Downers Grove Grade School District 58 School Improvement Plan
Lester School 2024-2025

Goal #1

Statement of Goal

Lester School will implement adopted ELA resources with integrity and fidelity in the 2024-2025 school year to enhance literacy outcomes across grade levels, in connection with the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan. Those ELA resources include UFLI Foundational Skills in grades kindergarten through 2, Benchmark Advance in grades kindergarten through 5, and Common Lit in grades 6 through 8.

Rationale for Goal

In connection with District 58's curriculum review process, the District ELA committee completed a review of instructional alignment to the Illinois state standards for ELA and the connection between our instructional practice to our ELA resources. The committee recommended new resources for K-2 foundational skills and K-8 ELA instruction. Through professional development and a consistent cycle of feedback, staff will build strong foundational skills and develop comprehensive literacy instruction across grade levels.

Implementation and Support of Goal

To achieve our building goal, we will adopt a comprehensive approach focusing on continuous professional development, collaborative teamwork, data-driven adjustments, and family engagement. We will provide opportunities for team collaboration and peer observations to enhance pedagogy. Administration will participate in classroom walkthroughs to ensure success implementation of curriculum. We will regularly analyze classroom data using tools such as Forefront and Common Lit. Based on this data, we will make informed adjustments to our teaching practices to better support student needs and enhance learning outcomes. In addition, we will keep families informed and engaged through regular updates in classroom newsletters. This will ensure that parents and guardians are aware of our goals, understand how they can support their children, and stay connected with the school's efforts. We will present professional learning opportunities to our staff focusing on individual components of the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan to ensure teacher understanding of best practices.

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Plans and Timelines to Measure Effectiveness

The success of this goal is ultimately measured by the presence of reading instruction aligned with the resources, strategies and pedagogy within the Benchmark curricula. This instructional presence will be verified using a combination of observational and feedback tools, including but not limited to principal walk-throughs and observations, teacher reflection and feedback, review of lesson plans and materials, student artifacts and outcomes, grade level collaboration and conversations and year-end review of sequence and pacing.

<u>Year-End Goal Review (to be completed June 2025)</u>

Review of Implementation

At the district level, professional learning focused on the reading curriculum was conducted during designated Professional Learning Mondays. The Instructional Coaching team, in collaboration with Curriculum Coordinators, facilitated Unit Previews for grade-level teams to promote fidelity in implementation. Additionally, building administrators received professional development on supporting reading instruction and shared information about the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan with staff during faculty meetings. These previews helped staff gain a clear understanding of the updates to state expectations for literacy instruction.

At the building level, time was intentionally set aside during Professional Learning Mondays, faculty meetings, and grade-level planning sessions for teachers and staff to engage collaboratively in discussions and professional learning around the implementation of Benchmark and UFLI resources. These sessions also provided opportunities to share effective instructional strategies and assessment practices aligned with the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan. Furthermore, staff collaborated on lesson structures and pacing to ensure instruction was responsive to the needs of all students.

Review of Impact

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The implementation of targeted professional learning and structured collaboration around literacy resources had a positive impact on student learning and engagement. As teachers deepened their understanding of the Benchmark and UFLI programs, instructional delivery became more consistent across grade levels, ensuring all students had access to high-quality, evidence-based literacy instruction.

Students benefited from more intentional lesson design, aligned pacing, and increased use of formative assessments to guide instruction. These practices allowed teachers to more effectively differentiate instruction, resulting in greater student confidence and improved reading proficiency, particularly among students who previously struggled with foundational skills.

The focus on the Illinois Comprehensive Literacy Plan also reinforced equitable practices by ensuring that instruction reflected current state expectations and addressed the diverse learning needs of all students. As a result, students experienced a more cohesive and supportive learning environment that fostered both academic growth and a love for reading.

Goal #2

Statement of Goal

Lester School will integrate the Zones of Regulation curriculum in connection with the Second Step program and the tenets of PBSS, Be Responsible, Be Respectful, Be Safe, during the 2024-25 school year, to promote social-emotional learning and positive behavior across the school. This will develop students' self-regulation, emotional awareness, and social skills, creating a supportive and safe learning environment.

Rationale for Goal

The Zones of Regulation curriculum is designed to help students develop emotional regulation skills by categorizing their feelings into four colored zones. Implementing this curriculum within a Positive Behavioral System of support framework supports the development of essential social-emotional skills, which are critical for academic and behavioral success. The connection of Zones of Regulation to PBSS offers a comprehensive approach to student support, addressing both behavioral and emotional needs.

Implementation and Support of Goal

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As part of our school improvement efforts, we are excited to integrate the Zones of Regulation framework into our community. We will include information about the Zones in our monthly parent newsletters to enhance awareness and support at home. A dedicated bulletin board will be created within the school, providing students with a visual reference for tools for self-regulations for the Zones. During our monthly lunchroom assemblies, we will discuss tools for self-regulation as well. Our staff will include information for students and parents to familiarize everyone with the Zones and the language we will use throughout the school in their biweekly communications. Consistent language will be emphasized in restorative conversations, student conferences, and reflections on unexpected behaviors. Additionally, classroom teachers will actively engage students in learning about the Zones, incorporating these concepts into their daily routines. Together, we aim to create a supportive environment that fosters emotional regulation and growth for all students.

Plans and Timelines to Measure Effectiveness

We will create a timeline for reviewing Zones of Regulation during SEL instruction in classrooms as well as reminders during monthly celebrations with all students. We will refer to the Zones of Regulation as a consistent portion of our reflection with unexpected office referred behaviors. We will share a toolbox of appropriate replacement behaviors. We will include information about Zones of Regulation in the principal newsletter to include families. We will track the quantity of offices referrals throughout this year compared to last year in hopes of decreased quantity of unexpected behaviors.

<u>Year-End Goal Review (to be completed June 2025)</u>

Review of Implementation

As part of our school improvement efforts, we began integrating the Zones of Regulation framework into our school community to promote emotional awareness and self-regulation among students. Implementation efforts included a multi-tiered communication strategy designed to involve students, staff, and families. Information about the Zones was consistently shared in biweekly classroom newsletters and monthly principal newsletters, helping to establish a common language and understanding across both school and home environments.

To reinforce these concepts visually, a dedicated bulletin board was created to highlight tools and strategies aligned with each Zone, serving as a daily reference for students. Classroom teachers incorporated the Zones into daily routines and SEL instruction, creating a supportive environment

where students could identify and regulate their emotions. Monthly lunchroom assemblies provided additional opportunities to reinforce self-regulation strategies with the entire student body.

Staff also integrated the Zones language into restorative practices, student conferences, and behavior reflections, ensuring consistency across settings. This approach allowed students to better understand the connection between their emotions, behaviors, and choices, and to develop a toolbox of appropriate replacement behaviors.

A timeline was established for continued reinforcement during SEL lessons and monthly celebrations. To monitor effectiveness, the school tracked office referral data and began comparing the number and nature of unexpected behaviors to previous years. This data-informed approach allowed the team to assess progress and adjust strategies as needed to better support student growth in emotional regulation.

Review of Impact

The implementation of the Zones of Regulation framework has had a meaningful impact on both students and the broader school climate. Students are increasingly demonstrating an ability to identify and articulate their emotions using the common language of the Zones. This shared vocabulary has empowered students to engage in more reflective conversations about their behavior and make more intentional choices when responding to emotional triggers.

Teachers report greater student engagement during social-emotional learning (SEL) lessons and an increased willingness among students to use self-regulation tools taught in the classroom. The consistent use of the Zones language across settings—classrooms, assemblies, and restorative conversations—has contributed to a more supportive and emotionally aware school environment. Students are becoming more proactive in recognizing their emotional states and selecting appropriate strategies to return to a state of readiness for learning.

At the school level, the Zones framework has supported a more unified and preventative approach to behavior. Staff have noted fewer instances of escalated behaviors, and the early data suggests a potential decrease in office referrals when compared to the previous year. The inclusion of families through newsletters and communication has extended the impact beyond the classroom, promoting continuity between home and school and reinforcing emotional regulation strategies in both settings.

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Overall, the integration of the Zones of Regulation has contributed to a positive shift in school culture, fostering a more emotionally responsive community where students feel seen, supported, and equipped with the tools they need to succeed both socially and academically.

Goal #3

Statement of Goal

Lester School will implement metacognitive strategies during math instruction and focus on the mathematical practice to construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others during the 2024-2025 school year.

Rationale for Goal

According to Hattie's research, metacognitive strategies have a high effect size of approximately 0.69. This effect size is indicative of a strong impact on student learning. Hattie defines an effect size of 0.40 as the hinge point for achieving meaningful progress, making 0.69 notably impactful. This suggests that teaching students to be aware of and control their own learning processes can significantly enhance their academic performance. Metacognitive strategies enhance cognitive skills, promote critical thinking, foster independent learning, and increase engagement and motivation enhancing cognitive skills. By incorporating these strategies into math instruction, Lester School aims to develop students' ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate their problem-solving approaches. This will lead to improved problem-solving skills and a better grasp of complex mathematical concepts, aligning with the cognitive demands of higher-grade mathematics. This initiative will not only improve students' mathematical understanding and critical thinking skills but also foster a culture of reflective and independent learning, positioning students for long-term academic and personal success.

Implementation and Support of Goal

As part of our school improvement initiative, we will implement a structured approach to enhance our mathematics instruction through the Bridges curriculum, focusing on Number Corner and Workplaces while maintaining appropriate pacing. Our instructional leadership team will engage staff in regular professional learning to enhance their understanding of and use of metacognitive strategies

in the classroom. Regular reviews of classroom data will be essential, allowing us to make informed adjustments based on insights from Forefront. We will intentionally utilize platforms such as Dreambox, IXL, and Khan Academy, with teachers reviewing data to tailor their instruction effectively. Additionally, we will foster team collaboration, creating spaces for teachers to share ideas and implementation strategies. By incorporating number sense and math problems into other subject areas, we aim to deepen students' analytical skills and uncover "hidden math," enriching their overall understanding and application of mathematical concepts across the curriculum.

Plans and Timelines to Measure Effectiveness

The Lester Instructional Leadership Team provided a baseline survey for staff to identify frequency of use of metacognitive strategies in their classroom during math in addition to their baseline understanding of metacognition and its impact on student learning. The ILT will then utilize Forefront and Bridges assessments throughout the year to check for progress and to measure the effectiveness of the use of metacognitive strategies and mathematical practice to construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others in math.

<u>Year-End Goal Review (to be completed June 2025)</u>

Review of Implementation

In the 2024–2025 school year, Lester School prioritized the integration of metacognitive strategies in math instruction, with a focus on the Mathematical Practice Standard: *Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others*. Staff began the year by completing a baseline survey to assess their understanding and use of metacognition in math. This informed ongoing professional learning sessions led by the Instructional Leadership Team.

Teachers embedded metacognitive strategies into the Bridges curriculum, particularly through Number Corner and Workplaces, while using platforms like DreamBox to personalize instruction based on student data. Collaboration among staff was encouraged through regular team meetings, where teachers shared strategies and reviewed assessment data from Forefront to guide instruction.

Additionally, math thinking was extended into other subject areas to help students apply reasoning skills across the curriculum. These efforts created a stronger foundation for reflective, student-centered

math instruction and improved the consistency and intentionality of mathematical discourse across classrooms.

Review of Impact

The integration of metacognitive strategies in math instruction had a positive impact on student learning and engagement. Students became more reflective in their approach to problem-solving, demonstrating increased ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate their thinking. This led to greater confidence in tackling complex math tasks and more thoughtful participation in mathematical discussions.

By focusing on constructing viable arguments and critiquing the reasoning of others, students developed stronger communication and critical thinking skills. They were more engaged in peer conversations and showed a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts.

The use of consistent strategies across classrooms helped create a more cohesive learning experience, while data-informed instruction supported targeted interventions. Overall, students showed growth in both their mathematical reasoning and their ability to independently navigate challenging problems.