

Dallin Elementary School Improvement Plan

Arlington Public Schools



Dallin School Information

Principal: Thad Dingman

Assistant Principal: Samantha Karustis

School Council Members:

Heidi Rosenberg (parent 3rd), Adam Boyd (parent 4th), Mana Joshi (parent 1st, 5th), Pam Watts-Flavin (Robbins Library, community rep), Joe Solomon (PTO president), Lynne Andaloro (3rd Grade teacher), Ann Leblanc (Kindergarten teacher), Kam Dennis (Music teacher)

Members of Instructional Leadership Team (ILT):

Ali Lewis (Kindergarten), Liz Farese (First Grade), Candace Lillis (Second Grade), Marissa Chapman (Third Grade), Christina Hughes (Fourth Grade), Jennifer Bench (Fifth Grade), Rye Daily (PE), Kam Dennis (Music), Jacquelyn Aureli (ELA Coach), Carolyn Snook (Math Coach)

APS Vision Statement

The vision of the Arlington Public Schools is to be an equitable educational community where all learners feel a sense of belonging, experience growth and joy, and are empowered to shape their own futures and contribute to a better world.

APS Mission Statement

The Arlington Public Schools focuses on the whole child to create inclusive and innovative learning opportunities for all students, values diverse identities and ways of learning, prepares all staff to maintain high expectations while providing necessary supports, and sustains collaborative partnerships with families and the community.

APS Strategic Priorities

Arlington Public Schools Strategic Priorities:

1. **Ensuring Equity and Excellence:** The Arlington Public Schools will ensure equity, excellence, and access to rigorous learning experiences for all students. All graduates will be prepared to achieve their choices of post-secondary education, career, and community contribution.

- Valuing All Staff: The Arlington Public Schools will recruit and retain an excellent and diverse workforce by creating a collaborative and supportive culture for all staff; providing high-quality and relevant professional development; expanding opportunities for leadership and shared decision-making; and prioritizing representation, diverse perspectives, and expertise.
- 3. *Improving Infrastructure, Operations, and Sustainability:* The Arlington Public Schools will maintain a system of schools that is safe, well-maintained, sustainable, and fiscally responsible, with the appropriate tools and resources to support best educational practices and an optimum teaching and learning environment.
- 4. **Sustaining Collaborative Partnerships:** The Arlington Public Schools will partner collaboratively with families in meeting the educational needs of all students; facilitate consistent two-way communication; and provide timely, transparent, relevant, and accessible information to all stakeholders.

Five-Year Strategic Plan

Dallin School Values

Dallin Elementary will always prioritize being a safe and supportive school for all students and adults. We will accomplish this by continuing to focus our school-wide goals on academic growth and advancing the social-emotional wellness of our students, staff, and families in support of continued success for all students.

The Dallin community continuously connects our work to Dallin's three Core Values:

Courage - We have the **Courage** to try things that are hard.

Respect - We demonstrate **Respect** for others, ourselves, and our environment.

Responsibility - The Dallin community takes **Responsibility** for our thoughts and actions.

Dallin Elementary Educational Mission

The Dallin community prioritizes healthy relationships as the foundation of learning and teaching. As in all healthy relationships, students, teachers, and families will learn from one another. We will encourage helpful feedback that supports our growth and development. We will all recognize the power of our language as well as our actions. We will define what makes a classroom culturally responsive. And, we will concentrate on wellness and mindset because we believe everyone has the ability to grow, learn, and achieve at high levels.

2023 Dallin Data Portrait

Data Sources:

- Dallin Elementary Fall 2023 Enrollment Demographics
- 2023 Accountability Rating
 - o MCAS Spring 2023, ELA, Math, Science
 - Subgroup Trends and Student Growth Percentile Distribution
- DIBELS 8th Edition K-3rd Grade Benchmark Assessments
- Panorama Spring 2023 Teacher Survey Belonging and Rigorous Expectations
- Panorama Spring 2023 Student Survey

Dallin Elementary Fall 2023 Enrollment Demographics

Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity (2022-23)				
Race	% of School	% of District	% of State	
African American	1.4	3.3	9.4	
Asian	12.8	12.6	7.3	
Hispanic	7.2	7.3	24.2	
Native American	0.0	0.0	0.2	
White	66.7	68.1	54.4	
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0.0	0.1	0.1	
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	11.8	8.5	4.4	

Title	% of School	% of District	% of State
First Language not English	9.9	13.4	25.0
English Language Learner	3.9	5.0	12.1
Low-income	7.7	10.5	42.3
Students With Disabilities	9.4	16.5	19.4
High Needs	17.3	28.2	55.1

2023 Accountability Rating and MCAS

Dallin Elementary continues to perform well on the MCAS tests when compared against the state and within the district. Our school's accountability rating has continuously placed us in the top 15% of the state when comparing outcomes for all learners. Additionally, students who have performed in the lowest 25% of the class in previous years have made gains when looked at year over year, which indicates both classroom and tiered supports are providing an appropriate safety net for students. We do need to interrogate the measurable gap between our students with disabilities in both ELA and mathematics for concepts and skills that can be more targeted in their Individual Education Program. MCAS scores are a year late in understanding these learners, so we will need better systems to more closely monitor progress during the year.

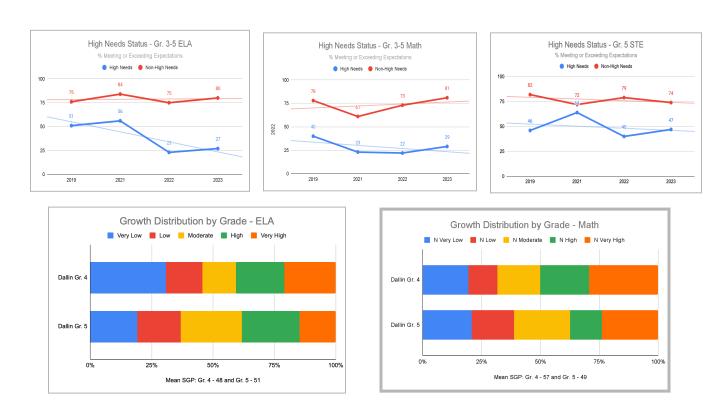
Overall classification	Reason for classification
Not requiring assistance or intervention	Meeting or exceeding targets
Progress toward improvement targets	Accountability percentile
80% - Meeting or exceeding targets	87

English language arts achievement - MCAS average composite scaled score						
Group 2022 Achv 2023 Achv +/- 2023 Target						
All Students	506.7	506.6	-0.1	510.5		
Lowest Performing	487.9	488.5	0.6	492.0		
High needs	492.4	486.9	-5.5	494.5		
Students w/ disabilities	488.7	481.4	-7.3	490.7		

Mathematics achievement - MCAS average composite scaled score						
Group 2022 Achv 2023 Achv +/- 2023 Target						
All Students	505.2	508.4	3.2	507.1		
Lowest Performing	479.4	487.1	7.7	483.1		
High needs	485.6	486.0	0.4	488.4		
Students w/ disabilities	483.9	482.3	-1.6	486.3		

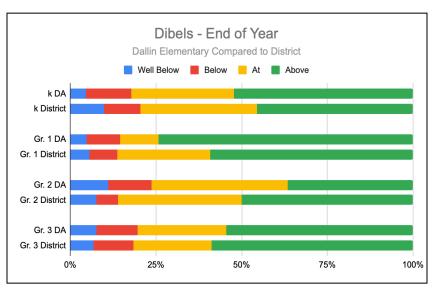
Science achievement - MCAS average composite scaled score					
Group 2022 Achv 2023 Achv +/- 2023 Target					
All Students	509.2	510.1	0.9	511.4	

MCAS Subgroup Trends and Student Growth Percentile Distribution



DIBELS 8th Edition K-3rd Grade Benchmark Assessments

DIBELS 2023 Fall to Spring Growth				
Grade	Fall % M/E	Spring % M/E	% Change (+/-)	
К	65	83	+18	
1	83	85	+7	
2	62	76	+14	
3	82	80	-2	



Panorama Spring 2023 Teacher Survey

Topic Description	Results	Compa	rison
Belonging How much faculty and staff feel that they are valued members of the school community.	72% -13 since last survey	57%	Arlington (N
Cultural Awareness and Action (Adult Focus)	68%	59%	Arlington (N
How well a school supports staff and faculty in learning about, discussing, and confronting issues of race, ethnicity, and culture.	▲ 2 since last survey		
Cultural Awareness and Action (Student Focus)	66%	62%	Arlington (M
How well a school supports students in learning about, discussing, and confronting issues of race, ethnicity, and culture.			
Professional Learning	E20/	40%	Arlington (M
Perceptions of the amount and quality of professional growth and learning opportunities available to faculty and staff.	52 %		
Well-being	63%	61%	Arlington (N

Sense of Belonging at Dallin

When looking at the Panorama Student and Staff Voice data taken from 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders and staff at Dallin, our overall scores highlight important gains in our teachers' sense of Belonging and the Rigorous Expectations that our students report from their classrooms. Staff are reporting a greater satisfaction with professional learning opportunities. School Safety remains high and climate scores are positive, especially when compared nationally and within our district.

Examining our focal group responses in the overall percentages indicates a different experience. Most notably, in the area of "Sense of Belonging", students who prefer a gender identity other than male or female are responding 2 to 3 times less positively than the group average.

Panorama Spring 2023 Student Survey

Summary			
Topic Description	Results	Compa	rison
Cultural Awareness and Action How often students learn about, discuss, and confront issues of race, ethnicity, and culture in school	36% 6 since last survey	36%	Arlington (MA)
Rigorous Expectations How much students feel that their teachers hold them to high expectations around effort, understanding, persistence, and performance in class.	76%	78%	Arlington (MA)
School Climate Perceptions of the overall social and learning climate of the school.	64%	63%	Arlington (MA)
School Safety Perceptions of student physical and psychological safety at school.	73%	74%	Arlington (MA)
Sense of Belonging	66% • 2 since last survey	67%	Arlington (MA)
Teacher-Student Relationships How strong the social connection is between teachers and students within and beyond the classroom.	64%	68%	Arlington (MA)



Data Portrait What is your school's story? What does the data say? Please cite data sources and get micro				
	What overall strengths do you notice when looking across relevant data sources?	What evidence is there, if any, of systemic inequities with regard to focal students?	What other areas of growth or questions are raised that deserve further drilling down into the data?	
Academic Achievement MCAS DIBELS (elem) Qualitative Data	- 87th percentile MCAS achievement results for both Math and ELA, 90th percentile in Science w/ average SGP of 50+ - 80% of students K-3 are meeting early reading benchmarks - K-3rd students identified well below reading benchmarks dropped from 40 students (15.8%) in the fall of 2022 to 18 (7%) in the spring of 2023.	- Inconsistent, but measurable performance gap between students identified as High Needs and Non-High Needs on MCAS Achievement in ELA, Math, and Science - Students with identified disabilities averaged low student growth when compared to previous year scores in ELA (32.5) and Math (34).	- What skills and tasks are most challenging for students in our identified focal groups? - What are we noticing from students who have spent extended periods of time (+6 months) in tiered intervention to accelerate learning growth? - What does academic engagement and discourse look like for students in our identified focal group, with special attention to students with identified disabilities?	
Social-Emotional	- Exceeded targets for reducing chronic absenteeism - 7% increase in Rigorous Expectations reported by students (76% total).	- Absenteeism for High Needs group still higher than aggregate - Students identified non-binary report a 22% less positive student -teacher relationship	- How do students feel like their voice is represented in classroom discussions? - What are our non-negotiable practices for creating safe classrooms for students across the gender spectrum?	
Culture & Climate	- 13% increase in teacher Sense of Belonging from Fall to Spring (72% total) -85% of students 3rd-5th report that their teacher encourages them to do their best. - 80% student reporting their teacher asks them to explain their answers - 20 students attending Rainbow Coalition affinity space for students weekly by spring of 2023	- Only 55% of student reported favorably to whether their teacher had high expectations of them - Students identifying non-binary or using a word other than male or female are reporting a 22% less positive relationship with their teacher.	- How can we explain the +20% difference between students reporting their teacher encourages and supports them but does not have high expectations of them? - What professional learning will help us improve belonging for our students who identify as non-binary feel more welcome at school? - What symmetry is there between our student focal groups and the experience of their families?	

Strategic Goals and Initiatives

Strategic Goals and Action Steps

Strategic Academic Goal 1: What do we want for students?

We will continue to address the opportunity gap in literacy between high needs and non-high needs students with the adoption of the EL English Language Arts curriculum and expanding our use of high-quality, universal screening assessments to all grades K- 5th grade, to identify opportunities for supplemental reading intervention.

Current Progress/Status:

What does this look like now? (Cite data for all students collectively and separately by focal identity marker.)

<u>See 2023 Accountability Data Tables above</u> Screening tools are assisting staff in

Screening tools are assisting staff in identifying targeted instructional opportunities and tiered interventions. We wonder how well the expansion into 4th and 5th grade will support closing opportunity gaps measured by MCAS assessments.

SMART Success Target:

What realistic targets will we reach for this year for all students collectively and separately by your focal identity marker?

Using DIBELS Composite Scores and MCAS ELA assessments and scaled scores, 3rd grade students identified as high needs will increase the percentage of meeting the reading benchmark to 85%.

We will increase the average scaled score in ELA for high needs students by 10 points and achieve a mean SGP of 45 or higher for high needs students who participate in our MCAS assessment.

Initiative: What do faculty & staff need to improve?

Grades 2 and 3 educators will participate in Year 1 of curriculum adoptions. They will receive cohesive and targeted professional learning opportunities to learn the new Expeditionary Learning (EL) and to align standards to curriculum. This will include implementing EL high leverage instructional strategies aligned with new curriculum resources.

Staff in grades 4th and 5th will use grade level meeting time to utilize new benchmark assessment tools to plan small group instructional opportunities and tiered reading interventions.

Our literacy intervention staff (ie. Reading interventionists, Special Education, and ELA coach) will continue to organize a system for frequent progress monitoring to better measure the effectiveness of tiered reading programming and make timely adjustments to the instructional focus. This will include a focus on reading progress for students well below grade level reading benchmarks and students with identified disabilities.

Action Steps How will we improve it?	Person/Team Responsible	Status
All staff will experience comprehensive professional development of the EL Education curriculum to ensure they understand the pedagogy, and high leverage instructional strategies, starting with Phase 1 in grades 2 and 3.	Coaches, Teachers (early EL implementers), Curriculum Directors, Building Administrator	
Grade level teaching teams will review assessment data 3 times a year during weekly team meeting times to identify areas of strength and areas that require additional support, and use this information to inform instructional decisions.	Classroom teachers, Coaches, Curriculum Directors, Content interventionists, SpEd and related Service Providers, Building Administrator	
Each grade level will schedule a daily intervention block (named WIN) for students to receive tiered intervention support that does not impact access to general classroom curriculum.	Classroom teachers, Coaches, Curriculum Directors, Content interventionists, SpEd and Related Service Providers	
Dallin School will develop a Core Literacy Intervention team responsible for designing an aligned progress monitoring system that utilizes norm-referenced screening instruments combined with appropriate formative assessment to ensure literacy intervention is effective, timely, and flexible based on student growth and success.	Classroom teachers, Coaches, Curriculum Directors, Content interventionists, SpEd and Related Service Providers	

Families/Caregivers will be provided literacy benchmark and progress monitoring assessment data, including communication that clarifies the plan to support students who are identified as in need of supplemental supports each progress reporting period. Classroom teachers, Coaches, Curriculum Directors, Content interventionists, SpEd and Related Service Providers, Building Administrators

Strategic Academic Goal 2: What do we want for students?

We will improve the general classroom instruction and academic rigor for all students by using protocols to increase students' engagement within the classroom learning environment, consistent with the EL high leverage instructional practices. We want our students to see themselves as valued and capable of high level work, including in discussions about their learning.

Current Progress/Status:

What does this look like now? (Cite data for all students collectively and separately by focal identity marker.)

Grade level teaching teams have identified the importance of classroom, academic discourse and participation in achieving academic and social emotional success. Additionally, students are also reporting an increased awareness of this expectation as seen in the Panorama Rigorous Expectation outcomes in the Spring of 2022 (+7%). However, students with identified disabilities are reporting a 11% less positive outcome.

SMART Success Target:

What realistic targets will we reach for this year for all students collectively and separately by your focal identity marker? (Include same data sources) By the end of the school year, all elementary school teachers will consistently incorporate EL Education high leverage instructional practices, including the use of protocols and strategies to deepen student academic discourse, into their daily lessons. We will continue to follow increases in Rigorous Expectations as reported by students on the Panorama student survey.

Initiative: What do faculty & staff need to improve?

The initiative aims to enhance classroom instruction and elevate student engagement by implementing EL high leverage instructional practices, with a particular focus on the use of protocols and deepening student discourse. Through professional development, training, and collaborative planning, teachers will be equipped with the tools and strategies to incorporate these practices effectively. This will include partnerships with instructional coaches, leadership by the Dallin ILT, and consistency in professional learning during our Dallin staff meetings throughout the year.

The initiative also encourages student involvement, reflection, and feedback while fostering a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement. By embracing EL high leverage practices, the goal is to create an enriched learning environment that not only improves student engagement but also enhances the overall sense of belonging students experience in their classrooms.

Action Steps How will we improve it?	Person/Team Responsible	Status
Protocol Implementation Introduce a variety of protocols (such as Socratic Seminars, Fishbowl Discussions, or Think-Pair-Share) to teachers during our staff meetings and plan their use in classroom instruction with teachers. Collaborate with teachers during our team planning meetings to select appropriate protocols for different subject areas and grade levels.	Classroom teachers, Paraprofessionals, Instructional Coaches, Curriculum Directors, Content interventionists, SpEd and Related Service Providers, Building Administrators	
Modeling and Observation Organize opportunities for teachers to observe experienced educators effectively using protocols and deepening student discourse in their classrooms, starting with our Instructional Leadership Team (ILT). Staff meeting time will be used for teachers to share their successful experiences and strategies with colleagues.	ILT teacher representatives, classroom and specialist teachers, Paraprofessionals, Instructional Coaches, Content interventionists, SpEd and Related Service Providers, Building Administrators	
Resource Development ILT will create a resource bank of protocol templates, discussion prompts, and instructional materials that teachers can access and adapt for their lessons. Implementation grades (2nd and 3rd) will meet during district professional development to share best practices and successful implementation of EL high leverage practices.	ILT teacher representatives, classroom and specialist teachers, Paraprofessionals, Instructional Coaches, Content interventionists, SpEd and Related Service Providers, Building Administrators	

Strategic Culture Climate Goal 3: What do we want for students?

APS Strategic Priority Addressed: Initiative 1. 3: Implementing MTSS

We will improve our sense of Belonging for all students, as defined by being understood as a person, supported as adults, respected by other students, and having a general feeling of belonging. We know that this is most urgent for our students who identify LGBTQ+, multilingual, and students who receive services through an IEP/504 plan.

Current Progress/Status: What does this look like now? (Cite data for all students collectively and separately by focal identity marker.)	Dallin students reported Sense of Belonging as self-reported on the Panorama survey remains steady at 67%. However, focal group data suggests smaller focal groups are feeling less connection. This is especially noticeable with students who are reporting as non-binary (-34%).	
SMART Success Target: What realistic targets will we reach for this year for all students collectively and separately by your focal identity marker? (Include same data sources)	Our students sense of Belonging will increase to 75%, while also closing our gap between aggregate and subgroups to <15%.	

Initiative: What do faculty & staff need to improve?

Our goal is to foster an atmosphere where students can bring their full identities to school and trust that they will be respected for who they are and also inspired to be their best selves. All students should have a sense of belonging as a valued part of an inclusive learning community.

In order to reach this goal, faculty, staff, and families need learning opportunities focused on school culture, climate, and the social emotional lives of our students. Students from our identified focal groups will need opportunities to share their experience with trusted adults in the building to help shape practices that will increase their sense of belonging and safety.

Action Steps How will we improve it?	Person/Team Responsible	Status
Social and Emotional Learning EL implementation teams will work with our APS SEL Dept. to articulate how SEL and academic learning are integrated within the EL curriculum.	Specialist and Classroom teachers, Paraprofessionals, Instructional Coaches, Content interventionists, SpEd and Related Service Providers, Building Administrators	
Student Clubs and Affinity Groups Dallin staff and families will nurture student clubs or affinity groups (e.g. Rainbow Coalition) that allow students to come together, share their experiences, and celebrate their cultural identities.	Specialist and Classroom teachers, Paraprofessionals, Instructional Coaches	
Multilingual Support To foster an environment that reflects the diversity of our student body and promotes a sense of belonging among families from various cultural backgrounds, staff will adorn common areas with	Specialist and Classroom teachers, Paraprofessionals, Instructional Coaches, Content interventionists, SpEd and Related Service Providers,	

cultural artwork representing different cultures, and incorporate multilingual signage throughout the school according to languages spoken by our families.	Building Administrators	
Bullying Prevention and Intervention Professional Development: We will provide bullying prevention, intervention and cyber safety professional development for staff and families that explicitly address issues related to diversity and promote a culture of respect and empathy.	Specialist and Classroom teachers, Paraprofessionals, Instructional Coaches, Content interventionists, SpEd and Related Service Providers, Building Administrators, PTO Executive Board	
Creating Inclusive School Environments We will host a learning session with PFLAG to continue partnership and support for LGBTQIA+ youth and families. Celebratory Events: Dallin SEL Team will organize cultural celebration events or heritage months that highlight the traditions and contributions of various cultural groups within the school community. These events can involve students, families, and staff.	Specialist and Classroom teachers, Paraprofessionals, Instructional Coaches, Content interventionists, SpEd and Related Service Providers, Building ASpecialist and Classroom teachers, Paraprofessionals, Instructional Coaches, Content interventionists, SpEd and Related Service Providers, Building Administrators	

Strategic Family Engagement Goal 4: What do we want for students?

We will improve Belonging for all families by auditing our communication practices, directly inviting the perspectives of diverse community voices, providing authentic ways for celebrating the rich diversity of our school community, and developing welcome teams for newcomer families.

Current Progress/Status:

What does this look like now? (Cite data for all students collectively and separately by focal identity marker.)

Our families and student body have become more and more diverse over the past decade. Families that identify as a race or ethnicity other than white have increased 14%. This provides us with an amazing opportunity to welcome and represent an increasingly rich and varied student body and community.

What realistic targets will we reach for this year for all students collectively and separately by your focal identity marker? (Include same data sources)

Initiative: What do faculty & staff need to improve?

Our staff will need opportunities to share the learning that they are experiencing by working directly with a community that is continually bringing more cultural assets to our school. Families will need the opportunity to meet with school representatives to talk about how our current systems are providing them with equitable access to their child's education, and how our school can provide a sense of belonging and inclusion for their families.

Action Steps How will we improve it?	Person/Team Responsible	Status
Celebration of Diversity: In the fall, we will host a family forum on cultural awareness initiatives and events with families and community members from diverse cultural backgrounds to gather insights and ideas for creating an inclusive school environment. Classroom teachers and families will facilitate opportunities for students to share their cultural backgrounds with their peers to encourage students to take pride in their cultural heritage.	Building Administrators, Dallin PTO, Dallin School Council, Dallin SEL Team, Specialist and Classroom teachers	
Nurture Family Engagement In partnership with our PTO, we will design in person family engagement opportunities that offer families authentic opportunities to engage with curriculum (ie. Math mornings, STEAM), connect families across common areas of interest (ie. bullying and cyber safety), and promote inclusion of diverse voices in our community.	Building Administrators, Dallin PTO, Dallin School Council, Dallin SEL Team, Specialist and Classroom teachers	
Developing Welcome Teams: We will work with school-based ILT, School Council, PTO, DEI working group and other invested constituents to develop a welcoming committee, meeting four times this school year.	Building Administrators, Dallin PTO, Dallin School Council, Dallin SEL Team, Specialist and Classroom teachers	

Conduct empathy interviews In partnership with our DEIJ&B team, our school council in partnership with the PTO and Dallin SEL teacher team will conduct empathy interviews to better understand the impact of current communication systems with a range of families in our community, with an emphasis on our LBGTQIA+ and multilingual families.	Building Administrators, Dallin PTO, Dallin School Council, Dallin SEL Team, Specialist and Classroom teachers	
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APS Strategic Priority Addressed: Initiative 4.3: Communication and Partnership

Part VI: Resources/Supports

Resources to Ensure Success

List resources required to facilitate and enable success for each strategic goal and its related initiatives. Please be as specific as possible

related illitiatives. I lease be as specific as possible			
Goal:	Resources Needed (Time, Training, Materials, etc.):	District Department Support	School Budget Implications
Strategic Academic Goal 1:	Common Planning Time, ACE meetings	Elementary ELA, Social Studies, Science, Mathematics, and SEL	NA
Strategic Academic Goal 2:	Common Planning Time, ACE meetings	Elementary ELA, Social Studies, Science, Mathematics, and SEL	EL Curriculum resources and Professional Development
Strategic Culture Climate Goal 3:	Common Planning Time, Staff meetings, School Council, PTO	SEL, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Belonging	NA
Strategic Family Engagement Goal 4:	Common Planning Time, ACE meetings, School Council, PTO	SEL, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Belonging	NA