Neshaminy School District

K-12 English Language Arts

Program Quality Review

October 22, 23, & 24, 2013

BUCKS COUNTY INTERMEDIATE UNIT #22

Our Children... Their Future... Bucks County IU

December 17, 2013

To the Neshaminy School District:

The K-12 English Language Arts Program Quality Review team would like to extend a "thank you" and commend those who participated in the Bucks County review process. We greatly appreciate the positive and professional attitude displayed by staff and administration.

The visiting team found the administration, teachers, staff, students, and parents of the district to be most cooperative and proud to discuss their ELA program. Your graciousness, openness, and hospitality were evident throughout our three-day visit.

The team members collected information in a variety of areas and provided detailed answers to questions along with strengths, needs, and recommendations. Program needs were identified and recommendations made by team members, applying their experiences in the field to the information available, realizing that local conditions will determine local action. Through the cooperative efforts of all those involved in the educational process, we hope you find our recommendations to be of value in educating your students in the future.

Team members were pleased to have had the experiences offered by this process and to have shared these experiences and results with your staff. We wish you continued success in what is the most significant activity for today and tomorrow – educating our children.

Sincerely,

The Bucks County Program Review Team

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Bucks County Intermediate Unit #22

Program Quality Review

Neshaminy School District

The Intermediate Unit Program Quality Review Process provides a thorough examination of school programs and services by an experienced team of educators form Bucks County. Under the process, the Intermediate Unit and the school districts provide continuity and direction for each evaluation. The participating districts currently support the process through released time for their staff to participate. The Programs and Services Council has been vital in scheduling and providing leadership for this process. Additional information is available from the Programs and Services Division of the Bucks County Intermediate Unit.

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Neshaminy School District

K‑12 ELA Program Quality Review

OVERALL STRENGTHS

We believe the following to be the strengths of the Neshaminy K‑12 ELA Program:

- Professional staff members in NSD are highly knowledgeable, motivated, and dedicated to their students, district, and community.

- The district has made considerable progress in the design and development of a comprehensive approach to balanced literacy at the elementary level.

- Considerable investment has been made in Grade K‑5 ELA materials district‑wide. Examples include *SuperKids* reading program; *Pearson's Good Habits, Great Readers* program; and *Writing Fundamentals.*

- The addition of 30 minutes to the school day dedicated to professional development, student intervention, and improved communication is already resulting in program improvement.

- The district has the infrastructure in place for sophisticated data warehousing which includes easy access for all administrative and teaching staff.

- District staff reported that they are eager to begin Grade K‑12 ELA program improvement.

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Neshaminy School District

K-12 ELA Program Quality Review

OVERALL NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We believe the following to be the overall needs of the Neshaminy K-12 English Language Arts Program. The recommendations accompany each need. Details for each need originate in the question sections of this report.

Need #1: To continue designing a well-articulated K-12 ELA curriculum that is aligned with PA Core Standards. *

Recommendations:

- Define a clear vision for the K-12 ELA program and translate that vision into an operational progression that addresses the articulation from elementary, middle school through high school ELA instruction.
- Develop clear expectations for the delivery of the ELA program for elementary, middle school, and high school levels.
  o Increase the emphasis on writing, speaking, and listening for all levels.
  o On the high school level clearly articulate differentiation among the existing tracks: Foundations, College Prep, Honors, and Advanced Placement.
  o Once differentiation among the existing tracks is clarified at the high school level, consider reducing the number of tracks.
  o On the high school level increase the level of cognitive challenge (rigor) in all tracks.
- Clarify K-12 ELA central office, building, and teacher leadership roles of the staff.
- Increase collaboration and communication between regular and special education.

- Ensure that there is common content and skill development for regular and special education students.
- Investigate time allocations for the ELA program at all levels; this factor will affect the type of instruction and quality of assessments that can be used.
- Incorporate developmental reading activities in grades 6-8.
- Align curriculum maps and documents with assessments and instructional practices in both regular and special education.

Through out this document the terms "PA Core" and "Common Core" will be used interchangeably.

Need #2: Increase the use of instructional best practices K-12.

Recommendations:

- Ensure fidelity of delivery of the K-12 ELA program from classroom to classroom and building to building.
- Design instruction to reflect appropriate levels of cognitive development including social/emotional learning (developmentally appropriate practices).
- Investigate the inclusion of reading instruction beyond fifth grade.
- On all levels, examine best practices including the use of a formative assessment process as a basis for differentiated instruction.
- Increase the use of differentiated instruction.
- Develop strategies to ensure active student engagement.
- Use writing to facilitate learning.
- Increase equitable access to technology to support student-centered learning, student engagement, differentiation, and formative assessment practices.
- Initiate cross-curricular activities to support reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language.

Need #3: To align assessments with curriculum and instructional decision--making.

Recommendations:

- Create clear expectations and definitions of all components of the assessment system.
- Enhance the use of the existing Grade K--5 assessment system to assign interventions, monitor progress, impact placement decisions, and program revision in both regular and special education. Continue the development to the secondary assessment and intervention system.
- Increase the use of a systemic, research--based formative assessment process that includes daily, short--term, and long--term instructional checks.
- Design and implement a balanced comprehensive assessment plan focusing on a formative assessment process. The formative assessment process should be an integral part of the professional development plan and a repetitive component of professional learning as the curriculum is revised and new benchmark assessments/common assessments are developed. (See pages 51-54 of the Assessment Section of this report.)
- Design a system to manage the review, analysis, and development of instructional alternatives for the program as a whole.
- Emphasize depth of study rather than "covering the curriculum."
- Review how assessments are used to assign grades and determine placement in the ELA program, particularly grades 6--12.
- Review the district's procedures for reporting student progress K--12 continuing with the revisions already underway with the elementary report cards

Need #4: To create a culture of building leadership that provides informed oversight and support of the ELA K--12 program.

Recommendations:

It is a recommendation of this report to:
- Explore possible reasons for the disconnect between documented efforts made to support teachers and administrators in the implementation of the Grade K--5 Balanced Literacy Framework over the last five years and the lack of acquisition, acknowledgement, and follow through of such efforts by administrators and teachers. (See pages 10-15 in the Curriculum Section.)
- Develop administrative goals for building leaders, which include responsibility for the supervision of the ELA program. Incorporate these goals as part of the Pennsylvania's Educator Effectiveness model for both teachers and administrators.
- Create grade appropriate walk--through checklists that are consistently implemented by grade level in all buildings.

Need #5: To design a comprehensive professional development plan that focuses on the effective delivery of the written, taught, and tested ELA curriculum.

Recommendations:

- Build on the existing Professional Education Action Plan (Appendix B), which is part of the district's Strategic Plan, by reviewing the strategies and activities for relevance and ensure that the plan includes opportunities for horizontal and vertical collaboration.

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- Ensure that all professional staff, including administrators and teachers, engage in professional learning activities related to the revision of the ELA curriculum.
- Ensure that the professional development plan supports embedded practice.
- Schedule, structure, and monitor professional learning communities.

Neshaminy School District
K-12 ELA Program Quality Review

SECTION I: CURRICULUM
Questions and Findings

1. What evidence is there to support that there is a consistent philosophy (i.e., balanced literacy) and language used across the K-12 ELA curriculum?

2. How are the individual components of ELA (as defined by CCSS/ PA Core) addressed?
(*Please note: findings for questions 1 and 2 are reported as a combined narrative.*)

Analyses of interview, observation, and document review data indicated a strong overlap in answers to the first two Curriculum PQR questions, thus, for the purpose of this report, these two questions have been combined. Overall, the review data point to an inconsistent level of knowledge and understanding of the K-12 ELA curriculum/philosophy as well as how the individual components (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) are defined among central office administrators, building level administrators, and teachers. The inconsistencies do vary based on grade span, thus, the analyses will be discussed using elementary, middle school, and high school categories.

Elementary ELA Programs and Philosophy

Interview and document review data highlighted a carefully thought-out process used to implement a Grade K-5 ELA course of study over the last five years. Prior to the adoption of a Comprehensive Approach to Balanced Literacy and the use of the *Superkids* reading program and Pearson's *Good Habits, Great Readers* program, the district had not updated its elementary language arts philosophy/materials for approximately ten years. Teachers were using an eight to ten-year old Harcourt anthology entitled, *Collections*. In 2008-2009, under the direction of the Director of Curriculum, the elementary reading specialists

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started a Grade K–5 ELA curriculum renewal process by examining the most up–to–date reading/writing research for early literacy. Their analysis of the literacy research resulted in a decision to adopt a comprehensive approach to balanced literacy using the Ohio State University Literacy Framework's gradual release of responsibility model for reading, writing, and word work. At this time the Director of Curriculum moved three literacy professionals into literacy coach positions. One of the coaches also functioned as a literacy coordinator. These professionals provided expertise, oversight, and guidance to the implementation process.

At the beginning of the implementation process, ELA binders were given to all administrators and teachers in all elementary buildings. These binders included, but were not limited to the following materials: the Balanced Literacy Framework (explanation and visual diagram), the Neshaminy School District Language Arts Mission Statement, components of Reading Workshop and corresponding definitions, components of Writing Workshop and corresponding definitions, the components of Word Work; The National Reading Panel's five elements: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension – all with corresponding resource materials.

Initially, the ELA Framework was rolled out to elementary principals. During the 2008–2009 school year, literacy coaches attended principal monthly meetings to explain the Framework. Each principal received the ELA K–5 binder. In the winter and spring of 2009, ELA materials were reviewed via small pilots. The district initially explored Rigby and Pearson K–5 ELA approaches. In March 2009, the *Superkids* reading program was piloted for K–2 since both Rigby and Pearson did not seem to have a strong enough approach to phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency for the early grades. The district then adopted the *Superkids* reading program for K–2 and Pearson's *Good Habits, Great Readers* program for grades 3–5 at the beginning of the 2009–2010 school year. The published materials were part of the Comprehensive Approach to Balanced Literacy and were to be used within the Balanced Literacy Framework. For instance, K–2 teachers were to do Interactive Read–

Alouds for comprehension in addition to using the *Superkids* materials for phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency. At that time, writing instruction was put on hold until the reading components of the Literacy Framework was implemented.

Extensive professional development was provided for elementary principals and K-5 teachers to support the implementation of the Literacy Framework. The original Director of Curriculum retired, and the new Director of Curriculum along with the Director of Elementary and Secondary Education worked with the Bucks County Intermediate Unit literacy consultants to provide monthly Best Practice meetings for the elementary principals during the 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 school years. These Best Practice meetings provided small group, job-embedded professional development in the Comprehensive Approach to Balanced Literacy for the principals over a two-year time period. In addition, the district used a Literacy Leadership team known as the Driving Team to guide the implementation. The team used the research of Michael Fullan, Andy Hargreaves, and Robert Evans among others to guide a systemic approach to the implementation. On the building and teacher level, large group, small group (building-based and grade level groups) professional development opportunities as well as individual consultations were consistently integrated into the implementation process in the eight elementary buildings.

During the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years, the district employed a Pennsylvania Writing and Literature Project (National Writing Project) Writing Fellow to help design and to provide professional development for Grade 1-5 teachers in implementing Writing Workshop. The consultant worked with the elementary literacy coordinator to write lessons of study for grades 1-5 as part of the Neshaminy Comprehensive Approach to Literacy: Writing Workshop binder. The writing consultant provided district-wide grade level professional development (two to three full days over the course of school year per grade level) using the Writing Workshop binder and mentor texts that were ordered for all elementary buildings by the Director of Curriculum. In addition, some building principals

ordered additional mentor texts and several of the elementary librarians organized the mentor texts and housed them in discreet sections of the library. (See Exhibit 1.)

Exhibit 1: Professional Development in the Area of Writing

Date	Topic	Audience
12/2/2009 4:00 – 6:00pm	Non-Negotiables / The Bottom Lines for Teaching Writing	Language Arts Committee
1/19/2010 4:00 – 6:00pm	Building Community in the Writing Workshop	Language Arts Committee
2/9/2010 4:00 – 6:00pm	Writer's Notebook	Language Arts Committee
3/11/2010 4:00 – 6:00pm	Mentor Texts – I	Language Arts Committee
4/15/2010 4:00 – 6:00pm	Mentor Texts – II	Language Arts Committee
5/13/2010 4:00 – 6:00pm	Conferring	Language Arts Committee
6/8/2010 4:00 – 6:00pm	Creating Units of Study	Language Arts Committee
6/21/2010 Half Day	Writing Workshop Approach: • Non-negotiables (A Writer's Bill of Rights) • WW Timeframe ○ Classroom Space	Grades 3-5 Pearl Buck & Schweitzer in AM Hoover, Lower South, & Miller in AM/Heckman, Ferderbar, & Everitt in PM
10/25/2011	Writing Workshop Approach	Grade 2 – entire district

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10/25/2011 (Con't)	Writer's Bill of Rights) • WW Timeframe • Classroom Space • Writer's Notebook • Architecture of a Mini-Lesson	
5/10/2012	Writing Workshop Approach • Non-negotiables (A Writer's Bill of Rights) • WW Timeframe • Classroom Space	Grade 1 – entire district

During the implementation process, the Director of Curriculum supported the literacy coaches and elementary building principals by underwriting the costs for substitutes used for professional development in the implementation of the Comprehensive Approach to Balanced Literacy including data review and analysis. In addition, the writing of the K-5 ELA curriculum maps was a priority of the elementary work. Initially, a consensus-building approach was used to write the maps, however, teacher participation was low. Following the initial writing efforts, the literacy coordinator then finished the elementary ELA maps and also incorporated the ELA Common Core Standards.

Surprisingly, within this context, interview data indicated that most elementary principals and a large majority of teachers reported that the district provided little to no professional development in a Comprehensive Approach to Balanced Literacy. Also, the majority of elementary educators interviewed reported that there is not a consistent philosophy or language used across the elementary ELA curriculum.

Interview and observation data also indicate that not all grade K-5 teachers are consistently using the ELA binder, the *Superkids* reading program, or Pearson's *Good Habits, Great Readers* program. Based on elementary principal and teacher interviews,

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there appears to be a lack of oversight in the use of the language arts materials and little oversight of ELA instructional practices by building instructional leaders within K-5 classrooms in many of the elementary buildings. Once again, the situation varies from building to building. Some elementary buildings indicated that their principal provide strong literacy leadership while others did not.

Recommendation for Further Study:

It is a recommendation of this report to explore the possible reasons for such a disconnect between documented efforts made to support teachers and administrators in the implementation of the Grade K-5 Balanced Literacy Framework and the lack of acquisition, acknowledgement, and follow through of such efforts.

Secondary ELA Program and Philosophy

Teachers on the secondary level (Grades 6-12) consistently reported the need for a well-articulated, shared philosophy and language for the secondary literacy program; however, at the middle school level, teachers reported that the use of the *McDougal Littell Series* helped to provide consistency in the teaching of literature. Due to the limited time afforded language arts instruction in the middle school, interview and document review data indicated the lack of a comprehensive writing program and little actual instruction in reading. From both administrative and teacher perceptual data, a middle school reading class for all students as well as a focused effort on reading across the curriculum were seen as major needs.

At the high school, in particular, teachers' perceptions indicated that a scope-and-sequence for skills by grade level did not exist and, thus, many teachers feel as though they are neglecting or re-teaching specific skills that the students have already learned.   In contrast

to this perception, interview data indicated that the high school English department, as a rule, valued the academic freedom of each teacher resulting in an ELA curriculum that varies from teacher to teacher. This also affects the clear articulation of the curriculum, including specific skills in reading and writing, from grade level to grade level. In contrast to the value of academic freedom, teacher interview data indicated that the secondary level would like to implement more direct writing instruction to improve the students overall writing confidence and competence. The number of levels of English classes, specifically, Foundations, College Prep, Honors, and Advanced Placement, further complicates the high school ELA program.

Curriculum Maps

Although the district has worked on developing curriculum maps, the maps on the secondary level are reported to not be user-friendly for all teachers and that the maps do not seem to address specific skills related grade level. Other perspectives indicated that the high school English curriculum is documented on the maps, however, there is inconsistent use of the maps due to a lack of articulated units of study, knowledge of how to use the maps, and structured collaboration time. Administrator interviews indicated that the process of writing the curriculum maps on the secondary level had been strongly influenced by the teacher contract issues and did not allow for a best practice approach to creating the maps. It was reported that the secondary ELA lead teacher is presently working on revising the secondary maps and aligning them with the ELA Common Core Standards. With the advent of the new contract, administrators and teachers indicate they are looking forward to a renewed emphasis on researched best practices for all components of the ELA secondary program including curriculum mapping.

3. In what ways does the K–12 ELA curriculum support diverse student needs?

In regard to meeting the needs of diverse learners, there are varied perspectives across the district and grade levels. While some believe that their programs are adequately meeting student needs, others believe there isn't enough differentiation. According to elementary teachers, there is not a consistent Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTII) program across the district; however, there is an early intervention program that identifies the students that are to be placed. It is reported that the bulk of the instruction for these students is coming from the classroom teachers. It was unclear if the interviewees understood the components of a RTII program and the requirement to supply "extra doses" of instruction within the Core Program, which is to address the needs of at least 80% of the students.

Reading specialist interventions vary building to building, as well as Title I instruction (funding varies year to year affecting the number of Title I teachers per building). Teachers also reported that more consistent guidelines for placement in this program are needed.   Once again, it was unclear if the respondents understood the federal guidelines under which the district's Title I program must work. Additionally, elementary level ELL students may have to attend a school other than their home school in order to receive specialized instruction. Based on the pull out schedule, some students may miss core instruction. At the secondary level, a special education teacher teaches ELL classes.

At all levels, teachers feel that the needs of their high–achieving/gifted students are not being met. Higher–level texts are available on the elementary level, but it was reported that high–achieving students receive less instruction during guided reading because so much emphasis is placed on helping struggling readers reach proficiency. It was difficult to ascertain from the review data, teachers' comfort with designing complex, cognitively challenging literature study activities that may be more appropriate for high–achieving/gifted students than guided reading instruction.

Special education support schedules vary at the elementary level causing students to miss some of the core activities. When these students return to the regular education classroom, they are not making connections to the skills that were taught during their absence, which causes confusion. Time needs to be provided for special and regular education teachers to meet, discuss, and design meaningful interventions. Overall, the special education program seems to be separate from general education. It is possible that the complexity of a big system that had limited time for collaboration has contributed to a lack of collaboration and co-planning. This area is one that warrants additional study.

Within the special education program, intervention programs such as Scholastic's *System 44* and *READ 180* are widely used. Over that last the last three years, *System 44* has been incorporated into third, fourth, and fifth grades in the elementary schools and seventh, eighth, and ninth grades in the secondary schools. READ 180 has been implemented primarily in the middle schools; however, the program has been piloted in the elementary and the high school. Co-teaching is in place as part of the Special Education Continuum of Services. It primarily occurs at the middle and high schools. With in this program, scheduling co-planning time has been a major barrier. Overall, the special education leadership reported that they are looking for ways to support inclusive practices and to enhance instructional quality. Instruction within elementary special education seems to be an area of concern. A focused approach to ELA instruction that is aligned to the Comprehensive Approach to Balanced Literacy was not reported.

Grouping Procedures

Procedures for grouping K-5 students vary across the district. Some teachers use data-driven methods to select guided reading groups, while others use more informal techniques. Teachers reported that a more consistent procedure for grouping students by reading performance is necessary.

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At the secondary level, a tracking system is used. Teachers' recommendations are considered, but it was reported that, ultimately, parents have a greater input in student placement. Also, teachers report that making student-tracking decisions (for the following school year) in February is too early in the school year to formulate an appropriate recommendation. Teachers would like this process revamped to include clear criteria for each tracked level (AP, Honors, College Prep, and Foundations).

4. What evidence is there that the materials and resources used to support instruction in the K-12 ELA program are appropriate and current?

At the elementary level (K-5), teachers feel that they have adequate materials to support ELA instruction. The *Superkids* program resources allow all students to have access to the text and related guided reading materials are leveled to support diverse learners. The Pearson materials are also adequate to support ELA instruction. Teachers report that the shared texts are engaging and appropriate. The guided reading texts for Pearson meet the needs of all learners by providing various texts at all levels. Some elementary teachers reported that they are sometimes supplementing materials to use with students because the Pearson guided reading suggestions (in the manual) are repetitive. The Pearson resources also have a good balance between nonfiction and fiction, as well as multicultural selections. Elementary teachers also reported that they are providing supplemental texts to help prepare students for the PSSA. There is much enthusiasm for the new *Writing Fundamentals* program and teachers are seeing increased student motivation to write. However, some teachers received this program in October and have had little time to implement it.

At the secondary level (6-12), teachers reported that there are not enough novels to teach the same novel across the grade level at the same time. Also, there are not enough books for a class set at the building level, so sharing across the district is necessary. There is only a

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small budget available to replace novels.. It was mentioned that these vocabulary books were selected without teacher input. Two teachers reported that the required novels per grade level were selected based on teacher preference. Teachers would like freedom to select more appropriate texts to meet their students' needs. In the area of vocabulary development, there are enough vocabulary books, but not enough teachers' manuals.   It was reported that there was previously a committee to oversee supplemental materials. However, the committee no longer meets, so teachers now pick their own materials without any supervision or process. Teachers were unsure if there is a procedure in place for selecting materials. In addition, some teachers reported that they supplement instruction with their own materials to meet their students' diverse needs. Teachers report that much time is spent gathering resources to more effectively teach ELA skills. It was suggested that professional learning communities could focus on identifying which resources should be culled or added.

Many teachers suggested the possibility of expanding access to digital materials in order to add the newer materials. The inclusion of various apps and other free digital resources would be highly beneficial. The COWS (computers on carts) are helpful, but there are not enough computers for a class with greater than thirty students.

5. To what extent is the NSD K–12 ELA program aligned with the CCSS?

The NSD professional staff members are all familiar with the CCSS for ELA. They received professional development on the topic and have also conducted personal research. At the elementary level, teachers reported that they received new ELA curriculum maps with the addition of the CCSS. However, teachers questioned how well their current programs in reading and writing align to these new standards, given their age of adoption. At every level, teachers reported that they would like more guidance from the district on how to effectively meet the demands of the CCSS. Teachers assume that their programs meet the

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standards, but are not sure where additional materials are needed to better meet these core standards and their requisite.

On the secondary level, it was reported that the secondary ELA lead teacher is in the process of incorporating the CCSS into the curriculum maps.

6. What evidence is there to support that appropriate time is allocated in order to deliver the K-12 ELA program?

Elementary level teachers expressed concerns in relation to the time allotted for the language arts block, although it was difficult to separate the teachers' knowledge and expertise in the implementation of best practices with the perceived need for more time. One elementary building reported the following time allocations for the language arts block: half-day kindergarten – 60 minutes; first grade and second grade – 145 minutes; third grade – 125 minutes; and fourth and fifth grades – 105 minutes. Based on best practices in literacy programs, a 90-minute undisturbed reading block is recommended especially for K-3 full day programs, with an additional 30 – 40 minutes for writing instruction. Based on these practices, the Neshaminy elementary ELA programs are within the recommended ranges. It is most difficult to deliver a comprehensive approach to literacy using the literacy framework in half-day kindergarten programs without affecting other parts of the program. We note that the district has implemented a full-day kindergarten program pilot in each elementary building. There is ample evidence that full-day kindergarten programs have a positive affect on learning especially for students who enter school without a strong literacy background.

Some teachers, specifically those in grades 3-5 expressed a disconnect in the programs offered. Teachers use three different programs for reading, spelling, and writing. Teachers also believe that they do not have enough time to ensure meaningful conversations with all reading groups. Some teachers even expressed a desire to shorten the block of time associated with Science and Social Studies instruction to provide more hands-on reading and writing instruction. They believe this may alleviate their time concerns and help them achieve a balanced literacy program. A better course is to integrate these programs with the ELA curriculum.

At the middle school level, English periods were limited to one period per day. This allocation of time severely limits the teachers' opportunities to deliver a comprehensive language arts program that includes reading, writing, speaking, and listening with the language and vocabulary skills integrated into the previously noted areas. Within this context, middle school teacher interview data expressed a desire for more support in the area of reading. It was the perception of some teachers that since reading specialists are not assigned to the middle schools, teachers spend some of the time that is normally allocated for ELA instruction teaching reading strategies. Moreover, they do not feel qualified enough to implement this instruction with fidelity. In contrast, high school teachers interviewed had no concerns in respect to time to deliver their curriculum effectively even though document review and administrative and parent interview data indicated that a comprehensive approach to reading, writing, speaking, and listening is not occurring on the high school level.

7. In what ways do other disciplines integrate reading, writing, speaking, and listening into their programs?

At the elementary level, teachers interviewed reported that science and social studies integration with reading, writing, speaking, and listening is organic. However, they indicate that there is no suggested framework for how to do so. Most teachers look for

opportunities to integrate RELA components into their science/social studies lessons. There is a concern, however, for the math implementation, specifically for the upper grade levels in elementary school. These students do have "high stakes" testing in the PSSA but the programs they currently teach do not have open-ended questions, so teachers must supplement and/or create their own questions to help with that.

At the secondary level, teachers of other disciplines believe they are integrating ELA in whatever capacity is necessary for their content area. Specifically, math instructors see that the students who may easily know the math but have decoding issues are struggling in math through word problems. In contrast, the World Languages are implementing reading, writing, speaking and listening consistently and daily. Their discipline requires this understanding. The teachers however expressed concerns with the transfer of certain fundamental skills (i.e. grammar). They believe if these skills were taught or transferred more consistently the students would benefit. In contrast, the World Language teachers reported increased student engagement and language acquisition due to the new resources adopted.

SECTION II: INSTRUCTION
Questions and Findings

1. To what extent do teachers consistently apply strong, sound, research–based instructional practices in English Language Arts?

Elementary Level

One district administrator described the elementary English Language Arts program as being 'five years into the start from scratch point.' This is an important historical perspective to understand when considering whether teachers are currently applying best instructional practices. Five years ago, the district had scarce evidence of a written curriculum and outdated commercial programs to support delivery of a curriculum, and no district–wide set of beliefs about teaching English Language Arts. In 2009, the literacy leadership team adopted a comprehensive approach to balanced literacy using the Ohio State University Literacy Framework's gradual release of responsibility model for reading, writing, and word work (please see the Curriculum section, pages 11-15 for a thorough description of this adoption and implementation process.)

If teachers are implementing the *Superkids* and *Good Habits, Great Readers* programs with fidelity, they are by default implementing strong, research–based best practices as these programs are built on solid foundations of research. In some elementary buildings, where there is strong building level instructional leadership overseeing and supporting the implementation process, the programs are being implemented with fidelity within the Balanced Literacy Framework. In other buildings where instructional leadership, oversight, and support were lacking, the team observed inconsistent delivery of the programs. It did appear that principals' level of knowledge of the balanced literacy framework had a significant impact on the delivery of the programs.

Literacy coaches worked with the elementary staff during the original implementation of the new programs, but the positions have since been eliminated. Many teachers spoke positively about the support that the coaches provided, and feel that they have not had that level of support without them. The coaches were also able to provide a consistent level of teacher-based instructional leadership across buildings.

PSSA data review by the team revealed that elementary buildings with more affluent demographics scored higher on the PSSA, regardless of what the team observed in terms of the implementation of best practices.

The gradual release of responsibility framework was observed consistently in classrooms, in terms of 'I do, we do, you do.' Team members observed the *SuperKids* and *Good Habits, Great Readers* programs being delivered with this model, but the balanced nature of the Ohio State framework was not consistently observed. Teachers reported feeling constrained by the commercial programs that have recently been implemented; they are not sure how
to fit all components of the programs in each day. Grades three, four, and five were recently re-trained on the Pearson program, *Good Habits, Great Readers*, and the team recommends following this training with additional support in the form of instructional coaching and providing time for teachers to collaborate on how to implement the program with fidelity. The team also recommends re-training K-2 teachers on the *SuperKids* program.

One administrator referred to a 'knowing-doing gap' existing in the district; the team's observations support this statement.

The district has implemented *Writing Fundamentals* this school year. Although it is too early to judge the success of this program (training of teachers was reportedly just finished last week), teachers and administrators seem pleased with the program so far. However,

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this program is also based on solid research – if teachers are implementing the program with fidelity, then they will be implementing research-based best instructional practices.

Middle School Level

Instructional best practices were inconsistently observed at the middle schools. Interview data revealed a concern about middle school teachers' knowledge and expertise of English Language Arts. Although much emphasis has been placed on data mining and intervening for struggling readers, emphasis has not been placed on professional learning of best practices. There is also a disconnect between the curriculum maps and what the team observed in practice; the maps are not in a useful format and as a result, teachers continue to teach what they are comfortable teaching and not necessarily what is Common-Core or best practice aligned.

Teachers and administrators both reported a need for a reading course at the middle level. They feel that students are reading below grade level and need an additional dose of reading instruction before entering high school.

High School Level

At the high school, the team observed inconsistent use of best practices. These inconsistencies apply teacher to teacher and between the various tracks or levels of courses.

There are four tracks at the high school: Foundations, College Prep, Honors, and AP. Honors and AP tracks provide academic challenge and prepare students for college and career. Students are encouraged to write with purpose and audience in mind. Foundations and College Prep tracks did not contain the same rigor and quality of instruction that Honors

and AP provided. Students in these tracks were more disengaged than peers in higher tracks. The team found limited opportunities for speaking and listening in these tracks.

Historically, there seems to have been the sense of academic freedom among high school English teachers that has contributed to today's inconsistencies. Many administrators shared the belief that teachers each 'do their own thing,' and that there does not seem to be consistency in the delivery of content or instructional best practices.

The team was unable to ascertain whether teachers use or follow the curriculum maps, but encourages the department to revise these maps and to follow them. This is especially important for the lower level tracks; parents and students reported that the College Prep track does not prepare students for college. One parent reported that her child did not receive one writing assignment during her four years in the College Prep track. While the team is hesitant to place significant weight on one parent's claim, the perception that students in lower tracks do not experience as much writing and rigor, in general, was consistent among all parents and students that were interviewed. The team observed the John Collins writing program across content areas, but not consistently.

Among administrators and teachers alike, there is a sense that today is a new day at the high school. The new teacher evaluation system has opened channels of communication regarding instructional practice that previously were not open. Teachers are talking about Common Core related topics such as text complexity and benchmark assessments. After the long contract dispute, the teachers now seem ready to get back to developing the curriculum. The team hopes that teachers and administrators capitalize on this new beginning to improve the instructional program for students.

2. In what ways and to what degree are students engaged in their own learning?

The team was able to identify a vision for the K-5 English Language Arts program in Neshaminy from administrators and staff development personnel. However, the team was not able to identify a vision for the secondary ELA program or the K-12 ELA program as a whole. This lack of vision manifested in inconsistent delivery of the program at all levels throughout the district. The district (especially students) would be well served if a vision was developed and communicated to all stakeholders of the ELA program.

Student engagement varies from level to level. Elementary students were found to be highly engaged and eager to learn. Several schools have special reading programs, such as Bucks for Reading at Pearl Buck. Middle school students reported enjoying opportunities to orally present their learning. In general, students become less engaged as they progress through the school system. High school students reported the desire to experience more student focused/generated discussions, hands-on activities, and self-selected projects. The team recommends infusing the curriculum with greater student choice; there currently seems to be an over-emphasis on worksheets, workbooks, and question/ answer sessions versus rich group discussions.

The team did not observe or hear about specific cross-curricular activities. Teachers reported that they would like to conduct interdisciplinary units, but without common planning time it is impossible for teachers to collaborate on such events.

3. How does the scheduling system promote collaboration between teachers f o r instructional improvements?

The addition of thirty minutes of professional time to each school day is seen as a tremendous step in the right direction for professional learning and collaboration. However, the use of this time varies widely between buildings and levels across the district.

Elementary Level

At the elementary level, teachers use the additional thirty minutes for grade level planning meetings, tutoring students, or other items assigned by their principal. Teachers felt that this time was not always focused on student learning or their own professional learning. Some elementary teachers felt that this time was micro-managed in terms of what they were expected to be doing during that time, while others felt that they needed clearer direction.

Many elementary teachers reported that better and more frequent collaboration occurred during lunch. Teachers also reported that they feel overwhelmed with the number of new programs that they are implementing and feel that they have not had adequate professional development to implement these programs fully. Teachers also expressed the desire for collaboration with colleagues to problem-solve implementation challenges with the new programs. At the current time, opportunities do not exist for teachers to collaborate between school buildings or across levels.

Middle School Level

At the middle level, the additional thirty minutes is structured differently at each building. At one building, this time is used for data mining. Teachers reported that real collaboration often happens on their own time. For example, some teachers meet once each week with colleagues to plan for one hour after school. Teachers reported that they do not have common planning time during the school day. Co-teachers also do not have common planning time. Middle level teachers reported that the additional thirty minutes that has been added to their professional day is used for 'clinic' or parent meetings. Teachers reported that they would like to engage their students in more cross-curricular learning activities, but they do not have common time to plan such activities. As curriculum maps

are revised, it is recommended that cross-curricular connections and activities be made explicit within the maps.

High School Level

The high school English department has a professional learning community that meets every Tuesday and Wednesday during the additional thirty minutes of professional time. The team encourages the department to structure their Professional Learning Community based on the work of Richard and Rebecca DuFour. According to their definition of a professional learning community, every professional in the school building must engage in three crucial questions that drive the work of those within a professional learning community:

- What do we want each student to learn?
- How will we know when each student has learned it?
- How will we respond when a student experiences difficulty in learning?

The answer to the third question separates learning communities from traditional schools (DuFour, 2004).

A major need for the school district is to establish guidelines for how the additional thirty minutes of professional time is to be used. This will serve to protect this time; many teachers reported that this time often gets taken for responsibilities other than collaboration and professional learning, such as parent meetings, IEP meetings, or other duties.

K-12 vertical collaboration is currently not structured. This is another major need for the school district. Vertical collaboration will aid the school district in designing and maintaining successful transitions for students between elementary, middle, and high school, and will also aid the district in revising the K-12 curriculum.

4. To what extent does technology enhance instruction?

The school district has invested in digital curricula and online resources that are to be used to provide adaptive instruction and progress/mastery data for the teacher. However, teachers reported a lack of professional development on these resources and therefore are not fully aware of how to leverage them.

SmartBoards are being used to augment direct instruction, model a process, or locate online resources. Occasionally students are called up to manipulate objects or annotate information. In middle and high school, overheads, monitors, and SmartBoards are used to project information (text definitions, groupings, lesson goals). Teachers reported very little instructional technology training.

Teachers and students uniformly shared frustrations with limited digital access. Reserving computer labs or laptop carts results in technology being augmentative or a "special" and not a core medium for collaboration and productivity. Teachers reported that they are reluctant to have students use technology as part of their regular practice because access in schools is limited. Students reported that they wait until they are home to use technology for research and productivity.

5. What evidence is there that the current schedule supports the use of best instructional practices in English Language Arts?

Overall, the team observed teachers working hard to utilize their instructional time to the best of their ability. Excessive down time was not observed. At the middle and high school levels, most classes began with a 'please do now' activity as the bell was ringing. The majority of classes concluded with an exit slip, which team members observed being

reviewed in classes. Below are additional observations that the team found at each level of the system.

Elementary Level

The elementary schedule allocates approximately two hours to deliver all components of the English Language Arts program in grades 1–5 (this varies per grade level). Elementary teachers consistently reported feeling that they could not fit in all that they are required to teach in these two hours. Teachers view the commercial programs, such as *SuperKids* and *Good Habits, Great Readers*, as their curriculum and feel unable to deviate from the programs' script.

The school district has recently invested in additional professional development on the elementary ELA programs. The team recommends following up this professional development with instructional coaching and job-embedded professional development for teachers. Teachers also need time to collaborate with one another and exchange ideas for best practices. The team encourages the district to implement professional learning communities at the elementary level, which focus on three essential questions:

• What do we want each student to learn?
• How will we know when each student has learned it?
• How will we respond when a student experiences difficulty in learning?

Middle School Level

The Middle School schedule allows for fifty minutes of ELA instruction daily. Teachers reported that the 'opportunity period' is currently more of a study hall than an instructional period. Teachers and administrators alike reported a desire to use this period as an additional reading class for students.

High school teachers reported that a number of students come to the high school reading below the grade level. It was difficult for the team to identify specific data to validate or invalidate this claim; the team recommends that the district investigate this issue further. The recommendation of adding a reading course to the middle school should improve students' overall reading performance and ameliorate this claim.

High School Level

The High School functions on a traditional eight-period day. Each class is just over forty minutes long and students spend forty minutes each day in transit around the high school between classes.

The majority of classes that the team observed were teacher-centered and featured lecture style instruction. Teachers reported feeling constrained by the short class periods and felt compelled to 'get all of the content in.'

At the high school, the schedule also inhibits the incorporation of writing instruction and activities. Feedback from parents, teachers, students, and administrators consistently pointed to the need for a stronger writing program at the high school.

6. In what ways do student grouping practices affect instructional delivery?

Elementary Level

Instructional grouping strategies were not consistent throughout elementary buildings or grade levels. This seemed to be reflective of how the overall implementation of the new ELA programs were going and how active of a role the principal was playing in the implementation process.

Teachers were knowledgeable about the Daily 5 and Fab 4, but implementation of these practices was not consistent in all classrooms. Most classes observed were teacher-centered and not reflective of a balanced literacy framework. The team recommends professional development for all teachers and administrators on instructional best practices and making classes more student-centered.

Middle School Level

The middle school program groups students heterogeneously. The 'opportunity period' is used differently at each middle school. Some teachers reported that the period is a study hall, while others reported that one day out of six it is used as a reading course with students grouped according to their needs. Teachers and administrators at the middle level reported a desire to make this reading period a permanent fixture in the daily schedule.

High School Level

At the high school, there are four levels of courses: AP, Honors, College Prep, and Foundations. The Foundation track receives extra ELA instruction, focused on reading and writing in the content areas.

A need for the district is to clarify and communicate the placement procedures at the high school. At the middle level, there is only one track while there are four tracks at the high school. Interview data revealed that students are frequently misplaced at the high school. For example, it was reported that many students score Advanced on their PSSAs yet are placed into the ninth grade Foundations course. Beyond ninth grade, placement decisions seem to be based on teacher recommendations. The lack of transparency in the placement process has caused an excess of parent over-rides.

Instructional quality varies widely between tracks, yet it is unclear what the curricular differences are between the various tracks at the high school. The Foundations courses seem to be dominated by worksheets and study guides while upper level courses engaged students with skits, written responses, and presentations. There was a clear difference in expectations between the tracks: lower expectations for students in Foundations courses and higher expectations in the upper level tracks. The team also observed differences between teachers across tracks; there was not consistency throughout the department in terms of what is expected of students in the different tracks and courses.

Neshaminy School District
K–12 ELA Program Quality Review

SECTION III: ASSESSMENT
Questions and Findings

1. What types of assessments are used in ELA classrooms? *

(* Answers to Question Two further elaborate on each of the assessments.)

The district has a published assessment schedule that details the assessments in reading and writing that will be administered in the 2013 – 2014 school year to students at the elementary, middle, and high school level. The schedule identifies the specific tests, students to whom the tests will be administered and the dates for testing (see Appendix A).

At the elementary level these assessments include the Dynamic Inventory of Basic Literacy Skills (DIBELS), the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), the Measures of Academic Progress (M.A.P.), the district–wide writing assessments using common prompts and purpose, and the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) in reading, writing and math.

At the middle level the M.A.P. and the state–mandated PSSA reading and math are continued. It is at this level that the English Quarterly Benchmark assessments are administered at the end of each of the four marking periods.

At the high school, in addition to the state–mandated PSSA and Keystone exams, the English Quarterly Benchmark Assessments are continued. M.A.P. assessments continue to be used primarily for students with special needs. The Advanced Placement (AP) English Literature and Composition Test is given in the spring of the year to students enrolled in that course.

In addition to the tests listed on the schedule of assessments a wide variety of other assessment practices were reported or observed. Many of these are related to curriculum

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materials or web-based assessments made available by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE).

At the elementary level teachers regularly use publisher-developed assessments. This is particularly true in the *Super Kids* reading program in grades kindergarten through two. The *Super Kids* assessments focused primarily on fluency providing little data about reading comprehension, writing or speaking and listening. This is a result of the curriculum's design. However, their use is limited when making judgments from the assessment about how the students are developing the other areas of the balanced literacy program including comprehension, writing, and speaking and listening. The review disclosed that there is little systematic district-wide comprehension assessment in kindergarten. The M.A.P. assessment starting in grade one does assess comprehension. We also note that a number of the assessments provided for the spelling curriculum, *Words their Way*, assess skills unrelated to building spelling competency and should be reviewed to see if instructional time were better spent. The use of publisher developed assessments tended to decrease as students move vertically through the grade levels to upper elementary, middle and high school. We noted that at the secondary level, teachers reported using the Classroom Diagnostic Test (CDT) available through the PDE's SAS website.

Formative Assessment Processes

Developing and implementing a formative assessment process is an overall district need identified in this report. In the area of teacher-made formative assessments, we noted a wide range of knowledge and application of formative assessment practices throughout the district. Teachers were observed, and they also reported in interviews, using an array of formative assessment techniques. To a significant extent there is a genuine interest on the part of teachers in assuring that students comprehend the concepts and acquire the skills being taught and to employ measures that will assure that students are engaged, acquiring

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the skills and comprehending the content. Many spoke about this in terms of focusing on students' learning the material rather than curriculum coverage. Examples of the many formative assessment techniques observed included whole class oral and signaled check-ins, over the shoulder observations, one-on-one impromptu conferences, "thumbs up "if you understand signal, rating difficulty 1 to 5, exit tickets, repeated comprehension checks, anecdotal notes, and many more.

A number of teachers reported formative processes that would be identified by W. James Popham as near future or last chance instructional adjustments. Although they did not use those terms, these are assessments used to prepare students for "higher stakes" tests such as the English Benchmark Assessments, final exams, or the PSSA. Our interviews with students, particularly at the middle and high school level, reported that formative assessment practices are common in many, but not all, of the district's classrooms.

It was observed in several classrooms that teachers regularly provide students with effective feedback coupled with the opportunity to re-engage with the content to be learned. In many cases teachers suggested adjustments to students about learning tactics or strategy. A clear example of this was where a teacher, following up on formative assessment, canceled the test scheduled for the next day. Through the formative assessment results the teacher realized many students did not fully comprehend material. More time was needed and the test was delayed to allow more direct instruction to take place.

Instructional practices often included feedback to clarify expectations as well as progress towards the current objectives. One teacher made clear and explicit connections between classroom instruction and the planned assessment with a lesson that used a jigsaw vocabulary approach. The students learned and taught each other the vocabulary words ensuring engagement. As importantly, the teacher clearly explained the class that these new words would later need to be used in the narrative essay to successfully complete the

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assignment. The teacher then checked again by having the students paraphrase to be sure they understood the expectations of the assignment and how it would be graded.

As a district revises its practice through a formative assessment process approach, it will be important to insure that all learning outcomes are as clearly stated as possible and that ways the learning will be assessed are understood by the students and teachers alike. One area of improvement would be to review the rubrics used in the program. Staff and students reported that the rubrics are not always clearly stated. Beyond the review and revision of rubrics, we recommend that exemplars be provided. The good practices sighted above can all be embedded in all classrooms through the systematic implementation of a formative assessment process.

The team examined a large number of artifacts representing the assessment practices in the ELA program grades kindergarten through twelfth grade. It was clear by the number of artifacts, their high quality coupled with the examination of the curriculum maps, and district assessment schedule that assessment data is regularly gathered and examined by the professional staff. This was confirmed in the interviews conducted with members of the professional staff. Much of student assessment the team reviewed were examples of performance-based assessments. It is often the case that writing assignments written to address a rubric clarifies expectations as to the level of quality. As the district revises the ELA curriculum maps and moves toward a systemic formative assessment process, particular care should be given to stating as clearly as possible the levels of expected achievement and the type(s) of assessment that will be used.

A prerequisite to ensuring that the assessments lead to quality work is to be sure that the assessments are valid measures of the intended learning. Few teachers have much experience in the area of test design and development. Most universities do not require any coursework in building assessments as part of professional preparation. This leaves much of the staff in need of professional development. Many important technical and practical

issues need to be understood and addressed when developing assessments. Technical issues include validity, reliability, sampling of the learning to be measured, item or test type serve as examples to be considered when designing and developing classroom assessments. Teachers need to understand that some assessments should be competency-based while others, although measuring the same learning outcomes, are intended to produce a more normative distribution of scores. Either type of test either can provide useful information for the school district but serve very different purposes. A formative assessment process will allow more summative assessments to be competency-based building success for all students in a program designed using high standards.

The literature is rich with guidance in these areas. Many easy to understand yet technically sound publications are available that provide clear steps in developing high quality teacher-made assessments. *How to Connect Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Learning* by Gareis and Grant (2008) is representative of this literature. Hopkins and Antes published a number of books that remain comprehensive guides to test construction. Well-designed assessments that truly measure the curriculum intended learning outcomes will produce assessment results that can be used with confidence to improve instruction, increase student engagement, and give direction to curricular revision.

It is not unexpected that we would find a fairly wide range of understanding and application or formatives practice among the staff in the absence of the carefully designed program to implement formative assessment district wide. When this processes is more fully realized, teachers will be better able to adjust instruction, and students their learning activities, to meet the learning outcomes identified in the curriculum. This approach coupled with the use of the district's summative assessments and refinement of the curriculum maps will, if done with fidelity, result in dramatic positive gains in achievement and student engagement. All this work should be designed to create a balanced system of assessment. The exhibit below shows the components and levels of a balanced system of assessment.

Exhibit 2: Balanced System of Assessment

	Classroom Assessment	Classroom Assessments	Common Formative Assessments	Interim or Benchmark Assessments	External Summative Assessments
Examples of Practice	Worksheets Clickers Whiteboards Exit slips Conferences	Final exams Final projects	Tasks associated with rubrics, short quizzes, common worksheets, and clickers	Quarterly tests or performances, writing samples	State tests, and ACT, SAT, and AP exams.
Formative or Summative	Very Formative	More Summative	Very Formative	More Summative	Summative
Whose Responsibility?	Classroom Teachers	Classroom Teachers	Classroom teams at each school	District teams of representative teachers	An external group of experts
Purpose?	To give immediate feedback	To give a grade	To determine if students have learned the material and how to respond	To assess curriculum, instructional strategies, and pacing	To determine whether curriculum, instructional strategies, and pacing were appropriate

A Balanced Assessment System from: Bailey, K & Jakicic, C. (2012) *Common Formative Assessment: A Toolkit for Professional Learning Communities at Work.* Solution Tree Press.

2. What processes and procedures exist to interpret assessment results to guide instruction?

In this section, the process for using the assessments to guide instruction will be described. It is organized by assessment; however, school district procedures are described throughout.

The Dynamic Inventory of Basic Literacy Skills (DIBELS)

The district has been using this assessment for five years. Consequently principals, teachers, and other professional staff are very familiar with its administration and the analysis of the results. The assessment is administered in the fall, winter, and spring. It is given to all students in kindergarten through grade two. It is administered to students in grades three through five who are not at benchmark. A teacher or reading specialist administers the DIBELs to eligible students. Immediately following the test administration, the reading specialist enters the data into University of Oregon's DIBELS database. This procedure ensures that the district's reading specialists have reviewed the DIBELS data for each student. At a later point in time, the DIBELS data is uploaded to the district's data management system, Performance Tracker, consequently, allowing each teacher to have access to the data from the DIBELS assessment. Each teacher can review the results for individual students in his/her class online. These data comprise one set of scores that is analyzed at data meetings that are scheduled monthly.

The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)

In prior years the DRA was administered to all students in grades two, three, four, and five. This academic year a new procedure has been implemented. Beginning this fall building level teams in the elementary buildings in which interviews report an active data meeting process identified students who were not at an expected level for their grade placement in the ELA program using other assessment results including previous DAR, DIBELS, M.A.P. and classroom assessments. The test is administered three times a year and is given concurrently with the DIBELS assessments. As with the DIBELS assessment, the results are used inconsistently across all elementary buildings. Those buildings with well-run and articulated monthly data meetings use the results to make adjustments in classroom instruction, and when required, to initiate special interventions.

Measures of Academic Progress (M.A.P.)

This is the second year that the district is administering the M.A.P. assessment. During the current school year at the elementary level, students in grades one through five will take this assessment. It is administered three times a year with one fall, one winter, and one spring testing session. In the 2012-13 school year teachers in grades first, second, fifth, and sixth were involved in M.A.P. assessments. This academic year teachers in grades kindergarten, third, fourth, seventh, and eighth have been added just beginning their first year using M.A.P. Teachers in their second year who have been involved in M.A.P. professional development are becoming more familiar with the many reports generated using M.A.P. results. The reports include a whole class profile as well as individual student reports. The individual report, entitled *DesCartes*, provides detailed information on a continuum of learning based on the Common Core Standards. This report gives the teacher information about major areas of the reading language arts program, for example reading strategies, and then categorizes very specifically stated skills and concepts into three categories. Those categories are: (1) skills and concepts that need to be enhanced, (2)

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skills and concepts that need continuing development, and (3) skills and concepts that can be introduced to the student at the proper instructional level. This provides a detailed set of instructional targets that are used by classroom teachers to adjust their instruction, strategies, and pacing.

The M.A.P. is also given to students at the middle school. The assessments are administered three times a year. The schedule is similar to the one used by the elementary schools. Last year it was given to students in the sixth grade and special education students only. This year students in grades seven and eight will take the M.A.P. assessments. The reports for middle school students duplicate those for the earlier grades. These reports are available online both through Performance Tracker and the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) website. Currently a professional development program using a "trainer of trainers" model is being provided for selected middle school staff.

Given its phased roll out, and its recent implementation, the M.A.P. assessment results are only beginning to be used to effectively inform changes in classroom instruction. Participants in their second year report they are increasingly using these data to better differentiate instruction for students in the classroom. The M.A.P. is used at the high school with special education students in grades nine through twelve.

English Performance Benchmark

These tests are given three times a year to students in grades six through twelve. The administration coincides with the end of the first three marking periods. At the middle level there is a single common assessment administered to all students within a grade cohort. Last year at the high school three forms of the assessment were used with each grade cohort to accommodate the tiered course structure. This year there will be only two forms per grade. One being for students enrolled in academic/Honors courses and a second enrolled in foundation courses.

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The program review revealed that last year's English Benchmark Assessments were not used systematically to improve instruction. This was a result of a combination of factors, some delay in the test scoring, and the subsequent availability of the test data on Performance Tracker. A perceived lack of alignment at several grades among others contributed to the fact that only a small minority of the teachers consistently used it to make adjustments in their instructional programs. This year there is a special emphasis on the minimizing the factors that affected practice last year. The plan is to have the assessments scored promptly, data loaded into Performance Tracker for analysis by teaching staff at the middle and high school levels, and feedback on the written portion available to students.

As noted elsewhere, considerable work needs to be done on these benchmarks so that they better reflect the new Common Core Standards being adopted by the district. It is also recommended that the benchmark assessment be reviewed further to determine their technical quality. When designing the assessment system decisions need to be made as to what degree those assessments are performing as either formative and/or summative measures.   This an essential decision as it leads to item selection that either produces a more bimodal distribution of scores to function as a competency-based test or a more normative distribution of scores that makes this assessment primarily summative in nature. Either choice will require considerable work when creating new forms of the English Benchmark Assessment aligned with the Common Core Standards.

Other Assessments

Several other assessments are used to inform instructional delivery for students. These include district-designed writing assessments administered to grades kindergarten through five. The assessments require writing opinion, informational, and narrative compositions. These assessments are given in November, January, and March. The PSSA

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writing tests are administered in grades five and eight. The results of the PSSA writing assessment are not available until the next academic year rendering it useless as a truly formative assessment tool. However, the district did identify a curricular need for a more structured writing approach through the combined analysis of the PSSA writing assessment, the district writing assessments, and classroom assessments. This has led to implementation of *Writing Fundamentals,* which will be detailed in the revised curricular maps. The program will also affect instructional practice in writing at a system level.

PSSA reading assessments are administered in grades three through eight. These tests, like the PSSA writing assessment, are more summative in nature with the results reported and available in the next academic year. These results are analyzed in combination with other assessments data to identify curricular needs. This method that triangulates data from several assessments is recommended as component of a balanced system of assessment. It will lead over time to better alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Elementary Level Data Meetings and Intervention Process

The elementary level has documented data meetings as part of their assessment plan. These data meetings are attended, at a minimum, by the principal of the teacher and literacy specialist. Others may attend as well if appropriate to determining interventions. Other professional staff involved in these meetings include literacy coaches, TaC personnel from the Bucks County Intermediate Unit, guidance counselors, reading specialists, Title I teachers, school psychologists among others.   At the data meetings, the staff attending review information for students that might include data from DIBELS, DRA, M.A.P., PSSA, or classroom-based assessments. As a result of these meetings, the team may determine that a student might need to be involved in intervention activities or that key skills need to be re--taught to selected students in the classroom setting or to the entire class. If an intervention is required, a staff member is identified to provide the selected intervention, responsibilities for data collection and monitoring are assigned, and systematic procedures

for instructional intervention is begun. Results from DIBELS, the DRA and M.A.P. as well as classroom assessments are used to determine if the student is progressing and meeting benchmarks. If successful the student can exit the intervention. If not, it triggers a discussion on further interventions that may be needed to improve a student's performance.

The district's intervention process is well documented. A flowchart with a thorough description of the stages of the process and data to be used is available. Each month students identified by this process have current data re-examined to determine if they need further interventions. As the year progresses new students may be identified relative to their need for special instructional interventions. Due to the collaborative nature of the procedure both the reading specialist, or other staff providing the interventions, and the classroom teacher can reinforce the special instructions techniques being employed. It is interesting to note, that although the intervention process is well-designed and documented, analysis of administrator and teacher interviews resulted in apparent inconsistent implementation of the data meeting process across all elementary buildings. These results appeared to differ based on elementary building leadership. Those elementary principals who were active in the process ran data meetings in which teachers came to the meetings with relevant and timely data, instructional responses were reviewed, monitored, and adjusted as needed. The data meetings were part of the school's routine. Other elementary buildings did not consistently hold data meetings, thus, consistent analysis of the plethora of data available to guide instruction appears not be to be used to support student achievement.

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3. What is the process and procedure for reporting assessment results to students, parents, and staff?

Secondary Level

At the secondary level, middle and high school, a variety of methods are used depending on the audience and assessment. For example, all teachers are required to post the results of classroom assessments to their eSchool grade book weekly. Students and parents can view these scores of graded classroom assessments online simply by logging into a student's account.

PSSA scores are reported annually to parents in a letter sent by the district office to each student's home. The letter contains students test results for the PSSA assessments taken in prior academic year. M.A.P. assessment data are typically shared at IEP or GIEP conferences on with parents.

Results from the English Benchmark Assessments are reported to parents as a grade and can be accessed through the students eSchool account. During the last academic year feedback was not systematically delivered to students concerning their performance on the English benchmark assessments. They were informed of the grade, but were given little other feedback regarding their performance on the assessment. The professional staff has identified this is as an area for improvement this year. Plans have been formulated to implement better formative processes to share the results of the test.

The staff has access to a comprehensive set of student assessment data. Student data for state and district assessments is available to teachers online through Performance Tracker. At the secondary level a midterm interim report is sent by email to the parents of students in danger of not successfully completing a quarter with a grade of C or better. Conferences are not scheduled as a regular event in the school calendar as is the case at the elementary level. Parents can request conferences through out the year to review assessment results.

Middle and High School Grade Report

The middle and high school grade report is traditional. The report is organized using a set of the columns and rows. The columns identify in which courses the student is enrolled by course number, section and name; the name of the teacher; the grades received by marking period ranging (grade range from A to F); teachers comments; final grade; and credits. The rows identify the courses being taken.   This grade report was not designed to provide information about the instructional program, but rather simply serves as a periodical report of progress stated in letter grades.

We noted during our review that there is no published grading policy for the secondary ELA program. Without such a policy, and common assessments to measure student learning, grades are not always comparable from class to class. The result can be that the same grade that is assigned to students enrolled in the same course but assigned to different classes could be based on different criteria. Inputs can differ as well with different teachers conducting more or fewer assessments, the types and level of difficulty, and so on can all affect students' grades as they move through the curriculum.

As identified in the overall need and recommendation in the area of assessment, we encourage the district to review its grading practices, particularly in grades six through twelve. Agreement needs to be reached as to what assessments will be common to all classrooms, what additional criteria may be employed by individual teachers to assign grades, and to what degree common assessments will be graded using a competency-based approach where students can have multiple opportunities on small-scale or large-scale assessments to demonstrate proficiency. The high school currently has a professional learning community looking at these issues as part of the School Improvement Process. The district should investigate how it can fold their work into the continuing development of a balanced assessment system.

Elementary Level

As with the secondary schools, the elementary level schools have a number of paths that provide the means to deliver assessment results to students and parents. At the elementary level parent conferences are scheduled. PSSA results are reported to parents via a letter sent from the district. In addition, one of the most basic methods is that the teacher marks the classroom-based assessments and returns them to the students as a routine classroom practice in both ELA programs: *Super Kids* and Pearson's *Good Habits, Great Readers*.

Progress Reports

At the elementary level, a standards-based report card is used. Student progress is reported as a performance level rather than in letter grades. Four performance levels are used to describe student progress. The levels are as follows: Level One is for a student showing little or no evidence of proficiency; Level Two is for the student showing development towards proficiency; Level Three is for the student whose proficiency is evident; and Level Four is for a student whose advance performance is evident at the time of the report. An asterisk is used to indicate that a particular skill, strategy, or area of content knowledge was not being assessed at this time.

The report cards mirrors the curriculum maps at each instructional level. The reading and language arts section of the report card is divided into the major areas of the developmental reading program addressed at that grade level. Each major area has a list of the specifically stated skills or concepts required of a student. For example, the kindergarten report card lists Phonemic Awareness as major area but also includes Comprehension, Writing, Fine Motor and Listening/Speaking. In grade one the major areas are Learning to Read Independently; Reads Critically in all Content Areas; Reading Analyzing and Interpreting Literature; Writing of Various Types in all Content Areas; and Speaking and Listening in all Content Areas. In grades three through five the major areas

are Learning to Read Independently, Reads Critically, Analyzes and Interprets Text, Speaking and Listening, and Writing. Each report has a section that allows teachers to make written comment. These categories are based on the Pennsylvania Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening, before the advent of the PA Core Standards, which have just recently been approved on the state level.

During the evaluation we learned that work has begun on revising the elementary report card to reflect the Common Core Standards. Additionally staff has reported that work is being done to improve communication about standards-based grading practices to parents and students. There is a need to clarify this marking system for students and parents. Teachers need to be consistent when assigning levels of proficiency and refine the system so that students showing accelerated growth can have it recognized on the progress report.

Addendum:

To ensure that the formative assessment process is implemented with fidelity, the district should use the following information in their design.

Formative Assessment Process Design

Formative assessment as a process is a set of intentional practices that uses assessments to inform changes in instruction or learning. Research recommends that formative assessments be embedded primarily in daily classroom instruction. Wiliam (2011) provides this definition: "An assessment functions formatively only to the extent that evidence about student achievement is elicited, interpreted, and used by teachers, learners, or their peers to make decisions about the next steps of the instruction that are likely to be better, or better founded, than the decisions they would have made in the absence of that evidence." Popham (2011) offers this definition: "Formative assessment is a planned process in which assessment-elicited evidence of students' status is used by teachers to

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adjust their ongoing instructional procedures or by students to adjust their current learning tactics."

Wiliam's recent book, *Embedded Formative Assessment* (2011) and Popham's *Transformative Assessment in Action: An Inside Look* at *Applying the Process* (2011) provide complete descriptions of formative assessment as a process and describes in detail the requisite component parts. In addition, Wiliam's book provides a summary of the extensive research that has been done over the last two decades. This research provides compelling evidence of the effectiveness of a formative assessment process in raising achievement for all students, but most especially for those with lower levels of achievement.

Although both of these authors emphasize the need to regularly assess the level of student engagement in the classroom, as well as other affective elements of an instructional plan, we strongly suggest that the work of Philip Schlechty be a critical component of the planning and implementation of the formative assessment process. Schlechty's focus on student engagement will better inform the entire process for the Neshaminy School District. His recent book, *Engaging Students: The Next Level of Working on the Work* (2011) provides a clear blueprint for increasing engagement. For over twenty years Schlechty has concentrated on designing processes that create engaging work for students in schools. His conception of levels of engagement can serve as a rubric for judging student engagement. His ten design qualities for creating engaging work can be guideposts for types of work, and the assessments to be used to judge that work in a formative assessment process.

The successful implementation of a formative assessment process also requires a well-designed professional development component. Building on the work of Wiliam and several colleagues, Bailey and Jakicic (2012) have authored a book entitled C*ommon Formative Assessment: A Toolkit for Professional Learning Communities at Work.*   This book provides a well-conceived, step-by-step process for designing a staff development program using professional learning communities to build a formative assessment process within a school district. Designing a formative assessment system using the work of the authors cited above will result in a plan that has the five essential components as identified by the

Educational Testing Services Learning and Teaching Research Center. The five essential components are:

- Clarify and share learning intentions and criteria for success for students
- Engineer affective classroom discussions questions and learning
- Provide feedback that moves learners forward
- Activate students as owners of their own learning
- Encourage students to be instructional resources for one another

Although the focus of the professional learning communities will be on the implementation of a formative assessment process, their work will certainly inform the revision of the curriculum maps. A formative assessment process will assist teachers in building deeper understanding of the Common Core Standards, identifying and sharing effective instructional and assessment practices and clarifying expectations for both teachers and students. Work done by the professional learning communities will generate essential information for the revision of the curriculum maps. DuFour and others have demonstrated the power of professional learning communities in developing within a district commitment to the type of systemic change required to implement an effective formative assessment process.

Implementing a balanced assessment system that focuses on a formative assessment process will result in the following:

- Higher achievement for all students but, most significantly, significantly larger gains for the lower achieving students in the school.
- Clearer expectations stated as learning outcomes, coupled with improved student performance will result from building a formative assessment process that uses well-conceived learning progression. Models of exemplars of learning progressions and their accompanying assessments are essential components.

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- With formative assessment as a necessary prerequisite, more effective differentiated instruction can be implemented. The work of Carol Tomlinson would be an excellent resource in building increasing and improving practice related to differentiation in the district's classrooms.
- The district can leverage the work of Philip Schlechtly and Thomas Guskey to build engagement and improve grading practices.
- Common assessments are critical to a balanced assessment system but are more summative in nature and informative.
- A balanced assessment system will provide guidance in the proper use of summative assessments for curriculum and program improvement.

Shown below is a list of websites that contain other resources related to Dylan Wiliam, W. James Popham, Philip Schlechty, Carol Tomlinson and Thomas Guskey.

Wiliam: http://www.dylanwiliam.org/Dylan_Wiliams_website/Welcome.html

Popham: http://www.ioxassessment.com/

Schlechty: http://www.schlechtycenter.org/

Tomlinson: http://caroltomlinson.com/

Guskey: http://www.schoolimprovement.com/experts/thomas-guskey/

Neshaminy School District
K-12 ELA Program Quality Review

LEADERSHIP AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Questions and Findings

1. How are teachers of the K-12 ELA program provided opportunities for professional growth? *

Professional development was greatly affected by the former teacher contract and the last five years in which the contract was not settled. Prior to the new teacher contract, district and building leadership were limited in their ability to deliver systemic and systematic professional development in which they could be assured that all required staff would attend. With the addition of the 30 minutes to the school day, there is now within the teaching day an opportunity to do ongoing job-embedded professional development activities.

It should be noted that the central office administration made it a priority to offer professional development for the Grade K-5 ELA implementation through full-day offerings and the job-embedded work of the literacy coaches and reading specialists over the last five years. For example, the selected reading programs supplied professional development for the teachers. The *SuperKids* reading program offered more professional development that was reported to be job-embedded opportunities than did Pearson. All of these workshops were supplemented and followed through via district grade level workshops, building-based workshops, and individual consults by the literacy coaches and reading specialists.

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Also, a Writing Fellow from the Pennsylvania Writing and Literature Project (National Writing Project) provided two to three days of intensive grade level professional development for grades 1--5 over the course of a 2--year period. Supplying each teacher with a Writing Binder, which contained units of study, co--designed by the writing consultant and literacy coaches, also supported this training. A binder for the reading side of the Literacy Framework had also been supplied to administrators and teachers at the start of the implementation process. Follow through was supplied by literacy coaches and reading specialists. Data did indicate that the quality of follow--through varied from building to building, as did the degree of instructional leadership. These factors appeared to affect the successful versus not successful implementation of the Literacy Framework in the elementary buildings.

New teachers reported that they appreciated the district's Induction Program and their mentors; however, the Induction Program did not directly train them in literacy.

* The Curriculum and Instruction Sections of this report also contain detailed information on K--5 ELA professional development.

2. What planning and staff development strategies are being used to keep the curriculum, teachers, and administrators up--to--date with best practices in ELA instruction?

Staff development has been impacted by the previous teachers' contract and recent five--year dispute. Despite these challenges, however, the curriculum department has remained committed to educating staff in English Language Arts. While there has been a job--embedded, ongoing professional development plan in place as part of the district's Comprehensive Plan, it was difficult to implement within the context of the teachers' contract. Nonetheless, the school district has provided professional development for its teachers. In addition to all of the professional development completed on the elementary

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level over the last five years, secondary teachers reported, as an example, that the district utilized an Act 80 day to train them on the Common Core Standards. Teachers have also been involved in the development of the curriculum maps, and will be involved in the future as the district revises these maps. In addition, the district and building leadership has supported many teachers in attending off-site professional development opportunities such as those offered by the Bucks County Intermediate Unit #22.

Administrators were provided extensive monthly professional development over a three-year period during the implementation of the K-5 balanced literacy implementation. It should be noted that some of the elementary principals acknowledged the opportunities afforded them, while others reported that they do not feel comfortable with overseeing a K-5 ELA program. These interview data focused on principals who participated in the monthly professional development. The team recommends re-educating the administrative team on the balanced literacy framework and on the new commercial programs. Any professional development that is provided for teachers should include the administrative team so that all staff receives a consistent message. In addition, it is recommended that a follow-through accountability system for instructional leaders would support and help to insure implementation across all buildings.

On the secondary level, the high school assistant principal that supervises the English department has engaged in extensive professional learning so that he can more effectively support the department. Bi-weekly professional learning community meetings have also helped to focus the department on student learning. The team encourages the district to continue investing in the high school English department by providing opportunities to learn more about instructional best practices and current trends in adolescent literacy.

On the other hand, it was reported that central office and ELA secondary teacher leadership and professional development was impacted by the high school's school improvement plan. This report once again recommends further study since both perspectives are designed to support staff. Limiting initiatives to those identified in the school improvement plan allows

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the high school leadership to stay the course over multiple years, however, with the fast-paced nature of change and initiatives impacting school districts from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, a process that accommodates both needs would benefit the high school ELA efforts.

Little data was available on ELA professional development at the middle school level; therefore, this report recommends this issue as one that deserves further study.

In terms of professional development for special educators, the data indicated a dis-connect between regular and special education. Very little coordination of programs was noted K-12. On the elementary level, it was reported that special education teachers were invited to all ELA professional development opportunities, however, conflicting demands on their schedules, the lack of communication between special education and general education, and teacher preferences resulted in inconsistent attendance.

3. How are instructional leadership and support provided for teachers?
4. What role do principals play in supporting best instructional practices in the K-12 ELA program?
(Due to the overlap in these questions, review data has been combined.)

The interview data indicated inconsistencies across the district in the areas of instructional leadership. The interview data revealed that teacher responses were based on their individual experiences within their buildings. Some felt supported by their instructional leader, appreciated ELA articles that were sent to them, and felt that they received constructive feedback on their teaching practices. At the high school level, teachers reported appreciation of their work with their assistant principal and the ELA lead teacher. Teacher reports varied from the elementary and middle schools. Some teachers indicated feelings of being isolated from his/her principal and did not perceive a support system for the ELA instruction. Others felt supported and acknowledged by their instructional leader.

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Another theme that became evident in the data was that the roles of administrative leadership and teacher leadership positions were unclear to the majority of interviewees. The names and responsibilities of positions seem to change without a vehicle for communicating with the staff members who are affected by the change. In addition, over the last five years, key central office and cabinet positions were eliminated. Job responsibilities were not eliminated, but were added to the existing administrators' job descriptions. This action resulted in individual and system overload contributing to the lack of clear communication. Furthermore, the implications of such actions were not explained to staff members.

5. In what ways does the district leadership team communicate expectations about the K-12 program to the staff?

In the past, the Director of Curriculum had no formal authority (line authority) with district building administrators. We note with the change in executive leadership that both authority and responsibility are given at the district level to implement change.

Teachers reported that the school district regularly uses email to communicate expectations about the K-12 ELA program. However, a disconnect exists between central office and building level administration. Teachers reported that their principals were not able to relay information related to the Common Core Standards and other initiatives. As is described elsewhere in this report, the team recommends a re-training of administrative staff with accountability in place to insure that teachers are then supported and communicated with effectively.

If other recommendations contained in this report are carried out, the communication between district leadership and the teaching staff will improve. Involving administrators in all staff development activities, establishing a clear vision for the K-12 ELA program,

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revising the curriculum maps – all will help create a concrete picture of what the ELA program should look like in classrooms.

6. In what ways does district leadership support teachers' ability to collaborate, co-plan, and engage in reflective practice?

The Director of Curriculum designed the district's Professional Education Report, which included the Professional Education Action Plan. This report was part of the district's Comprehensive Plan, formerly known as the Strategic Plan. This plan focused on the following goals and strategies: to align the curriculum to state or national standards by creating consensus curriculum maps to guide instruction; to introduce all staff to the Standards Aligned System (SAS) website as a PDE web tool to support and improve instructional practices to increase student achievement; to create standards-based assessments aligned to state curriculum standards; to use the Understanding by Design framework to create instructional units and action plans; to enable teachers to engage in professional conversations about student performance data, best instructional practices and standards aligned to assessments during PLCs embedded in the school day; to use research to guide the development of PLCs to individualize the model to suit district needs and resources such as demonstrating the effective use of the school day to embed PLCs; and to foster learning environments that are responsive to student differences and builds resiliency. (Please see Attachment A – Professional Education Report)

As one can see, the professional development plan focuses on standard- based curriculum and instruction, aligning curriculum and assessments, and supporting the development of professional learning communities and offers activities for supporting co-planning and collaboration. In contrast, such variables as the length of school day, the teacher contract issues, the reduction in central office personnel over the last five years, and instructional leadership norms seemed to work against the implementation of the Professional

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Education Report goals and strategies. With the advent of the new contract and the additional 30 minutes to the school day, clear efforts are being made to support teacher collaboration and engagement. These efforts at this point in time will benefit from clear guidelines as appropriately defined for each level so that principals are implementing processes that support teachers' ability to collaborate, co-plan, and engage in reflective practices.

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DuFour, R. What is a Professional Learning Community? ASCD May 2004

Gareis, C. W. & Grant, C. R., (2011) *Teacher Made Assessments: How to Connect Curriculum, Instruction and Student Learning.* Routledge.Hopkins, C. D. & Antes, R. L. (1978) *Classroom Measurement and Evaluati*on. F. E. Peacock Publishing.

Popham, W. J., (2008) *Transformative Assessment.* ASCD

Popham, W. J., (2011) *Transformative Assessment in Action.* ASCD

Schlechty, P. C. (2011) *Engaging Students: The Next Level of Working on the Work*. Josey-Bass.

Wiliam, D. (2011) *Embedded Formative Assessment.* Solution Tree Press.

Supporting Websites:

www.dylanwiliam.org

www.ioxassessment.com

www.schlectycenter.org

Appendix A

ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE FOR ALL SCHOOLS 2013-2014

ELEMENTARY		
DIBELS	Grades K, Pre -I "\ I, and 2 (Gr. 3, 4, & 5 not at benchmark)	September 16 - October 4 January 13 – 31 May 5-23
DRA 2 (Selected students as determined by data meetings)	Grades 2, 3, 4, and 5	September 23 - October 4 January 13 - February 14 May 5-30
M.A.P. Testing (Math and Reading)	Grades 1-5	September 23 - October 25 January 6 – 31 May 12-30
Writing Assessment (Opinion) Writing Assessment (Informational) Writing Assessment (Narrative)	K-5 K-5 K-5	November 4 - November 8 January 27 - 31 March 24-28
PSSA (Reading and Math)	Grades 3, 4, and 5	March 17-28
PSSA (Writing)	Grade 5	March 31 - April 4

MIDDLE		
M.A.P. Testing (Math and Reading)	Grade 6-8	September 23 - October 25 January 6 – 31 May 12- 30
English Quarterly Benchmark	Grades 6, 7 and 8	End of First Marking Period End of Second Marking Period End of Fourth Marking Period
PSSA (Writing)	Grade, 8	March 31 - Apri14
PSSA (Reading and Math)	Grades 6, 7 and 8	March 17-28

HIGH SCHOOL		
M.A.P. Testing (Math and Reading)	SPED Grades 9 - 12	September 23 - October 25 January 6-31 May 12-30
English- Quarterly Benchmark	Grades 9- 12	End of First Marking Period End of Second Marking Period End of Fourth Marking Period (Course Final Exam)
AP English Literature and Composition	AP Students	MayS AM May 8 PM
AP English Language and Composition	AP Students	May9AM May9 PM

June 27,2013

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Appendix B

Prof a1

Professional Education Action Plan

Goal: Professional Education Go**all:** Standards Aligned
Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction

Description: To align the intended curriculum, the implemented curriculum, and the attained curriculum for all students to meet the highest educational standards.

Strategy: Professional Education Goall/Strategy 1: To align the curriculum to state or national standards

Description: Create consensus curriculum maps to guide instruction.

Activity: Professional Education Goall/Strategy 1/Activity 1: Co11sensus Mapping

Description: Content areas will be mapped to align curriculum to grade level state standards.

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
		$150,000.00
Heble Geeta	Start: 8/112007 Finish: 8/30/2010	

Professional Development Activity Information

Number of Hours Per Session	Total Number of Sessions Per School Year	Estimated Number of Participants Per Year
	Name	District
3.00		Knowledge and Skills
Organization or Institution	Nesha miny School	

- Collegial conversations that support collaboration and lead to consistent delivery of standards-aligned curriculum - Increased instructional skills	5	250
	Type of Provider	Provider's Department of Education Approval Status
	• School Entity	Approved
	Research and Best Practices	Designed to Accomplish
	The work of Heidi Hayes-Jacobs and Carol Ann Tomlinson	*For classroom teachers, school counselors and education specialists:* • Enhances the educator's content <u>knowledge</u> in the area of the

https://www.estratplan.org/eSP/Reports/EditSection.aspx?Data=an8crnEUR%2bv10RGsZ... 3/9/2012