



**Public Law 221/North Central
Association
Continuous Improvement Plan
2011 - 2014**

**Hayes Leonard Elementary School
653 Hayes Leonard Road
Valparaiso, Indiana 46385 - 5320**

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Fall 2011

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MISSION STATEMENT

Hayes Leonard School Community creates a safe and challenging learning environment to promote the highest level of achievement for all students.

SCHOOL PROFILE

COMMUNITY DATA/LOCAL INSIGHTS

Hayes Leonard Elementary School is located at 653 Hayes Leonard Road in Valparaiso, Indiana. It is a part of the Valparaiso Community Schools Corporation, which consists of eight elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school. Our corporation serves the 6,000 students living in Center Township. Center Township has a population of 38,000. At the center of the township is the city of Valparaiso. It is the county seat and a middle-class community with a population of 29,102. The median family income is \$60,637. The percent of families under the poverty level is 4.8 percent with a 3.8 percent unemployment rate. About 91 percent of our adults have a high-school diploma, and 35 percent have a college degree. Therefore, most of the income generated is by two-income families with a mix of blue-collar occupations and white-collar professionals. Fifty-five percent of our 11,559 homes are owner-occupied, and 53 percent of them have changed ownership within the past five years (city and township dates from 2000 census).

The present Hayes Leonard Elementary School was built in 1929 and was originally formed by combining the students from the old Hayes and Leonard Schools. Hayes Leonard Elementary School moved from jurisdiction of Center Township schools to Valparaiso Community Schools in 1958. Throughout the years, the school building has been remodeled five times: 1955, 1965, 1974, 1978, and 1983. It has been completely upgraded for computer and technology systems. During the summer of 1997, Hayes Leonard Elementary School was retrofitted with new windows to enhance energy efficiency and the electrical service was upgraded to accommodate air-conditioning. During the summer of 1998, carpet was replaced in the classrooms, media center, computer lab, and office area. Repairs and upgrades on our school are completed in a proactive manner by the Valparaiso Community Schools maintenance department. This results in a well maintained facility.

The Hayes Leonard School attendance district stayed relatively unchanged until August of 2001. A portion of mostly undeveloped land between 50 West and 100 West (which was formerly Hayes Leonard's) became Central Elementary School's attendance district. As subdivisions have developed in this area, this helped to balance enrollments between Central and Hayes Leonard Elementary Schools. The student population at our school is divided fairly equal between high end homes from subdivisions such as Aberdeen, Valley View, Hidden Hollow, Highlands, and Sylvan Manor with medium priced homes from Shamrock, Northwest Hills, Southwest Hills, Heritage Valley, and Coolwood developments. The large portion of Hayes Leonard parents are professionals or blue collar workers with two incomes per household. This results in a parent population that is vary supportive in

their child's education and has the available resources to provide additional educational opportunities.

Our school contains grades kindergarten through five. After completing grades kindergarten through five, Hayes Leonard students will attend Benjamin Franklin Middle School. All Valparaiso Community Schools students will attend Valparaiso High School beginning with grade nine. The student population consists of 88% White, 5% Multiracial, 3% Hispanic, 3% Asian, and 1% Black. The free and reduced lunch percentage is divided into 2% free and 5% reduced. It can be concluded from these figures that our student population is not ethnically diverse.

Educational Programs:

The school has a media center that is used by students primarily to access reading and reference material. On line media services are available for student, parent, and teacher use. A media coordinator is employed to oversee the operations of the elementary media centers as well as Hayes Leonard's. The media coordinator manages all software programs including Renaissance Place as well as track and update computer hardware. This person also oversees the technical operation of all computers, assists teachers with instruction, hardware, and software in the computer lab, and coordinates our Technology Night.

Hayes Leonard Elementary School offers an assortment of special programs. Programs from the Porter County Education Service include speech, learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, and other health impaired. A part-time reading teacher focuses on teaching Phonemic Awareness with kindergarten children and reviewing Phonemic Awareness in grade one.

The teaching staff consists of fourteen full-time classroom teachers. Part-time teachers are shared with other schools for music, art, and physical education. Hayes Leonard has a special education teacher who services students identified for speech and a part-time social worker. Section 504 compliance is managed by the building principal also employed by the corporation.

Hayes Leonard has a full time building administrator, secretary, and two custodians. The rest of the current staff consists of part-time positions that include: eight classroom instructional aides, a special education paraprofessional, one shared school nurse, and two food service personnel.

Description of Curriculum:

The teachers of the Valparaiso Community Schools have created a very well defined curriculum at all grade levels of the school corporation. Teachers in grades kindergarten through grade twelve have curriculum guides that have been written by faculty curriculum committees to help insure that the document matches the demands of the Indiana Academic Standards and the local needs of our students. Valparaiso Community School's curriculum is a Standards Based Curriculum. A five year cycle has been adopted to develop curriculum, adopt textbooks, and write assessments for the curriculum. With this curriculum in hand, teachers form throughout the school corporation can direct their instruction to the standards created by the State of Indiana that are crucial to the success

of all children. Classroom instruction in Valparaiso is therefore guided by the curriculum and the academic state standards, not the textbook publishers.

Safe and Disciplined Learning Environment:

Hayes Leonard Elementary School has a safe and disciplined learning environment. Emergency procedures for fire, tornado, and earthquakes have been developed. Code Yellow and Code Red procedures are a part of the Emergency Preparedness Plan to be used with severe disruptions in the school. These are shared with all staff members and practiced in accordance to state mandates. A Faculty and Staff Crisis Response flip chart with emergency procedures is available in every classroom. Hayes Leonard School's Safe School Plan is reviewed and updated annually.

Students are supervised before entering the building in the morning and outside after dismissal procedures begin. Teachers are at their classroom door when students arrive in the morning and stay with the students during the process of dismissal in the afternoon. Students are to have notes from parents if they are going somewhere after dismissal that is different than their usual place. All visitors and parents must stop at the front office to sign in as well as get a visitor badge before being allowed to enter further into the building.

Hayes Leonard has a set of rules and expectations for all students. These are based on the Life Goals of Treating People Right and Doing the Right Thing. Teachers use these rules while developing their classroom rules and consequences. Common behavioral consequences received by students include loss of recess, a note home to parents, a phone call to parents, a LifeSkills discipline report describing the problem, and after school detention (Night Owl.) Severe discipline issues such as fighting and disrespect are referred to the principal. However, most students make good decisions and are well behaved.

The Hayes Leonard staff has made the CASS program a priority. Eight teams comprised of Kindergarten through grade five students with a designated color and flag are selected at the beginning of each school year. Each team is assigned CASS Club Coaches (teachers and instructional aides) that meet with their team once a month to follow through with an activity lesson that is coordinated with each month's CASS theme.

The staff is learning more about relational aggression and helping students identify it, name it, and deal with it more successfully. Author Trudy Ludwig made presentations to staff, parents, and children in three separate settings about using literature to help teach children tools to use to be safe from bullying. The new health curriculum will have many material and experiences for children in the area of a "healthy life". Drug education and drug abuse are a part of the curriculum. Changing Families and Beginning Alcohol and Addiction Basic Education Studies (BABES) are programs used to give students opportunities to enhance their social, behavioral, and emotional development.

Attendance:

Hayes Leonard Elementary School student attendance rate has stayed above the state average.

1999 - 97.7%	2003 - 97.8%	2008 – 96.70%
2000 - 97.6%	2004 - 97.7%	2009 – 97.00%
2001 - 97.6%	2005 - 98.2%	2010 – 96.20%
2002 - 97.5%	2006 - 97.7%	
	2007 – 96.70%	

Our goal is to maintain pace with the 95 percentile for attendance in the state of Indiana. A tardy policy was developed so that this problem could be communicated with the parents if a situation was developing. This practice has decreased student tardiness problems. Practices concerning chronic student attendance problems include contacting parents when students are having difficulty with their attendance. Follow up letters are sent when necessary. Finally, Porter County Juvenile Probation Office’s Project Attend procedures are put into place.

Increasing Parental Participation:

Hayes Leonard parents are extremely supportive of the school. The Parent Teacher Organization is very involved in a variety of projects and programs for the students. They purchase instructional equipment, playground equipment, sponsor programs such as Meet the Masters, study skills, assemblies, and fifth grade farewell.

The parents also contribute time and effort for classroom instruction. Classroom teachers have parent volunteers who help with a variety of tasks. Parents come to school to help with classroom learning centers, listening to children read, Junior Great Books, Junior Achievement, and assisting students with mathematics.

Communication among the classroom teachers and parents takes place on a regular basis. E-mail messages, phone calls, and conferences are the norm. The vast majority of Hayes Leonard parents will meet and conference with teachers throughout the school year. Valparaiso Community Schools has purchased the grade reporting software GradeQuick. Teachers are keeping their grades electronically and using the Ed Line Parent Portal. Teachers post their grades on the website for parents to view and stimulate communication on how the student is progressing.

Hayes Leonard teachers and parents will be focusing on improving reading comprehension. Our goal is that all students will develop a range of strategies to improve their reading comprehension. Teachers will discuss our reading goal and what expectations they have for the students at each grade level.

Parents are involved with other activities. The Meet the Masters program has parents going to each classroom to teach about artists and their work. This is done in conjunction with the art teacher who may introduce or follow up on the work by the parents in this area. Other parent sponsored or assisted activities include Technology Night, Book Fair, Grandparent’s Day, Friday Night Live, and Field Day. The total amount of hours donated by parents is tremendous. Parents also serve on various district committees as appropriate, such as the District’s Textbook Adoption Committee and the VCS Strategic Planning Committee.

Technology as a Learning Tool:

The use of technology as a learning tool is constantly evolving. Valparaiso Community Schools has formed a Technology Committee which includes classroom teachers, principals, and the IT administrator. This committee reviews the software available, the training that teachers are receiving, projects teachers are using with students, and the hardware available. This review will provide a baseline for developing our future technology vision.

Hayes Leonard has four mobile computer labs. There are Dell workstations available in the media center. Teachers have a laptop that is wired so that computer instruction can take place in the classroom with the teacher using the large interactive white board and document cameras for student viewing. Each student has a personal electronic locker to save their work so that it can be pulled up in the lab or classroom for completion.

Valparaiso Community Schools has developed grade level technology proficiencies for teachers to use in teaching technology as a tool and evaluating student progress. A student report for parents is generated two times a year to give summary evaluation of a child's progress with the grade level standards in grades three, four, and five. These proficiencies are available upon request.

Core pieces of software have been purchased for teachers to teach mathematics, language arts, and technology standards. Teachers often use the white boards and programs such as KID Pix to teach story illustration, counting money, shapes, patterns, and fractions. Inspiration is used to teach reading comprehension, story elements, and developing the writing process. Hyper Studio, Inspiration, and Kidspiration are also available on all computers to develop large group presentations. Other programs help students learn phonics, grammar, parts of speech, classification, addition, subtraction, and sorting. Hayes Leonard has added Accelerated Reader, STAR Reading, and STAR Math for all students to use.

Cultural Competency:

An analysis of Hayes Leonard's student population reveals the following subgroups:

- Ethnicity: White-88%, Hispanic-3.6%, Black-1%, Multiracial-5.3%, and Asian-2.8%
- ELL: 2.2%
- Special Needs population: 14.2%
- Free-Reduced lunch: 6.7%

Hayes Leonard Elementary School continues to evaluate and improve the cultural competency of the school community, including the students, parents, and school staff. Annually, ISTEP+ scores for the different groups within the school are identified. Scores for minority, racial, ethnic, exceptional learners, and socioeconomic groups specifically are identified and strategies are developed to assist all students who are not successful. In

addition to ISTEP+ scores, school staff perceptions, parent input, and student initiatives have demonstrated a school cultural awareness of respect for all others.

Hayes Leonard Elementary School has implemented several initiatives to promote cultural awareness and competency. Some examples of these are:

- Grade level teachers identifying strategies to assist with remediation of weak skills that can be practiced as a regular classroom activity,
- Deficiencies for special education students are identified, and individual educational plans address ways to help them become successful.
- English Language Learners (ELL) students are identified, receive special instruction from paraprofessionals, and follow individually developed schedules to help their learning opportunities.
- Creating a Safe School (CASS) teaches students awareness of cultural differences and awareness of relational aggression as well as tools to help them be more successful.
- The Project Wisdom character education program is coordinated with our CASS activities so students hear the positive messages about themselves, their family, and their world.

Hayes Leonard faculty and staff recognize and celebrate our diversity throughout our curriculum, teaching strategies, and various activities. We incorporate many activities through our social studies and literature readings, projects, and activities. Music and art activities also provide us wonderful opportunities to explore and express diverse cultures. We encourage students and the community to share holidays, traditions, and celebrations.

STUDENT ISTEP+ DATA

The results of the data has revealed discussions of our students' strengths and weaknesses. The data was used to come to a conclusion of areas that need to be addressed.

Trend data and test data analysis follow:

HAYES LEONARD TREND DATA OF STUDENTS PASSING ISTEP+

Grade 3 Language Arts

2002	87%
2003	94%
2004	98%
2005	93%
2006	92%
2007	84%
2008 (Fall)	93%
2009 (Spring)	93%
2010	93%
2011	96%

Grade 3 Math

2002	74%
2003	94%
2004	98%
2005	93%
2006	88%
2007	84%
2008 (Fall)	88%
2009 (Spring)	89%
2010	85%
2011	94%

Grade 4 Language Arts

2003	88%
2004	92%
2005	91%
2006	92%
2007	93%
2008 (Fall)	77%
2009(Spring)	79%
2010	88%
2011	86%

Grade 4 Math

2003	85%
2004	94%
2005	96%
2006	83%
2007	89%
2008 (Fall)	82%
2009 (Spring)	74%

2010	93%
2011	78%

Grade 5 Language Arts

2003	80%
2004	91%
2005	91%
2006	95%
2007	85%
2008 (Fall)	96%
2009 (Spring)	94%
2010	80%
2011	92%

Grade 5 Math

2003	81%
2004	88%
2005	89%
2006	95%
2007	85%
2008 (Fall)	94%
2009 (Spring)	94%
2010	93%
2011	97%

Conclusions of Student ISTEP+ Data:

The Hayes Leonard faculty is committed to improving the percentage passing of all students taking the ISTEP+. Our goal of 90 percent of the students passing ISTEP+ will be accomplished with in-services, CLASS coaching sessions, literacy workshops, staff development opportunities, teachers implementing best practice strategies in all classrooms, and implementing our results-based professional development. Furthermore, the number of students that score a pass plus on ISTEP also needs to increase.

DATA ANALYSIS CONCLUSIONS

The decision was made as to what assessment instruments would be used to determine the students' progress. The three assessment pieces are ISTEP+ for students in grades three through five, STAR Reading given for students in grades one through five, and NWEA for students in grades one, two and kindergarten. These assessments will be analyzed for learning gaps. There is not a significant population of special education students, free and reduced lunch students, ENL students, or ethnic diverse students to draw any conclusions for learning gaps or track trend data. However, the results gathered from these assessments indicate lower scores in reading comprehension than the expectations the staff has set to be an exemplary school as determined by Public Law 221.

Indiana has started to require students that cannot pass the IREAD state assessment in grade three to be retained. Hayes Leonard has begun to take steps to implement best practice strategies to improve students' reading comprehension across the curriculum.

2011 - 2014 ASSESSMENT MATRIX

SCHOOL Hayes Leonard Elementary

GOAL All students will show growth in the area of reading comprehension across the curriculum.

CHECK THE CATEGORY THAT APPLIES

Entire Grade Level

Disaggregation Category: (If disaggregated data is used then circle the applicable group)

S.E.S. ELL Spec.Ed Gender Ethnicity Top Quartile Bottom Quartile

(Describe the group being disaggregated [examples SES – Free and reduced lunch students])

ISTEP+ Percent Mastery

**For Number Sense, Computation, Algebra and Functions,
Geometry, Measurement, Data Analysis and Problem Solving**

Grade 3, 4, & 5

Name of Assessment/ Subtest	GRADE	Pre-test Year (Labeled "Comparison Group" in NCA software"),	Interval years (generally left out of the final documentation but these are useful for the school in observing trends),				Post-test Year (Labeled "Your Group" in the NCA software),
		Score attained and type of score report	Score attained and type of score report				Score attained and type of score report
ISTEP+ Reading Comprehension	3	Spring 2011	Spring 2012	Spring 2013	Spring 2014		
		Type: Percent Mastery (ASAP Website)					
ISTEP+ Reading Comprehension	4	Spring 2011	Spring 2012	Spring 2013	Spring 2014		
		Type: Percent Mastery (ASAP Website)					

2011 - 2014 ASSESSMENT MATRIX

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**ISTEP+ Percent Mastery
For Number Sense, Computation, Algebra and Functions,
Geometry, Measurement, Data Analysis and Problem Solving
Grade 3, 4, & 5**

SCHOOL Hayes Leonard Elementary

GOAL All students will show growth in the area of reading comprehension across the curriculum.

CHECK THE CATEGORY THAT APPLIES

Entire Grade Level

Disaggregation Category: (If disaggregated data is used then circle the applicable group)

S.E.S. ELL Spec.Ed Gender Ethnicity Top Quartile Bottom Quartile

(Describe the group being disaggregated [examples SES – Free and reduced lunch students])

Name of Assessment/ Subtest	GRADE LEVEL	Pre-test Year (Labeled “Comparison Group” in NCA software”),	Interval years (generally left out of the final documentation but these are useful for the school in observing trends),				Post-test Year (Labeled “Your Group” in the NCA software),
		Score attained and type of score report	Score attained and type of score report				Score attained and type of score report
ISTEP+ Reading Comprehension	5	Spring 2011	Spring 2012	Spring 2013	Spring 2014		
		Type: Percent Mastery (ASAP Website)					

2011 - 2014 ASSESSMENT MATRIX

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SCHOOL Hayes Leonard Elementary

GOAL All students will show growth in the area of reading comprehension across the curriculum.

CHECK THE CATEGORY THAT APPLIES

 Entire Grade Level

Female Disaggregation Category: (If disaggregated data is used then circle the applicable group)

S.E.S. ELL Spec.Ed Gender Ethnicity Top Quartile Bottom Quartile

_____ (Describe the group being disaggregated [examples SES – Free and reduced lunch students])

ISTEP+ Percent Mastery

**For Number Sense, Computation, Algebra and Functions,
Geometry, Measurement, Data Analysis and Problem Solving
Grade 3, 4, & 5**

Name of Assessment/ Subtest	GRADE	Pre-test Year (Labeled “Comparison Group” in NCA software”),	Interval years (generally left out of the final documentation but these are useful for the school in observing trends),				Post-test Year (Labeled “Your Group” in the NCA software),
		Score attained and type of score report	Score attained and type of score report				Score attained and type of score report
ISTEP+ Reading Vocabulary	5	Spring 2011	Spring 2012	Sept 2013	Sept 2014		
		Type: Percent Mastery					

2011-2014 ASSESSMENT MATRIX

ISTEP+ Percent Mastery
For Number Sense, Computation, Algebra and Functions,
Geometry, Measurement, Data Analysis and Problem Solving
Grade 3, 4, & 5

SCHOOL Hayes Leonard Elementary

GOAL All students will show growth in the area of reading comprehension across the curriculum.

CHECK THE CATEGORY THAT APPLIES

Entire Grade Level

Disaggregation Category: (If disaggregation data is used then circle the applicable group)

S.E.S. ELL Spec. Ed Gender Ethnicity Top Quartile Bottom Quartile

_____ (Describe the group being disaggregated [examples SES – Free and reduced lunch students])

Name of Assessment/ Subtest	GRADE	Pre-test Year (Labeled “Comparison Group” in NCA software”), Score attained and type of score report	Interval years (generally left out of the final documentation but these are useful for the school in observing trends), Score attained and type of score report	Post-test Year (Labeled “Your Group” in the NCA software), Score attained and	Statistical Engine Used (NCE, Percent Correct, Percentile Rank, Raw Score, Rubrics)	Change in Standard Units (SU) Pre-Post
NWEA	K	Year January 2012 Score	January 2013	January 2014	Levels of Attainment with Means	
		Type: Mean				
NWEA	1	Year January 2012 Score	January 2013	January 2014	Levels of Attainment with Means	
		Type: Mean				
NWEA	2	Year January 2012 Score	January 2013	January 2014	Levels of Attainment with Means	
		Type: Mean				
NWEA	3	Year January 2012 Score	January 2013	January 2014	Levels of Attainment with Means	
		Type: Mean				
NWEA	4	Year January 2012 Score	January 2013	January 2014	Levels of Attainment with Means	
		Type: Mean				
NWEA	5	Year January 2012 Score	January 2013	January 2014	Levels of Attainment with Means	
		Type: Mean				

2011- 2014 ASSESSMENT MATRIX

SCHOOL Hayes Leonard Elementary

GOAL All Students will show growth in the area of reading comprehension across the curriculum.

CHECK THE CATEGORY THAT APPLIES

Entire Grade Level

Disaggregation Category: (If disaggregated is used then circle the applicable group)

S.E.S. ELL Spec. Ed Gender Ethnicity Top Quartile Bottom Quartile

_____ (Describe the group being disaggregated [examples SES – Free and reduced lunch students])

**ISTEP+ Percent Mastery
For Number Sense, Computation, Algebra and Functions,
Geometry, Measurement, Data Analysis and Problem Solving
Grade 3, 4, & 5**

Name of Assessment/ Subtest	GRADE	Pre-test (Labeled "Comparison Group" In NCA software") Score attained and type of score report	Interval years (generally left out of final Documentation but these are useful for the school in observing trends), Score attained and type of score report	Post-test Year (Labeled "Your Group" in the NCA Software), Score attained and type of score report	Statistical Engine Used (NCE, Percent Correct, Percentile Rank, Raw Score, Rubrics)	Change in Standard Units (SU) Pre-Post
STAR Reading	1	Year January 2012	January 2013	January 2014	Levels of Attainment with Means	
		Score:	Score:			
		Type: Scale Score	Gain			
STAR Reading	2	Year January 2012	January 2013	January 2014	Levels of Attainment with Means	
		Score:	Score:			
		Type: Scale Score	Gain			
STAR Reading	3	Year January 2012	January 2013	January 2014	Levels of Attainment with Means	
		Score:	Score:			
		Type: Scale Score	Gain			
STAR Reading	4	Year January 2012	January 2013	January 2014	Levels of Attainment with Means	
		Score:	Score:			
		Type: Scale Score	Gain			
STAR Reading	5	Year January 2012	January 2013	January 2014	Levels of Attainment with Means	
		Score:	Score:			
		Type: Scale Score				

SCHOOL ACTION PLAN

GOAL STATEMENT

After a review of the student data found in the previous pages, the faculty and administration of Hayes Leonard Elementary School has selected the following goal for the PL221/NCA Cycle of 2011 – 2014. All students will develop a range of strategies to improve their reading comprehension across the curriculum.

RESULTS BASED STAFF DEVELOPEMENT PLAN

Goal Determination:

Hayes Leonard teachers reviewed the data that was available. Discussions centered around the high scores that Hayes Leonard students typically achieve on ISTEP+. However, three good facts were concluded from these discussions: Even though most students score above the state average there is still room for improvement, and teachers need additional strategies to help students develop better comprehension skills.

Staff development will focus on our PL 221/NCA reading comprehension goals. The approach will be to use the CLASS state approved improvement planning model through the state of Indiana

CLASS is the accumulation of brain research, common sense, and action research using problem teaching strategies and the ability to create a school culture and community that is nurturing, free of threat, and conducive for learning. The process of instruction that teachers will use to help our students develop improved comprehension skills will include:

- Analyzing data to drive instruction
- Organizing standards into teachable language for students
- Delivering direct instruction of standards in varies ways to meet needs of students
- Processing content and skill to help students create mental programs
- Assessing progress through every step of instruction
- Evaluating individual work connected to inquiry based student performance tasks

By taking each step as teachers design lessons, they will be able to create comprehensive lesson plans that are meaningful, engaging, and accountable to the state standards and our PL 221/NCA goal.

Our focus is that students read and comprehend texts of consistently increasing complexity. Teachers have reviewed and applied grade level standards, periodically assessed student growth, and adjusted their instruction to meet the needs of all students.

Intentional instruction this year focused on student needs such as making inferences, determining main idea. Always our instruction strives for higher order and critical thinking skills students need as they progress through school.

Our goal for continued growth is to be cognizant of district, state, and core standards offering students the skills and resources they need to achieve. Some of those resources are the Literacy Links, a C.L.A.S.S. tool ensuring that all language arts standards are reviewed each day. That review is seen in the Hallway Greetings, the Welcome Messages, and daily Agendas. These are intentional tools providing daily skill examples.

To achieve our goal the following initiatives will occur:

- 1. Review the district, state, and core standards for Language Arts.**
- 2. Map the curriculum into grading periods with systematic review**
 - **Direct Instruction**
 - **Mini Lessons**
 - **Literacy Links**
 - **Hallway Greeting**
 - **Welcome Message**
 - **Agenda**
- 3. Assess strategies that work this year and in the past.**
 - **What does the data show?**
 - **What skills need more attention?**
- 4. Determine time engaged in literacy instruction and how it matches with the required, uninterrupted 90 minute instructional block of time.**
 - **Tiered Instruction**
 - **Whole group**
 - **Small group**
 - **Individual**
 - **Word Work**
 - **Partner Read**
 - **Self Sustained Reading**
 - **Listening Center**
 - **Response to Reading**
 - **Reader's Theater**
 - **Reader's Workshop**
 - **Genre / Author's Study**
- 5. Assessment**
 - **Rubrics**
 - **Checklists**
 - **Self assessment**
- 6. Goal Setting**

- **School Wide**
 - **Teacher goals**
 - **Classroom goals**
 - **Student goals**
- 7. Thinking about Connections**
- 8. Connect with the students.**
- **Use current events**
 - **Cass skills**
 - **Create an inviting climate**
 - **Hallway Greeting**
 - **An agenda that is more than a schedule**
 - **Procedures written to include the CASS skill of the week / month**
- 9. Connect the minutes and standards.**
- **Review important vocabulary words from the standards.**
 - **Incorporate the vocabulary words into the Hallway Greeting, Welcome Message, and Agenda.**
- 10. Connect the brain research.**
- **Provide movement**
 - **Provide choice**
- 11. Connect the dots.**
- **Determine what assessment is appropriate for the skill.**
 - **Capture student progress in practical and meaningful ways.**
- 12. *Say It* – Setting the stage for learning. Creating an inviting climate when students get clues to what is in store for the day.**

The Welcome Message is written with important skill vocabulary such as student's names, compound words examples of similes or metaphors along with connections to what students will learn today such as genre or author's study, modeling letter construction, content skills, or CASS skills. These connections link to episodic memory. By adding students' names or connecting to current or local events engages the emotional memory for students creating a personal connection. Procedures are written with the same intent. Procedures can be written with the students in modeled writing fashion; an intentional lesson with literacy skills embedded. (For primary students, any written lesson can be a phonics lesson.)

Each teacher was provided with a common core standards vocabulary sheet divided into the quarter it is to be taught. This is another tool to use as a reminder to incorporate this vocabulary words in our written and spoken word each day.

Play It – What processing strategies will be used to help students retain the information.

Connect to the brain research by adding movement and choice activities. During our professional development time teachers experienced Quiz, Quiz, Trade to practice and process similes and metaphors. Quiz, Quiz, Trade is a Spencer Kragan collaborative structure, already prepared, allowing for a quick and easy strategy for teachers to have students up, moving around, and processing information. This is another opportunity for a quick informal assessment as the teacher can check for understanding and determine if reteaching is required.

Stamina needs to be taught and revisited often. Students are building stamina to keep on task. Kindergarten students are working on building 12 minutes of reading stamina by the end of the year. Fifth grade students are building their own predetermined length of stamina.

Some organizational strategies for the 50 minute portion of the 90 minute block is to have students reading to themselves, buddy reading, working on words, response writing, or listening to reading. For each of these strategies, procedures are written so that students know exactly what they are to be doing and exactly what the teacher is doing such as small group or individual instruction. Written procedures are crucial to avoid any confusion and reteaching procedures is done for specific trouble areas. Such as, “Class, we need to revisit number one on our procedure chart because that isn’t clear what that looks like, sounds like and feels like for success.”

Play It – Choice activities during the literacy block can be the color of sticky note paper used to mark a passage, ways to respond to writing in their literacy journal, which skill they work on first. Choice, even small in nature, gives students some sense of control over their work time. For our professional development time together, teachers had choice in which strategies and black line matters they wanted for their students. Teachers left with examples they could use immediately.

Relay it – What can students produce to “show what they know”? One of the choice activities was making a “little book” that could be used for retelling a story, assessing beginning, middle, or end.

Weigh It – How will the information be assessed?

Connecting the dots with the appropriate skills taught that are tied to the Indiana Academic Standards, implementing best practice instructional strategies in the classroom, setting baseline benchmarks through data points, and using assessment results to improve student achievement is ongoing and never ending.