school education and its related experiences.

The District Improvement Plan is posted on the district website and described and referred to in a number of school publications. The plan serves the leadership well in reminding us of our responsibility to define roles for students, teachers, and parents – and hold us accountable for the coordination of stakeholders' supports. The District Improvement Plan is formally presented at an open school board meeting for the public and media. The plan is also presented to the Curriculum Advisory Committee, the School Improvement Team, Department Chairs, and the faculty at scheduled meetings.

Overall Assessment:

Operational: The school system implements a collaborative and ongoing process for improvement that aligns most functions of the system and its schools with the expectations for student learning. Improvement efforts are sustained and the system demonstrates progress in improving student performance, system and school effectiveness. New improvement efforts are informed by the results of earlier efforts through reflection and assessment of the improvement process.

QA Methods

1. What processes does the district use to monitor and document improvement?

The district uses e-School to collect and disburse individual student grades. Students and teachers may monitor progress online. Course progress reports are issued three times a semester with final grades issued at the end of the grading period. Different stakeholders in the district may monitor student progress by following along in a teacher's grade book for missing assignments and determine the student's general performance. Per the new Board - Union Contract the teachers must update their grade books in a timely manner that is reflective of the progress of the curriculum for the course. Parents will be notified of the interval being followed for the posting of grades.

Following the district mandate of final exams, each course team prepares and gives the students a comprehensive exam covering the semester's lessons. Departments have integrated Mastery Manager into their assessment process to document results on common assessments as well as final exams. Reports are generated and used by subject teams to audit their questions and determine the quality and effectiveness of the prompt. Prior to Mastery Manager, the district used a File Maker database to collect item analysis information from the teachers for processing. With the new system, common answer forms are generated for all classes and standardized reports are returned to teachers. Further data processing is available to the individual teacher as well as department chairpersons.

Mastery Manager has been incorporated into district testing during PSAE days. Mirror tests consisting of retired PLAN and ACT exams are given to freshmen and sophomores with scores calculated and data processed with Mastery Manager. Actual gains between the components of the EPAS system are calculated and reported out. Mirror WorkKeys testing follows the same procedure with the results being returned to students and teachers for reflection and corrective action. SPSS is used by the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction to provide data reports back to department chairs and teachers.

Standardized test scores are discussed with the students during PSAE day activities. The freshmen are given the Mirror PLAN test and then receive back their scores in ACCESS. A printout is returned to the students with their Explore score and the new Mirror Plan score. Calculating their own gain students are briefed on the expected gain. To reinforce the importance of success, the students work through a simulation of the earning power of education. Sophomore students receive their results for the Mirror ACT and also work through their calculated score gain and its perceived meaning for the actual ACT.

Students entering Leyden are given the Explore test to gather baseline data from which comparisons are made and used to explain results on state and federal testing. Scores from the Explore are used for placement into the different levels of courses offered in the core departments. This information is also used for placement into the district's intervention programs to aid students in math and reading. Students may be placed into a summer academy program to improve their math and reading skills. Explore retests are given at the conclusion of the academy to measure improvement and the reclassification of courses being taken the freshman year. Likewise, students not making the necessary gains are enrolled in Academy Core Classes and a Reading program. The reading courses retest students at the semester for progress. The literacy cycle followed by the literacy team includes direction, creation, implementation, and assessment. This process allows the subject teams to learn strategies from the literacy team to create a lesson or unit of study and implement it. Assessment of the lesson provides empirical and anecdotal evidence that is shared with the team. Modifications are made as directed by the data.

Teachers are encouraged to use Mastery Manager to follow the progress of students through a course. Many SMART goals being used compare pre and post test data to gauge success and determine the gains being made. Gains are being measured using local assessments as well as the Mirror testing program used by the district.

2. How does the district provide meaningful feedback and support to its schools and across the district?

Feedback is provided to district stakeholders through different venues. These include school board meetings, Administrative Council and department chair meetings, subcommittee meetings, department in-service meetings, Curriculum Advisory Council, School Improvement Team, Operational Advisory Council, building level teams meetings (WLAC and A-team), Student Council, the Leyden website, distributed meeting minutes, twitter pages, faculty newsletters, principal newsletters, board community communications, parent-teacher conferences, Freshmen parent night, college counseling events, students announcements, and press communiqués put out by the district publicist. The management teams meet in different committees that then come together at Department Chair meetings to discuss the needs and concerns of the district. Administrative Council, made up of the district administration, takes direction from the Superintendent who conveys the input given by the Board of Education. Department Chairpersons convey feedback to their departments during in-service meetings. Functioning as a professional learning community, the stakeholders have open access to one another.

Published minutes are emailed to the faculty for review and for questions to be asked of the participants. The advisory support structures of the districts – CAC and SIT – are composed of building administration, department chairpersons and teachers. The Curriculum Advisory Council also has members of the student government, as well as a student representative. Members are expected to report out the happening of these committees to department colleagues and to collect feedback.

The Superintendent sends formal letters to the staff recognizing individual accomplishments, speaks at institute days offering encouragement, giving thanks, and updating the faculty on issues facing the school district. The district supports teaching and learning through a fiscally conservative budget that rewards teaching experience and provides students with resources to support their academic growth at Leyden. Students do not pay fees customary in other districts. They are provided textbooks and have access to technology and opportunities for experiences beyond the classroom.

Teacher evaluation provides teachers with feedback in both the formative and summative reports. The evaluation cycle occurs over a two year period with classroom observations occurring the second year. Non-tenured teachers are observed by three different people while tenured teachers are observed by their department chairperson. Board / Union collaboration has developed the alternative evaluative process allowing excellent teachers to go beyond the normal process and pursue interests that will result in better teaching and learning.

3. How does the district ensure that the AdvancED standards are met by all the schools and the district as a whole?

The two campuses making up the school district function identically for curriculum and instruction. AdvancED standards and the accreditation process are under the School Improvement Team made up of stakeholders from building administration, department chairpersons and teachers. Through collaboration, this team uses information gathered from quantitative, as well as qualitative data to determine the focus of the school district. Initiatives are developed in this committee and sent to other stakeholders for comment and input.

The vision and mission were developed in SIT with input from its stakeholders. A process involving numerous meetings on different proposals, revisions, and reality checks distilled the Vision “committed to excellence”. The mission followed the same process and has provided the framework the district has used to meet its commitment to excellence.

The Administrative Council, the department chairpersons, and the School Improvement team have worked with the seven standards. However, the School Improvement Team follows the adherence to the standards by the district. Familiarity of the standards was established by having the co-chairs attend AdvancEd conferences and then running

workshops with the SIT members. A continual referencing to the standards has made them familiar with these individuals. Agendas are put together with topics for discussion being associated with the corresponding standards. SIT team members have been assigned standards to audit for adherence by the district. Using a SAR template, the SIT gathered the artifacts and identified the practices they had been assigned. This provided the team with a structure to follow and promoted their understanding of where Leyden is at and how well it is doing. It also provide the “ah ha” moments of realization that practices need to be changed or modified. Several team members have participated in AdvancEd reviews of other high schools.

Institute Days and in-service time are used to develop awareness of the standards, train teachers with the strategies used with the district initiatives, and provide time to work with the strategies. By supporting the change to weekly in-service meetings, the district provided the time for teachers to implement the required changes. The evaluative process of teachers includes the teacher’s participation and support of the district initiatives. Further supporting the literacy initiative, the district created a literacy team of in-house experts to work with the faculty and oversee the implementation of the best practices identified by the team.

District resources have been used to acquire computer software to reinforce skill development for the students. Autoskill is part of the math program used with students identified placement scores as needed extra help. Stakeholder outside of the district such as Rotary, local government, and the Leyden Alumni recognized by the Wall of Fame committee are kept abreast of the district’s accreditation process and the support needed by these groups.

4. How does the district regularly collect, use, and communicate results?

The district collects quantitative data from reporting systems such as Mastery Manager, eSchool, and Cognos reports. Individuals gather and process data for their areas of responsibility. These reports pass through the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Curriculum’s office for further dispersal or inclusion in larger reports. Information is then communicated in a variety of ways including committee reports, department meetings, subject team reports, the school and district report cards, principal newsletters, articulation meetings with partner school teachers and administration, Superintendent level meetings, and the local media.

Examples of reports that are generated include the following:

- Mastery Manager reports for standardized and local assessments
- Specific EPAS gains
- WorkKeys results
- Academy results
- Reading readiness results from Explore and ISAT
- Grade distributions
- Demographic reports including 10 year attendance projections, cumulative attendance reports, course selection history
- Subject team auditing of final exams
- Post Graduation Study
- District Report Card

Information gathered from these types of reports is used to develop a comprehensive picture of the district, individual buildings, departments, teachers, course sections, or individual students. Decisions made are grounded in the data. The district looks for the data to answer questions, substantiate its course of action, or open the door to the next initiative.

Stakeholders that hold a global view of the district see all of the pieces as they come together. Individuals see the data for their particular area of responsibility. Data is collected, processed and the results are openly shared. The district's openness allows for the questioning of the data and the ability to "get it right" through constant review.

Conclusion

The following focus questions reflect the school's overall analysis of its internal evaluation of the accreditation standards.

Focus Questions

As you review your responses to the standards, what major trends, themes, or areas of focus emerge that cut across the seven standards?

There are clear trends, themes, and areas of focus across the seven standards. A point to note is that our SAR was the product of 27 members of the School Improvement Team (SIT). Each standard was assigned to a team of three or four members. The teams worked on their standard to verify artifacts and practices. Once the artifacts and practices were verified, they were posted to a common folder, and the team proceeded to answer the focus questions. The following list identifies commonalities across the standards:

1. The vision and mission are an integral part of all policies, procedures, and practices at Leyden. All levels of stakeholders live the vision and mission by supporting programs and decisions, being innovative, and respecting one another.
2. Leyden has dedicated stakeholders who are proud to be part of the system. There is an insurmountable amount of evidence to show that there is a two-way communication process and that stakeholders' input at all levels is welcomed and valued.
3. Leyden shares the responsibility for leadership by adhering to the principles of a professional learning community. Teachers have input in decision-making practices, procedures, and policies through membership on many committees. The administration, faculty, and staff understand how important their work is to ensure that students are ready for college or career when they graduate from Leyden. Policies, procedures, practices, and processes are evident through the system to support student achievement and students' social emotional needs.
4. The district has made a commitment to provide resources to the certified and non-certified staff to meet its vision, mission, and academic goals. Time has been set aside for collaboration to meet the essence of the standards. Financial resources are available for instructional technology, eSchool (student management), Mastery Manager (assessment analysis), professional travel, and collaborative curriculum projects.
5. Leyden uses data to make decisions for instruction that lead to increased student achievement. The staff uses formative, summative, and standardized tests scores to analyze student success. The educational leadership provides assistance and training to help teachers find ways to reach all learners.

Based on your review of these cross-cutting themes/trends and each of the seven standards, what would you consider to be your school system's greatest strengths?

Based on the themes and trends evidenced in this SAR, our district has the following strengths:

1. Stakeholders trust that the district upholds the best interests of the students when making decisions.
2. The district is fiscally fit. This provides the ability to support practices, processes, and procedures to increase student achievement.
3. Leyden has a highly qualified staff from the top down. Everyone participates in meeting the vision and mission for every learner in the system by showing a willingness to learn new strategies and skills.
4. Leyden accepts responsibility for student achievement. Rather than blaming outside factors, the district continues to use its resources in seeking ways to prepare all students for success.

What would you consider to be your school system's greatest challenges?

Leyden is aware of its greatest challenges. Over the past few years, an increasing percentage of our students enter high school significantly lower than grade level in both reading and math. Our low-performing students often receive limited support from home due to language and cultural factors. Finding ways to increase parent awareness and participation is an on-going task for the district.

While our district is challenged to accommodate and remediate gaps in learning, the negative impact of AYP targets has put stress on the morale of our teachers. As evidenced in this SAR, the district diligently works to overcome this challenge by providing continuous supports and opportunities for teachers to find strategies to improve achievement for all learners.

The looming economic problems in Illinois cannot be ignored as a challenge. This issue has put the district on alert to be aware of its expenditures while not detracting from the process for quality education.

How will you use the insights gained from this self-assessment to inform and enhance your quality assurance and continuous improvement efforts?

Because Leyden has complete 'buy in' to the AdvancED standards, the insights from this self-assessment will continue to guide practices, procedures, policies, and practices in the future. When compiling the artifacts and practices for the SAR, members of the School Improvement Team also recognized areas for improvement. This process has given our district the fortitude to accept full responsibility for the quality of education that Leyden extends to every learner. The process has also made us aware of the quality that we currently have in our system.

Standards Assessment Report Summary

Standards & Indicators	Not Evident	Emerging	Operational	Highly Functional
1. Vision & Purpose				
1.1 Establishes a vision and purpose for the system in collaboration with its stakeholders				
1.2 Communicates the system's vision and purpose to build stakeholder understanding and support				
1.3 Identifies system-wide goals and measures to advance the vision				
1.4 Develops and continuously maintains a profile of the system, its students, and the community				
1.5 Ensures that the system's vision and purpose guide the teaching and learning process and the strategic direction of schools, departments, and services				✓
1.6 Reviews its vision and purpose systematically and revises them when appropriate				
2. Governance & Leadership				
2.1 Establishes and communicates policies and procedures that provide for the effective operation of the system			✓	
2.2 Recognizes and preserves the executive, administrative, and leadership authority of the administrative head of the system			✓	
2.3 Ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws, standards, and regulations				
2.4 Implements policies and procedures that provide for the orientation and training of the governing board			✓	
2.5 Builds public support, secures sufficient resources, and acts as a steward of the system's resources				
2.6 Maintains access to legal counsel to advise or obtain information about legal requirements and obligations			✓	
2.7 Maintains adequate insurance or equivalent resources to protect its financial stability and administrative operations			✓	
2.8 Provides for systematic analysis and review of student performance and school and system effectiveness			✓	
2.9 Creates and supports collaborative networks of stakeholders to support system programs				
2.10 Provides direction, assistance, and resources to align, support, and enhance all parts of the system in meeting organizational and student performance goals			✓	
2.11 Provides internal and external stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership			✓	
2.12 Assesses and addresses community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction				
2.13 Implements an evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel				
3. Teaching & Learning				
3.1 Develops, articulates, and coordinates curriculum based on clearly- defined expectations for student learning, including essential knowledge and skills				✓
3.2 Establishes expectations and supports student engagement in the learning process, including opportunities for students to explore application of higher order thinking skills and investigate new approaches to applying their learning				✓
3.3 Ensures that system-wide curricular and instructional decisions are based on data and research at all levels			✓	
3.4 Supports instruction that is research-based and reflective of best practice				
3.5 Supports a curriculum that challenges and meets the needs of each student, reflects a commitment to equity, and demonstrates an appreciation of diversity				✓
3.6 Allocates and protects instructional time to support student learning				
3.7 Maintains articulation among and between all levels of schooling to monitor student performance and ensure readiness for future schooling or employment			✓	
3.8 Supports the implementation of interventions to help students meet expectations for student learning				✓
3.9 Maintains a system-wide climate that supports student learning				
3.10 Ensures that curriculum is reviewed and revised at regular intervals				
3.11 Coordinates and ensures ready access to instructional technology, information and media services, and materials needed for effective instruction				✓
4. Documenting & Using Results				

4.1 Establishes and implements a comprehensive assessment system, aligned with the system's expectations for student learning, that yields information which is reliable, valid, and bias free			✓	
4.2 Ensures that student assessment data are used to make decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and learning			✓	

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4.3 Conducts a systematic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness, including support systems, and uses the results to improve student and system performance		✓		
4.4 Provides a system of communication which uses a variety of methods to report student performance and system effectiveness to all stakeholders			✓	
4.5 Uses comparison and trend data from comparable school systems to evaluate student performance and system effectiveness	✓			
4.6 Demonstrates verifiable growth in student performance that is supported by multiple sources of evidence		✓		
4.7 Maintains a secure, accurate, and complete student record system in accordance with state and federal regulations				✓

5. Resource & Support Systems

5.1 Establishes and implements processes to recruit, employ, retain, and mentor qualified professional and support staff to fulfill assigned roles and responsibilities			✓	
5.2 Establishes and implements a process to assign professional and support staff based on system needs and staff qualifications as may be required by federal and state law and regulations (i.e., professional preparation, ability, knowledge, and experience)			✓	
5.3 Establishes and implements a process to design, evaluate, and improve professional development and ensures participation by all faculty and staff			✓	
5.4 Ensures that staff are sufficient in number to meet the vision and purpose of the school system and to meet federal and state law and regulations, if applicable			✓	
5.5 Engages in long-range budgetary planning and annually budgets sufficient resources to support its educational programs and to implement its plans for improvement			✓	
5.6 Ensures that all financial transactions are safeguarded through proper budgetary procedures and audited accounting measures			✓	
5.7 Maintains sites, facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, orderly, and healthy environment			✓	
5.8 Establishes and implements written security and crisis management plans with appropriate training for stakeholders			✓	
5.9 Implements processes and plans for maintaining and improving sites, facilities, and equipment				
5.10 Provides technology infrastructure and equipment that is up-to-date and sufficient to accomplish the system's goals			✓	
5.11 Provides and coordinates support services that meet the health, counseling, nutrition, safety, co-curricular, transportation, and special learning needs of all students			✓	
5.12 Provides student support services coordinated with the school, home, and community				

6. Stakeholder Communications & Relationships

6.1 Fosters collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning				
6.2 Uses system-wide strategies to listen to and communicate with stakeholders				
6.3 Solicits the knowledge and skills of stakeholders to enhance the work of the system				
6.4 Communicates the expectations for student learning and goals for improvement to all stakeholders				
6.5 Provides information that is meaningful and useful to stakeholders				

7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

7.1 Engages in a continuous process of improvement that articulates the vision and purpose the system is pursuing (Vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, system effectiveness, and the community (Profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (Plan); and documents and uses the results to inform future improvement efforts (Results)			✓	
7.2 Engages stakeholders in the processes of continuous improvement				
7.3 Ensures that each school's plan for continuous improvement is aligned with the system's vision and expectations for student learning			✓	
7.4 Ensures that each school's plan for continuous improvement includes a focus on increasing learning for all students and closing gaps between current and expected student performance levels			✓	
7.5 Provides research-based professional development for system and school personnel to help them achieve improvement goals			✓	
7.6 Monitors and communicates the results of improvement efforts to stakeholders				
7.7 Evaluates and documents the effectiveness and impact of its continuous process of improvement				

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7.8 Allocates and protects time for planning and engaging in continuous improvement efforts system-wide			✓	
7.9 Provides direction and assistance to its schools and operational units to support their continuous improvement efforts			✓	