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Project #1-Current Reality

Part A: Current Reality

Dade County Schools is a school system in North Georgia and it is home to the Wolverines. It is a small school system that is based on two elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. There are several great things about this school system and it has been a great opportunity, as a teacher to be in a small and supportive environment for special education. Although technology has not been as consistent for the foundation of learning for students. The current technology in the classrooms includes every room having a promethean board, a teacher computer, and several mobile labs. There are two computer labs available for teachers and students to use but the computers are older and need to constantly be updated. Recently, the Board approved of a new program that would allow every student and faculty member to have a chrome book to increase technology in the classroom. There has been a big push for the use of Google classroom and other different technology apps. For this assignment, I had the opportunity to sit down and discuss the current climate at the middle school with my principal, Dr. Sandra Spivey.

When we started discussing what the current professional learning plan for the system, Dr. Spivey informed me how there is not a current plan for the district; although due to the recent accreditation visit from the state. There will be a more exact plan in place for technology and student engagement in the classroom and the chrome books is the beginning of the plan.   The report shared how the county needed to increase the use of technology in the classroom and how there will be a need for consistent professional development for the teachers, regarding effectively engaging students. There has been a concern wither or not if there will be enough bandwidth to maintain the use of all the computers and how each school will store the chrome books. The school's aspiration is to provide great professional development for teachers in an effective and useful manner that teachers will be able to apply and use in the classroom, as soon as the next day (Knight,2007). The students will be using the Google Chromebooks to increase their understanding and engagement in the classroom by completing more project-based learning tasks given by the teacher, who will serve as a facilitator. The goal for this will have the teachers and students to be achieving LoTi level five. When decoding the school current asportations and understanding of the LoTi level, the students are at a Level one or two.

The professional learning needs for the school is a learning process because this is the first year for the principal and the new academic coach. Due to the TKES process, the school has identified a goal for professional development to increase reading and math scored for the Georgia Milestones through student engagement. Currently, the academic coach has been sending out surveys through Google classroom to figure out where each of the teachers are struggling and need the most help in the classroom. Dr. Spivey shared how the current progress monitoring program has not been used by teachers, therefore the school is currently looking for a

new program that can identified needs through open-based tests and provide consistent program monitoring for all students. Two of the grade levels are conducting book studies to enhance their teaching in the classroom and discussion of peer observations has begun with small groups during grade level meetings. Dr. Spivey shared that she wanted the observations to be as non-threatening to each other because so often teachers can learn better from one another then having a long day full of meaningless workshops.

Since it is the principal's first year at DMS, it was unclear of what professional development that the classroom teachers experienced last year. It was inspiring to discuss with Dr. Spivey what she envisions for professional development for the teachers. Before the school year really started, Dr.Spivey sat down with every member of the faculty to get his/her impression of what has been working for the school and what had not been working for the school. This is similar to what Knight talks about in his book for coaches to do on building relationships with teachers to gain their trust and understanding (2007). After a recent PD, I asked Dr. Spivey if there was going to be a follow-up information session and she was unsure of the follow-up from the Central Office. As for recent training, there has been discussion between myself, Dr. Spivey and the academic coach for us to collaborate on a training for an upcoming Professional Learning Day. The biggest push for technology, Dr.Spivey, shared is how to use the Google Chrome books and to use Google Classroom. Funding for professional development is limited within the small school system and the current school/district improvement plan is under reconstruction so it was not available to be used for research purposes.

In the past, there has not been an incentive for teachers to improve their practice by attending professional development and it seems to be a controversial subject between administrators and teachers. While discussing it with Dr.Spivey, she shared how professional development is an opportunity for teachers to improve their craft and teachers should want to continuously improve because of the nature of how education is continually improving in all areas. But as a teacher, I feel that it can be very difficult to want to pursue professional development without some type of acknowledgement or reward from my administration, especially during the summer month; so hopefully, the district will be able to propose a happy medium to meet all needs.

As a special education teacher, I can tell how there needs to be some intense collaboration professional development between general and special education teachers to effectively maximize student engagement. There has not been anything offered this year and it has been a concern for Dr.Spivey and the academic coach. For cultural responsive professional development, we have watched a few videos and have had some discussions during grade level meetings but there has not been a consistent follow-up on how to use the information learned for the classroom. Collaborative teams for the middle school is beginning to take place, especially with an upcoming PD day and each subject area will be working together to receive some training. Dr.Spivey shared her thought process on allowing some vertical planning to start

happening in the next few months to ensure standards are being meet and consistent follow-up through out the years.

It seems to be unclear on how the impact of professional learning that has previously taken place at the school. I am excited to be apart of the change in the learning climate at Dade Middle with the new administration and the implantation of new technology in the classroom. We will be able to tell whether the professional development had improved student engagement, this time next year.

Knight, Jim. (2007). *Instructional Coaching: A Partnership Approach to Improving Instruction*. Thousand

Oaks. Corwin Press.

Part B: Standards and Recommendations:

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

The means by which teachers, administrators, and other staff acquire, enhance, and refine the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions necessary to create and support high levels of learning for all students.

Professional Learning Standard 1: Aligns professional learning with needs identified through analysis of a variety of data			
Level 4 ☐ **Exemplary**	**Level 3** ☐ **Operational**	**Level 2** **X** **Emerging**	**Level 1** ☐ **Not Evident**
Professional learning needs are identified and differentiated through a collaborative analysis process using a variety of data (e.g., student achievement data, examination of student work, process data, teacher and leader effectiveness data, action research data, perception data from students, staff,	Professional learning needs are identified through a collaborative analysis process using a variety of data (e.g., student achievement data, examination of student work, process data, teacher and leader effectiveness data, action research data, perception data from students, staff, and families).	Professional learning needs are identified using limited sources of data.	Professional learning needs are identified using little or no data.

and families). Ongoing support is provided through differentiated professional learning.			

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detailed evidence supporting your rating above – The evidence for this scoring is because the school has not specifically chosen what the professional development needs to be besides learning more about technology and incorporating it in the classroom. The district has provided the school with the Chromebooks and has provided some training to teachers who are going to train other teachers. With the new administration and the unclear expectations of what professional development looks like, there is a lot to be improved for both teachers and potential presenters.

RECOMMENDATIONS: My recommendations include administration coming up with a specific plan for the next 2 years to include technology professional development plan that covers several different elements from using Google classroom with students to developing project-based learning to incorporate the LoTi scale. Also, I think teachers need to be surveyed as to what professional development they would be interested in from collaboration with special education teachers to incorporating writing into other subjects besides Language Arts.

Professional Learning Standard 2: Establishes a culture of collaboration among administrators and staff to enhance individual and collective performance

Level 4 ☐ **Exemplary**	Level 3 ☐ **Operational**	Level 2 **X Emerging**	Level 1 ☐ **Not Evident**
Administrators and staff, as a foundational practice, consistently collaborate to support leadership and personal accountability and to enhance individual and collective performance (e.g., construct knowledge, acquire skills, refine practice, provide feedback). Teachers conduct action research and assume ownership of professional learning processes.	Administrators and staff routinely collaborate to improve individual and collective performance (e.g., construct knowledge, acquire skills, refine practice, provide feedback).	Administrators and staff routinely collaborate to improve individual and collective performance (e.g., construct knowledge, acquire skills, refine practice, provide feedback).	Administrators and staff routinely collaborate to improve individual and collective performance (e.g., construct knowledge, acquire skills, refine practice, provide feedback).

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detailed evidence supporting your rating above –
My scoring for this standard is at the Level 2-Emerging. Among the various meetings we have had throughout the school year, there has been a collaboration among colleagues on how to improve reading in the classroom and outside the classroom by providing opportunities for students to show case their knowledge in fun activities. In the upcoming months, there is the expectation to complete peer observations on one another, which will provide some constructive criticism from another teacher, rather then an administrator. This will provide the opportunity for collaboration and learning of new skills.

RECOMMENDATIONS: My recommendations would be for the staff to go over the indicators of engagement for lesson planning and to review the LoTi scale prior to the peer observations so there could be an explanation of what has been happening in the classroom. Another recommendation is for the administration to maybe pick 3-4 teachers to be used to pilot some professional development ideas rather then waste everyone times if it is not worth either the money or time. Student engagement is the issue everyone has been talking about but when sharing PD with everyone, it needs to be engaging and useful for those teachers.

Professional Learning Standard 3: Defines expectations for implementing professional learning

Level 4 ☐ **Exemplary**	Level 3 ☐ **Operational**	Level 2 ☐ **Emerging**	Level 1 **X** **Not Evident**
Administrators, teacher leaders, or both consistently define expectations for the implementation of professional learning, including details regarding the stages of implementation and how monitoring will occur as implementation progresses.	Administrators, teacher leaders, or both regularly define expectations for the implementation of professional learning.	Administrators, teacher leaders, or both occasionally define expectations for the implementation of professional learning.	Administrators, teacher leaders, or both rarely, if ever, define expectations for the implementation of professional learning.

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detailed evidence supporting your rating above – As mentioned in part A of this assignment, there has not been clear expectations on what professional development is to look like in the district so there have not been any expectations set forth to teachers and other staff members. It will be exciting to see what expectations and standards that will be used in the upcoming months.

RECOMMENDATIONS: My recommendation for this standard is for the administration to pick a few teachers and start to talk about what the goal of professional development is for the school and what expectations there will be for the classroom. Within a few weeks of this meeting, it would be great to see it implied in a few teachers' classroom to see if it would work or not.

Professional Learning Standard 4: Uses multiple professional learning designs to support the various learning needs of the staff

Level 4 ☐ **Exemplary**	Level 3 ☐ **Operational**	Level 2 ☐ **Emerging**	Level 1 **X** Not Evident
Staff members actively participate in job-embedded professional learning that engages collaborative teams in a variety of appropriate learning designs (e.g., collaborative lesson study, analysis of student work, problem solving sessions, curriculum development, coursework, action research, classroom observations, online networks). Professional learning includes extensive follow-up with descriptive feedback and coaching.	Staff members actively participate in professional learning, most of which is job-embedded, which includes multiple designs (e.g., collaborative lesson study, analysis of student work, problem-solving sessions, curriculum development, coursework, action research, classroom observations, online networks) to support their various learning needs. Professional learning includes follow-up with feedback and coaching.	Some staff members are engaged in professional learning that makes use of more than one learning design to address their identified needs.	Staff members receive single, stand-alone professional learning events that are informational and mostly large-group presentation designs.

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detailed evidence supporting your rating above – The reason for this particular rating is because I have only known of 4-5 teachers who have gone to some kind of PD for their particular subject area. Although as a school, we are trying to have more informal PD, once a month.

RECOMMENDATIONS: My recommendation is for teachers to be able to attend some type of PD, whether it be through a webinar and put the information into practice the next day or attend some training and present to other teachers and to follow-up on implementation in the classroom.

Professional Learning Standard 5: Allocates resources and establishes systems to support and sustain effective professional learning

Level 4 ☐ **Exemplary**	Level 3 ☐ **Operational**	Level 2 ☐ **Emerging**	Level 1 **X Not Evident**
Extensive resources (e.g., substitute teachers, materials, handouts, tools, stipends, facilitators, technology) and systems (e.g., conducive schedules, adequate collaborative time, model classrooms) are allocated to support and sustain effective professional learning. Opportunities to practice skills, receive follow-up, feedback, and coaching are provided to support the effectiveness of professional learning.	Adequate resources (e.g., substitute teachers, materials, handouts, tools, stipends, facilitators, technology) and systems (e.g., conducive schedules, adequate collaborative time, model classrooms) are in place to support and sustain professional learning.	Some resources and systems are allocated to support and sustain professional learning.	Few, if any, resources and systems are provided to support and sustain professional learning.

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detailed evidence supporting your rating above – AS per conversation with Dr.Spivey, we are unsure of what money has been allocated for professional development per school. It seems as if the teacher just takes a chance to see if it gets approved by the central office.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The recommendation would be for each school to have a certain amount of money ensuring the availability for teachers to be able to go to conferences that are worth the money and effort. If there were possibilities like this offered to other faculty members, there could be more in house professional development. Anytime you allow someone to have ownership in his or her choice, you will have more buy-in from other teachers.

Professional Learning Standard 6: Monitors and evaluates the impact of professional learning on staff practices and student learning

Level 4 ☐ **Exemplary**	Level 3 ☐ **Operational**	Level 2 ✗ **Emerging**	Level 1 ☐ **Not Evident**
Monitoring and evaluating the impact of professional learning on staff practices and increases in student learning occurs extensively. Evaluation results are used to identify and implement processes to extend student learning.	Monitoring and evaluating the impact of professional learning on staff practices and student learning occurs routinely.	Monitoring and evaluating the impact of professional learning on staff practices occurs sporadically.	Monitoring and evaluating the impact of professional learning on staff practices occurs rarely, if ever.

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detailed evidence supporting your rating above – The evidence for this is the constant evaluation from the academic coach and the principal to see what ash and what has not been working in the classroom. The current way to monitor and evaluate includes completing surveys from teachers and observations based on TKES standards.

RECOMMENDATIONS: My recommendation includes having an evaluation system for both teachers and administration to really be able to identify the needs and wants for the classroom for student engagement. Also there needs to be some training on how to effectively interact with students based on prior professional development and see what may or may not be working in the classroom.

Level 4 ☐ **Exemplary**	Level 3 **X** **Operational**	Level 2 ☐ **Emerging**	Level 1 ☐ **Not Evident**
Classroom practices (e.g., considering interests, backgrounds, strengths, and preferences to provide meaningful, relevant lessons and assess student progress, differentiating instruction, and nurturing student capacity for self-management) of all teachers reflect an emotionally and physically safe environment where respect and appreciation for a diverse population is evident. There are high achievement expectations for all students and teachers. The principal and other leaders provide professional learning for teachers lacking understanding of the impact that attitudes regarding race, disabilities, background, culture, high expectations, and social class of both students and teachers have on the teaching and learning process.	Classroom practices of most teachers reflect skill in communicating high expectations for each student and adjusting classroom activities to meet student needs. Respect for students' cultures and life experiences is evident through the emotionally and physically safe learning environment where students of diverse backgrounds and experiences are taught the school code of conduct (customs) to help them be successful in the school context.	Classroom practices of some teachers reflect evidence of teachers' training in understanding the impact that attitudes regarding race, disabilities, background, culture, high expectations, and social class of both students and teachers have on the teaching and learning process.	Classroom practices reflect little or no evidence of teachers' training in understanding the impact that attitudes regarding race, disabilities, background, culture, high expectations, and social class of both students and teachers have on the teaching and learning process.

EVIDENCE: In the space below, provide detailed evidence supporting your rating above – DMS does a fantastic job of providing educational opportunities for students based on their various backgrounds and experiences. The school climate for acceptance is extremely strong because of

the various and diverse needs of the students. The school is very similar to a family and each teacher has high expectations for the students, even if they have a disability.

RECOMMENDATIONS: My recommendations would be for the teaches to continue to work on having more empathy towards students and being able to continue to build a positive climate in the classroom by providing opportunities for more student centered learning. There has to be a buy in from the teachers' leader for this type of progressive growth to happen in the school. Overall, it is a great time to be at DMS because the culture will be changing for the better with new administration and the input of new technology.