

Rationale for District Priority 1: Establish and Implement a District-wide Vision for Instruction

Hanover will ensure all students have access to consistently excellent, standards-aligned instruction that meets their individual learning needs and supports them in demonstrating improved academic achievement.

How District SSR Findings Supported This Priority

The selection of a district-wide vision for instruction as District Priority 1 builds upon valuable insights from recent School System Reviews (SSRs) that identified opportunities to strengthen instructional quality and consistency across all classrooms:

Instructional Variability Across Classrooms

SSR data revealed that while curriculum materials are aligned, there is meaningful variability in how instruction is planned, delivered, and differentiated across classrooms. Students' learning experiences are not yet consistently excellent, and a unified instructional framework is needed to ensure equity of access to high-quality teaching.

Assessment Data Insights

Student achievement outcomes, including NWEA MAP data and state assessment results, indicate the need for more consistent, high-quality instructional practices. Specifically, Hanover Elementary School's Turnaround status and Hanover Jr/Sr High School's Priority Improvement status reflect the urgency of improving instructional outcomes across both schools.

Professional Development Opportunities

SSR findings highlighted that teachers will benefit from structured support in unit and lesson planning using backwards design, and in differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all learners, including Multi-Language Learners (MLLs) and students needing acceleration. Classroom instructional delivery was identified as an area for focused attention to maximize learning outcomes.

Building Upon Our Foundation to Enhance Student Performance

This priority builds upon our existing strengths while addressing opportunities for growth identified in the District Overview:

Strengthening Instructional Planning and Delivery

- Growth Opportunity: Reduce variability in instructional planning and delivery to ensure all students access consistently excellent teaching
- Strategy Response: District-wide professional development on backwards design, engagement strategies, and differentiation for all learners (including MLLs and students needing acceleration)

Enhancing Lesson Quality and Differentiation

- Growth Opportunity: Ensure daily lessons are planned with both content and engagement in mind and include scaffolds for diverse learners
- Strategy Response: Implementation of backwards unit planning processes with daily lesson preparation expectations and PM tools to support continuous improvement (Hanover Elementary School PM Tool; Jr/Sr High School PM Tool in development)

Expanding Curriculum Effectiveness Monitoring

- Growth Opportunity: Establish systematic monitoring of instructional quality and curriculum effectiveness
- Strategy Response: Ongoing curriculum effectiveness monitoring using assessment data and classroom walkthroughs for continuous improvement

Evidence Base for the Strategy

Backwards Design and Student Achievement

Research consistently demonstrates that when teachers plan from learning goals backward to instruction and assessment, student achievement improves. Backwards design ensures lessons are purposeful, aligned to standards, and structured to support all learners.

Differentiated Instruction and Equity

Strong evidence supports the impact of differentiated instruction and scaffolded supports on closing achievement gaps, particularly for Multi-Language Learners and students who need acceleration. Building this capacity among all teachers creates more equitable outcomes across classrooms.

Professional Learning Communities and Instructional Coaching

Research on effective professional development shows that sustained, job-embedded learning focused on instructional practices leads to meaningful gains in teacher effectiveness and student outcomes. The district's approach to structured PD and PM tool-guided continuous improvement reflects this evidence base.

Alignment with Site Context and Assets

Existing Assets to Leverage

- Committed Leadership Team: Principals and superintendent demonstrate readiness to lead instructional transformation at both Hanover Elementary School and Hanover Jr/Sr High School
- Aligned Curriculum Materials: Strategic investments in quality curriculum resources provide a strong foundation upon which improved instructional practices can be built
- PM Tools: The Hanover Elementary School PM Tool is in place and the Jr/Sr High School PM Tool is in development, creating infrastructure for data-driven continuous improvement

Building Upon Identified Opportunities

- Growth Target: Move Hanover Elementary School from Turnaround status to Improvement, and Hanover Jr/Sr High School from Priority Improvement to Improvement
- Annual Goal: By the end of 2025–2026, the Median Growth Percentile (MGP) for grades 3–5 will reach 50
- Interim Target: At the Winter NWEA MAP administration, 60% of students will meet their growth goals

Supporting Our Diverse Student Population

- Equitable Learning Outcomes: A unified instructional vision ensures all students, regardless of classroom, receive consistently high-quality instruction
- Differentiated Support: Professional development is designed to build teacher capacity in meeting the needs of MLLs, students needing acceleration, and all learners in between
- Assessment-Informed Instruction: PM tools and assessment data guide instructional decisions and continuous improvement

Strategic Implementation Rationale

The three-component approach (professional development on backwards design, lesson planning and delivery expectations, and ongoing monitoring) creates a coherent system that:

- Establishes a Shared Instructional Vision: Defines what consistently excellent instruction looks like across all classrooms in Hanover
- Builds Teacher Capacity: Equips all teachers with tools and strategies for effective planning, delivery, and differentiation
- Ensures Continuous Quality Improvement: PM tools and walkthrough data create feedback loops for ongoing instructional growth