# A close-up of a white background Description automatically generatedSchool Title

**School Distric**t

**Needs Assessment Site Visit Report**

Month 2024

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## About the Needs Assessment Process

The Illinois needs assessment process is a partnership between the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and the American Institutes for Research® (AIR®), a not-for-proﬁt research organization. The needs assessment is designed to provide formative feedback regarding a school’s strengths and opportunities for growth in four key school improvement areas, with the purpose of supporting schools in designing school improvement plans.

Research regarding schools that have successfully achieved dramatic academic and nonacademic improvements has identiﬁed four key school improvement areas that contribute to rapid improvements in student outcomes.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AREAS

|  |
| --- |
| 1. LEADERSHIP AND VISION |
| A circle with blue and green outline with people in the middle  Description automatically generated2. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT |
| 3. CULTURE AND CLIMATE |
| 4. TARGETED INSTRUCTION AND SUPPORT |

The Illinois needs assessments conducted by AIR use data from multiple sources—including a principal interview and leadership survey, an instructional staﬀ survey, teacher focus groups, student focus groups (for intensive schools only) and instructional observations—to identify strengths and areas for growth according to multiple indicators within the four school improvement practice areas. Ratings from classroom observations are based on the nationally normed Classroom Assessment Scoring System developed by Teachstone. In the needs assessment summary report, ratings in each school improvement area provide formative feedback to the school. When used in tandem with the continuum that guides the Illinois needs assessment process, this report will help school teams assess areas of strength and areas for improvement to inform continuous school improvement eﬀorts.

ILLINOIS SCHOOL NEEDS ASSESSMENT CONTINUUM

Based on information gathered from the site visit, schools are rated for each indicator on a 4-point implementation continuum: initial, emerging, established, or robust (see table 1 for deﬁnitions of the ratings). The process for assigning the ratings is as follows: (1) code data and analyze implementation for each indicator; (2) for relevant indicators, consider qualitative and quantitative data, as well as a review of relevant documents; and (3) assign ratings for each indicator.

Table 1. IL School Needs Assessment Continuum Ratings

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Initial | Emerging | Established | Robust |
| Evidence suggests that necessary organizational practices, structures, or processes are nonexistent or are not yet fully eﬀective. | Evidence suggests that few necessary organizational practices, structures or processes are in place, that these are only in initial stages of development, or concentrated in a small segment of the school, such as the leadership team. | Evidence suggests that some necessary organizational practices, structures, or processes are in place and are implemented eﬀectively. However, key systems are not yet implemented schoolwide for all relevant teachers and students. | Evidence suggests that necessary organizational practices, structures, or processes are in place and are implemented eﬀectively for all or nearly all relevant teachers and students. |

## How to Use This Report

This report begins with a broad school overview, including key demographic information, methods used to conduct the needs assessment, as well as a summary of strengths and areas for growth. Following is an overview of the school’s ratings for each indicator. Finally, the body of the report includes a presentation of each indicator, the school’s rating for that indicator, and all of the data that contributed to each indicator for the report.

Within each indicator, the report includes the school’s rating, language from the Illinois Needs Assessment Continuum, a summary of the rationale for the rating, and a presentation of speciﬁc data that contributed to that indicator. This often includes data from existing sources such as the University of Chicago 5Essentials® Survey, as well as other school administrative data. In addition, each section presents data collected by AIR from the school for this report.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Abraham Lincoln Middle School is part of the Rockford SD 205. During the 2022–23 school year, the school had approximately 45 teaching staﬀ and 693 students in Grades 6 - 8; 19.9% of students are students with disabilities, 78.9% are considered economically disadvantaged.2 In the 2022–23 school year, Abraham Lincoln Middle School was designated as a school in need of support.

Grounded in the four improvement areas, the summary below highlights strengths and areas for improvement in school structures and systems.

SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS

* School leadership has established practices for regularly monitoring the implementation of improvement eﬀorts and prioritizing initiatives based on student data.
* The school has a documented instructional curriculum in English language arts, math, and science and uses observations and planning meetings to support the ﬁdelity of implementation and alignment across grades.
* Teachers have opportunities to participate in weekly collaborative planning sessions, which include data reviews.
* School leaders and staﬀ use a set of validated assessments to monitor student learning across all grade levels and core content areas on a quarterly basis.
* The school has established partnerships with community organizations that provide wraparound services for students and families (e.g., mental health support).

AREAS FOR GROWTH

* School leaders are working to support the implementation of the instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and to establish benchmarks for measuring progress.
* Staff have limited opportunities for professional development and instructional coaching.
* The instructional schedule does not consistently provide time for social-emotional learning instruction or for students with disabilities and multilingual learners to receive necessary supports without missing other learning opportunities.
* School leaders and staff identified a need to more fully engage families as partners in students’ academic and social development.
* Structures to support positive relationships among staff and between teachers and students are limited.

Data collected from the school for this report included the following:

* **Principal interview and leadership survey**, which asked the school principal for feedback on all indicators. Abraham Lincoln Middle School conducted 1 principal interview and included 1 survey response.
* **Staff survey**, which asked all instructional staff for feedback on all indicators. Abraham Lincoln Middle School had 43 survey respondents.
* **Classroom observations** using the CLASS protocol, with scores based on the nationally normed Classroom Assessment Scoring System developed by Teachstone and the Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) at the University of Virginia. CLASS uses distinct tools for Grades K-3, upper elementary, and secondary levels. When conducting a visit to a classroom, the observer rates each dimension on a scale of 1 to 7.
* **The University of Chicago's 5Essentials Survey** (for more information, see their website [https://uchicagoimpact.org/our-offerings/5essentials](https://uchicagoimpact.org/our-offerings/5essentialshttps:/www.illinoisreportcard.com/)) and Illinois Report Card data (for more information, see their website <https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/>
* **Teacher focus group**, or an in-person discussion with a sample of instructional staff on the focus indicators for each school.
* **Student focus group**, or an in-person discussion with a sample of students in select schools (Grades 6 and above only).

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK

RATINGS OVERVIEW

Ratings for each indicator across the four school improvement areas for Abraham Lincoln Middle School are included in Table 2. More details about the ﬁndings for the indicators follow.

Table 2. Ratings for Needs Assessment Indicators

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Needs Assessment Indicator | Initial | Emerging | Established | Robust |
| **1.Leadership and Vision** | | | | |
| 1.A Focused, Shared Vision and Goals |  | ● |  |  |
| 1.B Distributed Leadership and Sustainability |  | ● |  |  |
| 1.C Culture of Continuous Improvement |  |  | ● |  |
| 1.D Aligned, Consistent Professional Development |  | ● |  |  |
| 2. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment | | | | |
| 2.A High-Quality, Deﬁned Curriculum |  |  |  |  |
| 2.B Collaborative Planning |  |  |  |  |
| 2.C High Expectations, Rigorous Instruction |  |  |  |  |
| 2.D Teacher Observation and Feedback |  |  |  |  |
| 2.E Data Collection and Collaborative Data Use |  |  |  |  |
| 3. Culture and Climate | | | | |
| 3.A Positive Interpersonal Relationships |  |  |  |  |
| 3.B Warm and Responsive Environment |  |  |  |  |
| 3.C Student Voice and Feedback (Secondary) |  |  |  |  |
| 3.D Family Collaboration |  |  |  |  |
| 3.E Community Resources and Engagement |  |  |  |  |
| 4. Targeted Instruction and Support | | | | |
| 4.A Multitiered System of Supports |  |  |  |  |
| 4.B Inclusive and Diﬀerentiated Instruction |  |  |  |  |
| 4.C Enrichment (Elementary) |  |  |  |  |
| 4.D College and Career Readiness Opportunities (Secondary) |  |  |  |  |

## A blue circle with a group of people in it Description automatically generatedLeadership and Vision

Indicators in this standard focus on the school’s vision, plans for pursuing that vision, and degree of distributed leadership.

How Is the Leadership and Vision School Improvement Practice Area related to teacher and student outcomes?

To give you insights into relevant school practices and potential outcomes for both staﬀ and students, we analyzed prior data from schools similar to yours[[1]](#footnote-2) and have found that schools that score higher in survey items related to the Leadership and Vision School Improvement Practice Area tend to have higher levels of student academic performance and lower student absence.[[2]](#footnote-3)

Schools with a higher rating on survey items related to the Focused, Shared Vision and Goals indicator generally:

* Have higher levels of student academic performance, with an average increase of 2.7% in median student growth percentile in English Language Arts.

Schools with a higher rating on survey items related to the Aligned, Consistent Professional Development indicator generally:

* Have higher levels of student academic performance, with an average increase of 3.0% in median student growth percentile in English Language Arts.

As you consider next steps for your school improvement planning, you may want to consider these findings. Where your school is doing better than similar schools, think about how you can build on these areas of strength and transfer the strategies that are working to other areas of focus for your school. In aspects where your school is not performing as well as similar schools, consider what could be contributing factors and ways to address or mitigate those factors. Based on these findings, you may also want to consider which practices can yield greater improvements in student and staff outcomes.

*On the following pages, the Illinois Needs Assessment Report provides ratings for all indicators within this standard, as well as language from the Needs Assessment Continuum and a summary of all data used to inform the feedback on each indicator.*

### Indicator 1.A: Focused, Shared Vision and Goals

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rating Description from the 2023-24 Illinois Needs Assessment Implementation Continuum | | | |
| Initial | Emerging | Established | Robust |

School leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. School leadership may have started to communicate with staﬀ about the vision and improvement priorities, but few staﬀ understand the instructional vision and priorities for improvement. Typical actions and conversations suggest that only some staﬀ have a sense of shared ownership for all students and schoolwide improvement.

#### OVERALL RATING SUMMARY:

Consistent with an emerging rating for this indicator, school leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. The majority of staﬀ survey respondents (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are familiar with their school’s main instructional vision and goals. However, school leadership indicated that the school is in the early stages of implementing the new instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and that teachers are in the early stages of collective commitment to the vision.

Insert chart

#### STAFF SURVEY RESPONSE:

Insert chart

#### STAFF PERSPECTIVES:

* In some classrooms, lessons focused on discrete pieces of information, providing few opportunities for students to develop a deeper understanding of how ideas were related.
* Some teachers provided real-world examples and explanations of the cultural signiﬁcance of the material.
* At times, teachers connected lessons to students’ background knowledge and addressed misconceptions.

### Indicator 1.B: Distributed Leadership and Sustainability

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rating Description from the 2023-24 Illinois Needs Assessment Implementation Continuum | | | |
| Initial | Emerging | Established | Robust |

School leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. School leadership may have started to communicate with staﬀ about the vision and improvement priorities, but few staﬀ understand the instructional vision and priorities for improvement. Typical actions and conversations suggest that only some staﬀ have a sense of shared ownership for all students and schoolwide improvement.

#### OVERALL RATING SUMMARY:

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#### STAFF SURVEY RESPONSE:

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#### STAFF PERSPECTIVES:

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* Some teachers provided real-world examples and explanations of the cultural signiﬁcance of the material.
* At times, teachers connected lessons to students’ background knowledge and addressed misconceptions.

### Indicator 1.C: Culture of Continuous Improvement

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rating Description from the 2023-24 Illinois Needs Assessment Implementation Continuum | | | |
| Initial | Emerging | Established | Robust |

School leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. School leadership may have started to communicate with staﬀ about the vision and improvement priorities, but few staﬀ understand the instructional vision and priorities for improvement. Typical actions and conversations suggest that only some staﬀ have a sense of shared ownership for all students and schoolwide improvement.

#### OVERALL RATING SUMMARY:

Consistent with an emerging rating for this indicator, school leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. The majority of staﬀ survey respondents (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are familiar with their school’s main instructional vision and goals. However, school leadership indicated that the school is in the early stages of implementing the new instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and that teachers are in the early stages of collective commitment to the vision.

Insert chart

#### STAFF SURVEY RESPONSE:

Insert chart

#### STAFF PERSPECTIVES:

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* Some teachers provided real-world examples and explanations of the cultural signiﬁcance of the material.
* At times, teachers connected lessons to students’ background knowledge and addressed misconceptions.

### Indicator 1.D: Aligned, Consistent Professional Development

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rating Description from the 2023-24 Illinois Needs Assessment Implementation Continuum | | | |
| Initial | Emerging | Established | Robust |

School leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. School leadership may have started to communicate with staﬀ about the vision and improvement priorities, but few staﬀ understand the instructional vision and priorities for improvement. Typical actions and conversations suggest that only some staﬀ have a sense of shared ownership for all students and schoolwide improvement.

#### OVERALL RATING SUMMARY:

Consistent with an emerging rating for this indicator, school leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. The majority of staﬀ survey respondents (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are familiar with their school’s main instructional vision and goals. However, school leadership indicated that the school is in the early stages of implementing the new instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and that teachers are in the early stages of collective commitment to the vision.

Insert chart

#### STAFF SURVEY RESPONSE:

Insert chart

#### STAFF PERSPECTIVES:

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* Some teachers provided real-world examples and explanations of the cultural signiﬁcance of the material.
* At times, teachers connected lessons to students’ background knowledge and addressed misconceptions.

## Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

Indicators in this standard focus on the school’s eﬀorts to deﬁne, implement, and continually improve classroom instruction through the use of data and observations.

How Is the Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment School Improvement Practice area related to teacher and student outcomes?

To give you insights into relevant school practices and potential outcomes for both staﬀ and students, we analyzed prior data from schools similar to yours[[3]](#footnote-4) and have found that schools that score higher in survey items related to the Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment School Improvement Practice Area tend to have higher levels of student academic performance and lower student absence.[[4]](#footnote-5)

Schools with a higher rating on survey items related to the Collaborative Planning indicator generally:

* Have higher levels of student academic performance, with an average increase of 2.7% in median student growth percentile in English Language Arts.

Schools with a higher rating on survey items related to the High Expectations, Rigorous Instruction indicator generally:

* Have higher levels of student academic performance, with an average increase of 6.1% in median student growth percentile in English Language Arts and an increase of 2.9% in median student growth percentile in Mathematics.
* Have lower student absence rates, with an average decrease of 8.6% in chronic student absenteeism.

As you consider next steps for your school improvement planning, you may want to consider these findings. Where your school is doing better than similar schools, think about how you can build on these areas of strength and transfer the strategies that are working to other areas of focus for your school. In aspects where your school is not performing as well as similar schools, consider what could be contributing factors and ways to address or mitigate those factors. Based on these findings, you may also want to consider which practices can yield greater improvements in student and staff outcomes.

### Indicator 2.A: High-Quality, Defined Curriculum

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rating Description from the 2023-24 Illinois Needs Assessment Implementation Continuum | | | |
| Initial | Emerging | Established | Robust |

School leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. School leadership may have started to communicate with staﬀ about the vision and improvement priorities, but few staﬀ understand the instructional vision and priorities for improvement. Typical actions and conversations suggest that only some staﬀ have a sense of shared ownership for all students and schoolwide improvement.

#### OVERALL RATING SUMMARY:

Consistent with an emerging rating for this indicator, school leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. The majority of staﬀ survey respondents (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are familiar with their school’s main instructional vision and goals. However, school leadership indicated that the school is in the early stages of implementing the new instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and that teachers are in the early stages of collective commitment to the vision.

Insert chart

#### STAFF SURVEY RESPONSE:

Insert chart

#### STAFF PERSPECTIVES:

* In some classrooms, lessons focused on discrete pieces of information, providing few opportunities for students to develop a deeper understanding of how ideas were related.
* Some teachers provided real-world examples and explanations of the cultural signiﬁcance of the material.
* At times, teachers connected lessons to students’ background knowledge and addressed misconceptions.

#### STUDENT PERSPECTIVES:

* Students reported that the online curriculum changes every year.

### Indicator 2.B: Collaborative Planning

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rating Description from the 2023-24 Illinois Needs Assessment Implementation Continuum | | | |
| Initial | Emerging | Established | Robust |

School leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. School leadership may have started to communicate with staﬀ about the vision and improvement priorities, but few staﬀ understand the instructional vision and priorities for improvement. Typical actions and conversations suggest that only some staﬀ have a sense of shared ownership for all students and schoolwide improvement.

#### OVERALL RATING SUMMARY:

Consistent with an emerging rating for this indicator, school leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. The majority of staﬀ survey respondents (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are familiar with their school’s main instructional vision and goals. However, school leadership indicated that the school is in the early stages of implementing the new instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and that teachers are in the early stages of collective commitment to the vision.

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#### STAFF SURVEY RESPONSE:

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#### STAFF PERSPECTIVES:

* In some classrooms, lessons focused on discrete pieces of information, providing few opportunities for students to develop a deeper understanding of how ideas were related.
* Some teachers provided real-world examples and explanations of the cultural signiﬁcance of the material.
* At times, teachers connected lessons to students’ background knowledge and addressed misconceptions.

### Indicator 2.C: High Expectations, Rigorous Instruction

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rating Description from the 2023-24 Illinois Needs Assessment Implementation Continuum | | | |
| Initial | Emerging | Established | Robust |

School leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. School leadership may have started to communicate with staﬀ about the vision and improvement priorities, but few staﬀ understand the instructional vision and priorities for improvement. Typical actions and conversations suggest that only some staﬀ have a sense of shared ownership for all students and schoolwide improvement.

#### OVERALL RATING SUMMARY:

Consistent with an emerging rating for this indicator, school leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. The majority of staﬀ survey respondents (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are familiar with their school’s main instructional vision and goals. However, school leadership indicated that the school is in the early stages of implementing the new instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and that teachers are in the early stages of collective commitment to the vision.

Insert chart

#### CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS: CONTENT UNDERSTANDING

Classrooms in Grades 6–8 at this school averaged in the **middle** range. At the middle range, the focus of the class is sometimes on meaningful discussion and explanation of broad, organizing ideas. At other times, the focus is on discrete pieces of information. Class discussion and materials communicate some of the essential attributes of concepts and procedures, but examples are limited in scope or not consistently provided. The teacher makes some attempt to elicit and/or acknowledge students' background knowledge or misconceptions and/or to integrate information with previously learned material; however, these moments are limited in depth or are inconsistent.

Insert chart

### Indicator 2.c: High Expectations, Rigorous Instruction, cONT.

#### CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS: INSTRUCTIONAL DIALOGUE

Classrooms in Grades 6–8 at this school averaged in the **middle** range. At the middle range, the focus of the class is sometimes on meaningful discussion and explanation of broad, organizing ideas. At other times, the focus is on discrete pieces of information. Class discussion and materials communicate some of the essential attributes of concepts and procedures, but examples are limited in scope or not consistently provided. The teacher makes some attempt to elicit and/or acknowledge students' background knowledge or misconceptions and/or to integrate information with previously learned material; however, these moments are limited in depth or are inconsistent.

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#### CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS: ANALYSIS AND INQUIRY

Classrooms in Grades 6–8 at this school averaged in the **middle** range. At the middle range, the focus of the class is sometimes on meaningful discussion and explanation of broad, organizing ideas. At other times, the focus is on discrete pieces of information. Class discussion and materials communicate some of the essential attributes of concepts and procedures, but examples are limited in scope or not consistently provided. The teacher makes some attempt to elicit and/or acknowledge students' background knowledge or misconceptions and/or to integrate information with previously learned material; however, these moments are limited in depth or are inconsistent.

Insert chart.

#### STAFF SURVEY RESPONSE:

Insert chart

#### STAFF PERSPECTIVES:

* In some classrooms, lessons focused on discrete pieces of information, providing few opportunities for students to develop a deeper understanding of how ideas were related.
* Some teachers provided real-world examples and explanations of the cultural signiﬁcance of the material.
* At times, teachers connected lessons to students’ background knowledge and addressed misconceptions.

#### STUDENT PERSPECTIVES:

* Students reported that the online curriculum changes every year.

### Indicator 2.d: TEACHER OBSERVATION AND FEEDBACK

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rating Description from the 2023-24 Illinois Needs Assessment Implementation Continuum | | | |
| Initial | Emerging | Established | Robust |

School leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. School leadership may have started to communicate with staﬀ about the vision and improvement priorities, but few staﬀ understand the instructional vision and priorities for improvement. Typical actions and conversations suggest that only some staﬀ have a sense of shared ownership for all students and schoolwide improvement.

#### OVERALL RATING SUMMARY:

Consistent with an emerging rating for this indicator, school leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. The majority of staﬀ survey respondents (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are familiar with their school’s main instructional vision and goals. However, school leadership indicated that the school is in the early stages of implementing the new instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and that teachers are in the early stages of collective commitment to the vision.

Insert chart

#### STAFF SURVEY RESPONSE:

Insert chart

#### STAFF PERSPECTIVES:

* In some classrooms, lessons focused on discrete pieces of information, providing few opportunities for students to develop a deeper understanding of how ideas were related.
* Some teachers provided real-world examples and explanations of the cultural signiﬁcance of the material.
* At times, teachers connected lessons to students’ background knowledge and addressed misconceptions.

### Indicator 2.E: Data Collection and Collaborative Data Use

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rating Description from the 2023-24 Illinois Needs Assessment Implementation Continuum | | | |
| Initial | Emerging | Established | Robust |

School leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. School leadership may have started to communicate with staﬀ about the vision and improvement priorities, but few staﬀ understand the instructional vision and priorities for improvement. Typical actions and conversations suggest that only some staﬀ have a sense of shared ownership for all students and schoolwide improvement.

#### OVERALL RATING SUMMARY:

Consistent with an emerging rating for this indicator, school leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. The majority of staﬀ survey respondents (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are familiar with their school’s main instructional vision and goals. However, school leadership indicated that the school is in the early stages of implementing the new instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and that teachers are in the early stages of collective commitment to the vision.

Insert chart

#### STAFF SURVEY RESPONSE:

Insert chart

#### STAFF PERSPECTIVES:

* In some classrooms, lessons focused on discrete pieces of information, providing few opportunities for students to develop a deeper understanding of how ideas were related.
* Some teachers provided real-world examples and explanations of the cultural signiﬁcance of the material.
* At times, teachers connected lessons to students’ background knowledge and addressed misconceptions.

## Culture and Climate

Indicators in this standard focus on relationships within the school and between the school and community.

How Is the Culture and Climate School Improvement Practice Area Related to Teacher and Student Outcomes?

To give you insights into relevant school practices and potential outcomes for both staff and students, we analyzed prior data from schools similar to yours[[5]](#footnote-6) and have found that schools that score higher in survey items related to the Culture and Climate School Improvement Practice Area tend to have higher levels of student academic performance, lower student absence, and lower teacher turnover rates.[[6]](#footnote-7)

Schools with a higher rating on survey items related to the Positive Interpersonal Relationships indicator generally:

* Have higher levels of student academic performance, with an average increase of 6.0% in median student growth percentile in English Language Arts.
* Have lower teacher turnover rates, with an average of 5.5% lower turnover rate compared to schools with a lower rating.

Schools with a higher rating on survey items related to the Warm and Responsive Environment indicator generally:

* Have higher levels of student academic performance, with an average increase of 8.8% in median student growth percentile in English Language Arts.

Schools with a higher rating on survey items related to the Family Collaboration indicator generally:

* Have higher levels of student academic performance, with an average increase of 5.6% in median student growth percentile in English Language Arts.
* Have lower student absence rates, with an average decrease of 9.7% in chronic student absenteeism.

**AS YOU CONSIDER NEXT STEPS FOR YOUR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING, YOU MAY WANT TO CONSIDER THESE FINDINGS.**

Where your school is doing better than similar schools, think about how you can build on these areas of strength and transfer the strategies that are working to other areas of focus for your school. In aspects where your school is not performing as well as similar schools, consider what could be contributing factors and ways to address or mitigate those factors. Based on these findings, you may also want to consider which practices can yield greater improvements in student and staff outcomes.

### Indicator 3.A: Positive Interpersonal Relationships

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rating Description from the 2023-24 Illinois Needs Assessment Implementation Continuum | | | |
| Initial | Emerging | Established | Robust |

School leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. School leadership may have started to communicate with staﬀ about the vision and improvement priorities, but few staﬀ understand the instructional vision and priorities for improvement. Typical actions and conversations suggest that only some staﬀ have a sense of shared ownership for all students and schoolwide improvement.

#### OVERALL RATING SUMMARY:

Consistent with an emerging rating for this indicator, school leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. The majority of staﬀ survey respondents (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are familiar with their school’s main instructional vision and goals. However, school leadership indicated that the school is in the early stages of implementing the new instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and that teachers are in the early stages of collective commitment to the vision.

Insert chart

#### STAFF SURVEY RESPONSE:

Insert chart

#### STAFF PERSPECTIVES:

* In some classrooms, lessons focused on discrete pieces of information, providing few opportunities for students to develop a deeper understanding of how ideas were related.
* Some teachers provided real-world examples and explanations of the cultural signiﬁcance of the material.
* At times, teachers connected lessons to students’ background knowledge and addressed misconceptions.

#### STUDENT PERSPECTIVES:

* Students reported that the online curriculum changes every year.

### Indicator 3.B: Warm and Responsive Environment

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rating Description from the 2023-24 Illinois Needs Assessment Implementation Continuum | | | |
| Initial | Emerging | Established | Robust |

School leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. School leadership may have started to communicate with staﬀ about the vision and improvement priorities, but few staﬀ understand the instructional vision and priorities for improvement. Typical actions and conversations suggest that only some staﬀ have a sense of shared ownership for all students and schoolwide improvement.

#### OVERALL RATING SUMMARY:

Consistent with an emerging rating for this indicator, school leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. The majority of staﬀ survey respondents (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are familiar with their school’s main instructional vision and goals. However, school leadership indicated that the school is in the early stages of implementing the new instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and that teachers are in the early stages of collective commitment to the vision.

Insert chart

#### CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS: POSITIVE CLIMATE

Consistent with an emerging rating for this indicator, school leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. The majority of staﬀ survey respondents (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are familiar with their school’s main instructional vision and goals. However, school leadership indicated that the school is in the early stages of implementing the new instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and that teachers are in the early stages of collective commitment to the vision.

Insert chart

#### CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS: TEACHER SENSITIVITY

Consistent with an emerging rating for this indicator, school leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. The majority of staﬀ survey respondents (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are familiar with their school’s main instructional vision and goals. However, school leadership indicated that the school is in the early stages of implementing the new instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and that teachers are in the early stages of collective commitment to the vision.

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#### CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS: BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Consistent with an emerging rating for this indicator, school leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. The majority of staﬀ survey respondents (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are familiar with their school’s main instructional vision and goals. However, school leadership indicated that the school is in the early stages of implementing the new instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and that teachers are in the early stages of collective commitment to the vision.

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#### CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS: PRODUCTIVITY

Consistent with an emerging rating for this indicator, school leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. The majority of staﬀ survey respondents (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are familiar with their school’s main instructional vision and goals. However, school leadership indicated that the school is in the early stages of implementing the new instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and that teachers are in the early stages of collective commitment to the vision.

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#### CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS: NEGATIVE CLIMATE

Consistent with an emerging rating for this indicator, school leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. The majority of staﬀ survey respondents (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are familiar with their school’s main instructional vision and goals. However, school leadership indicated that the school is in the early stages of implementing the new instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and that teachers are in the early stages of collective commitment to the vision.

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#### STAFF SURVEY RESPONSE:

Insert chart

#### STAFF PERSPECTIVES:

* In some classrooms, lessons focused on discrete pieces of information, providing few opportunities for students to develop a deeper understanding of how ideas were related.
* Some teachers provided real-world examples and explanations of the cultural signiﬁcance of the material.
* At times, teachers connected lessons to students’ background knowledge and addressed misconceptions.

#### STUDENT PERSPECTIVES:

* Students reported that the online curriculum changes every year.

### Indicator 3.C: Student Voice and Feedback

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rating Description from the 2023-24 Illinois Needs Assessment Implementation Continuum | | | |
| Initial | Emerging | Established | Robust |

School leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. School leadership may have started to communicate with staﬀ about the vision and improvement priorities, but few staﬀ understand the instructional vision and priorities for improvement. Typical actions and conversations suggest that only some staﬀ have a sense of shared ownership for all students and schoolwide improvement.

#### OVERALL RATING SUMMARY:

Consistent with an emerging rating for this indicator, school leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. The majority of staﬀ survey respondents (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are familiar with their school’s main instructional vision and goals. However, school leadership indicated that the school is in the early stages of implementing the new instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and that teachers are in the early stages of collective commitment to the vision.

Insert chart

#### CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS: REGARD FOR STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Consistent with an emerging rating for this indicator, school leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. The majority of staﬀ survey respondents (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are familiar with their school’s main instructional vision and goals. However, school leadership indicated that the school is in the early stages of implementing the new instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and that teachers are in the early stages of collective commitment to the vision.

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#### STAFF SURVEY RESPONSE:

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#### STAFF PERSPECTIVES:

* In some classrooms, lessons focused on discrete pieces of information, providing few opportunities for students to develop a deeper understanding of how ideas were related.
* Some teachers provided real-world examples and explanations of the cultural signiﬁcance of the material.
* At times, teachers connected lessons to students’ background knowledge and addressed misconceptions.

#### STUDENT PERSPECTIVES:

* Students reported that the online curriculum changes every year.

### Indicator 3.D: Family Collaboration

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rating Description from the 2023-24 Illinois Needs Assessment Implementation Continuum | | | |
| Initial | Emerging | Established | Robust |

School leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. School leadership may have started to communicate with staﬀ about the vision and improvement priorities, but few staﬀ understand the instructional vision and priorities for improvement. Typical actions and conversations suggest that only some staﬀ have a sense of shared ownership for all students and schoolwide improvement.

#### OVERALL RATING SUMMARY:

Consistent with an emerging rating for this indicator, school leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. The majority of staﬀ survey respondents (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are familiar with their school’s main instructional vision and goals. However, school leadership indicated that the school is in the early stages of implementing the new instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and that teachers are in the early stages of collective commitment to the vision.

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#### STAFF SURVEY RESPONSE:

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#### STAFF PERSPECTIVES:

* In some classrooms, lessons focused on discrete pieces of information, providing few opportunities for students to develop a deeper understanding of how ideas were related.
* Some teachers provided real-world examples and explanations of the cultural signiﬁcance of the material.
* At times, teachers connected lessons to students’ background knowledge and addressed misconceptions.

#### STUDENT PERSPECTIVES:

* Students reported that the online curriculum changes every year.

### Indicator 3.E: Community Resources and Engagement

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rating Description from the 2023-24 Illinois Needs Assessment Implementation Continuum | | | |
| Initial | Emerging | Established | Robust |

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#### OVERALL RATING SUMMARY:

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#### STAFF SURVEY RESPONSE:

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#### STAFF PERSPECTIVES:

* In some classrooms, lessons focused on discrete pieces of information, providing few opportunities for students to develop a deeper understanding of how ideas were related.
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* At times, teachers connected lessons to students’ background knowledge and addressed misconceptions.

## Targeted Instruction and Support

Indicators in this standard focus on the school’s efforts to individualize instruction and other supports.

How Is the Targeted Instruction and Support School Improvement Practice Area Related to Teacher And Student Outcomes?

To give you insights into relevant school practices and potential outcomes for both staff and students, we analyzed prior data from schools similar to yours[[7]](#footnote-8) and have found that schools that score higher in survey items related to the Targeted Instruction and Support School Improvement Practice Area tend to have higher levels of student academic performance.[[8]](#footnote-9)

Schools with a higher rating on survey items related to the Inclusive and Differentiated Instruction indicator generally:

* Have higher levels of student academic performance, with an average increase of 3.6% in median student growth percentile in English Language Arts.

As you consider next steps for your school improvement planning, you may want to consider these findings. Where your school is doing better than similar schools, think about how you can build on these areas of strength and transfer the strategies that are working to other areas of focus for your school. In aspects where your school is not performing as well as similar schools, consider what could be contributing factors and ways to address or mitigate those factors. Based on these findings, you may also want to consider which practices can yield greater improvements in student and staff outcomes.

### Indicator 4.A: Multitiered System of Supports

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rating Description from the 2023-24 Illinois Needs Assessment Implementation Continuum | | | |
| Initial | Emerging | Established | Robust |

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#### OVERALL RATING SUMMARY:

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#### STAFF SURVEY RESPONSE:

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#### STAFF PERSPECTIVES:

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* Some teachers provided real-world examples and explanations of the cultural signiﬁcance of the material.
* At times, teachers connected lessons to students’ background knowledge and addressed misconceptions.

#### STUDENT PERSPECTIVES:

* Students reported that the online curriculum changes every year.

### Indicator 4.B: Inclusive and Differentiated Instruction

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rating Description from the 2023-24 Illinois Needs Assessment Implementation Continuum | | | |
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#### OVERALL RATING SUMMARY:

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Insert chart

#### CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS: INSTRUCTIONAL LEARNING FORMATS

Consistent with an emerging rating for this indicator, school leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. The majority of staﬀ survey respondents (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are familiar with their school’s main instructional vision and goals. However, school leadership indicated that the school is in the early stages of implementing the new instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and that teachers are in the early stages of collective commitment to the vision.

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#### CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS: QUALITY OF FEEDBACK

Consistent with an emerging rating for this indicator, school leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. The majority of staﬀ survey respondents (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are familiar with their school’s main instructional vision and goals. However, school leadership indicated that the school is in the early stages of implementing the new instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and that teachers are in the early stages of collective commitment to the vision.

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#### CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS: STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Consistent with an emerging rating for this indicator, school leadership has begun to develop an instructional vision, improvement priorities, and measurable goals aligned with this vision. The majority of staﬀ survey respondents (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that they are familiar with their school’s main instructional vision and goals. However, school leadership indicated that the school is in the early stages of implementing the new instructional vision and goals in all classrooms and that teachers are in the early stages of collective commitment to the vision.

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#### STAFF SURVEY RESPONSE:

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#### STAFF PERSPECTIVES:

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* At times, teachers connected lessons to students’ background knowledge and addressed misconceptions.

### Indicator 4.C: Enrichment (Elementary)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rating Description from the 2023-24 Illinois Needs Assessment Implementation Continuum | | | |
| Initial | Emerging | Established | Robust |

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#### OVERALL RATING SUMMARY:

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#### STAFF PERSPECTIVES:

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* At times, teachers connected lessons to students’ background knowledge and addressed misconceptions.

#### STUDENT PERSPECTIVES:

* Students reported that the online curriculum changes every year.

### Indicator 4.D: College and Career Readiness Opportunities

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rating Description from the 2023-24 Illinois Needs Assessment Implementation Continuum | | | |
| Initial | Emerging | Established | Robust |

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#### OVERALL RATING SUMMARY:

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#### STAFF SURVEY RESPONSE:

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#### STAFF PERSPECTIVES:

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* At times, teachers connected lessons to students’ background knowledge and addressed misconceptions.

#### STUDENT PERSPECTIVES:

* Students reported that the online curriculum changes every year.

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Heading 6. Applied as a character style to body text. Select the text you want to format and select the style from the Styles ribbon.

Block Text is indented 0.50” from the left margin. Right margin is not indented.

### Lists

* Bullet 1.
* Bullet 2.
* Bullet 3.

1. Numbered List, Arabic numerals
   1. Numbered List, lowercase letters
      1. Numbered List, lowercase Roman numerals

#### Ratings Table

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rating Description from the 2023-24 Illinois Needs Assessment Implementation Continuum | | | |
| Initial | Emerging | Established | Robust |

### Tables

Table Head

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| Column 1 | Column 2 | Column 3 |
| Row Heading | Text | Text |
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| Row Heading | Text | Text |
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*Note.* “*Note.*” (including a period) is italicized.

1. Similar schools were identified using student and staff demographic compositions, student socioeconomic status, school size, school finance, and school type data from the 2020-21 school year. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. For the purposes of this analysis, we only report statistically significant findings on the relationship between the indicator and school outcomes. Specifically, we consider findings with a p-value of less than .05 to be statistically significant, indicating a low probability that the results occurred by chance. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Similar schools were identified using student and staff demographic compositions, student socioeconomic status, school size, school finance, and school type data from the 2020-21 school year. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. For the purposes of this analysis, we only report statistically significant findings on the relationship between the indicator and school outcomes. Specifically, we consider findings with a *p*-value of less than .05 to be statistically significant, indicating a low probability that the results occurred by chance. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Similar schools were identified using student and staff demographic compositions, student socioeconomic status, school size, school finance, and school type data from the 2020-21 school year. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. For the purposes of this analysis, we only report statistically significant findings on the relationship between the indicator and school outcomes. Specifically, we consider findings with a p-value of less than .05 to be statistically significant, indicating a low probability that the results occurred by chance. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
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