

# School Support and Readiness Assessment Summary Report

<b>School:</b> Red Mountain Middle School	<b>LEA:</b> Deming
<b>School Leader:</b> William Richmond	<b>LEA Leader:</b> Vicki Chavez
<b>SSRA Team Leader:</b> Connie Copeland	<b>Date:</b> November 8, 2023
<b>School Description</b>	
<p>Red Mountain Middle School serves 760 students in grades seven and eight. The leadership team comprises Principal Richmond and two assistant principals. Red Mountain employs 48 full-time teachers and a support staff of 35-40 people.</p> <p>Just over half of the students at Red Mountain are designated as English language learners, and 17% qualify for special education services.</p> <p>Attendance at Red Mountain Middle School is roughly 90%; the highest number of office referrals for discipline has been 70 weekly, of which 20 were for bus referrals.</p> <p>After participating in professional development in project-based learning, the Red Mountain Middle School staff developed the following mission and vision statement: <i>Raising Champions; Motivating Minds; Molding Character; Supporting Community.</i></p> <p>The school's DASH goals are as follows:  <i>English language arts (ELA): 100% of teachers will incorporate the four domains of language during direct instruction.</i> This goal was determined to be ambitious and was narrowed to speaking and writing at the last 30-day meeting. Following that meeting, it was limited further to speaking. Teachers are working on vocabulary in their professional learning communities now.</p> <p><i>Math: 100% of teachers will analyze data to plan for instruction and interventions.</i> This goal has been in place for a long time, and leaders have determined that it is not fully implemented; there is an opportunity to provide explicit professional development to support more teachers in the skills needed to meet this goal.</p>	
<b>School Successes and Celebrations</b>	
<p>Red Mountain Middle School is growing and changing to meet the needs of its community. It is the first school in the district to become a community school, adding after-school programming and resources such as a food bank. There is a strong sense of collaboration and support. Teachers are encouraged by the new administrative team, which is implementing improved systems to bring about needed change.</p>	

**DOMAIN 1: CULTURE & EQUITY**

*To what degree has the school established equitable practices that ensure ALL students and staff have an opportunity to reach their full potential?*

**Promising Practices:**

The advent of the new after-school programming at Red Mountain is positive and promising. A social-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum is offered during the seventh period. One of the new assistant principals is creating this curriculum to ease teachers' workloads. There is also a plan to develop additional after-school classes to meet diverse student interests.

Red Mountain is innovating to meet the needs of its students and families in and out of school. The school employs a full-time Community Schools Coordinator who helps manage the food and clothing banks. Students who participate in after-school programming are fed meals and can use a late bus that goes to neighboring Columbus Elementary.

**Opportunities for Growth:**

Communication at Red Mountain Middle School is both a promising practice and an opportunity for growth. The administrative staff at Red Mountain knows all the students enrolled at the school, creating a safe and welcoming environment. Additionally, the school has started sharing "shout outs," or recognition of positive behaviors.

There is an opportunity to streamline and systematize this communication, as teachers communicate using different methods and platforms. While teachers send home individual progress reports, this system could be more efficient for all stakeholders. A plan to share activities and student successes would bolster relationships between the school and the families it serves.

**Potential Next Steps:**

Red Mountain Middle School already has a strong and consistent implementation of Microsoft Teams for teacher collaboration. The leadership team could create a protocol for teachers to share successes and celebrations and house them in a Teams folder. This information could then be used to acknowledge students and faculty across campus for accomplishments that might otherwise go unseen. This type of public acknowledgment protects against teacher burnout and contributes to feelings of collective efficacy.

The school can take a multi-pronged approach to create more consistent communication channels with students and their families. They can weave the completion of Infinite Campus into the registration requirements to get all families signed up from the beginning. When internet access is challenging, the school may help secure hot spots and other technology needs. These resources will help families and students stay connected. Finally, there is an opportunity to diversify the types of platforms being used – more information can be shared on social

media, including sites like TikTok, where some students and families get information.

Existing infrastructures for communication can also be updated. The school might work with the librarian to post activities and successes – internally for faculty and externally for families. The school can also contribute to the district newsletter. Families need information in many formats. Especially in a time of growth and change, Red Mountain Middle School has an opportunity to educate families and open doors to its enhanced offerings.

## **DOMAIN 2: LEADERSHIP**

*To what degree does school leadership establish, communicate, support, and monitor schoolwide priorities?*

### **Promising Practices:**

With the new administrative team at Red Mountain Middle School, there are also unique structures for teacher leadership that are promising. The school has implemented pods and a core team. Teachers applied to be on the core team, and each has a defined role and responsibilities. One of the first things the core team did together was participate in learning walks. During these walks, teachers were surprised at some aspects of the school climate they observed. The conversations that started during these walks helped the team envision and develop a plan that added support for English language learners. Teachers are excited and optimistic about the direction the school is taking.

Another helpful, collaborative structure at Red Mountain Middle School is learning pods. Within this model, teachers have weekly grade-level collaboration time. They can also discuss and plan for individual interventions for students. New teachers are supported by the models provided by veteran teachers in these collaborative settings. Teachers also have the opportunity to visit one another's classrooms to conduct peer observations. The administrative team has opened doors for teacher leadership and continued growth by scheduling and protecting teacher collaboration time.

### **Opportunities for Growth:**

As the leadership team at Red Mountain continues to create and modify systems to meet the evolving needs of its students and staff, transparent and timely communication will continue to aid efforts at transparency. There is a new, progressive disciplinary policy; there needs to be a way to track its efficacy and set and monitor goals related to student behavior. Similarly, new collaborative structures enable teachers to conduct peer observations more frequently. There is an opportunity to reinforce schoolwide instructional initiatives through shared observation protocols. When teachers are empowered to conduct observations in the way they will be observed, they unlock new avenues of reflection. There is safety in knowing the expectations and clarity in knowing how schoolwide goals manifest at the individual classroom level.

The school has had an influx of new resources; teachers, support staff, families, and students

will need training to use some of these. Where new technologies provide progress monitoring, teachers can automate more frequent checks for understanding and communication about students' proficiency levels on identified standards. When families are empowered to use these tools, they can help provide accountability and encouragement at home.

Finally, as new structures, such as grade-level pods, are implemented, school leadership can communicate what is happening and why. Sharing the rationale behind new initiatives will help families know what to expect and how best to support. Multilingual school communications will increase access to this critical information.

**Potential Next Steps:**

As Principal Richmond monitors and adjusts schoolwide goals, he must prioritize which initiatives to implement this year. He will then need to work with his leadership team and the core team to develop an implementation plan for each initiative.

Components of an implementation plan will need to include detailed timelines and responsibilities, as well as benchmarks. The 90-day plan can be a powerful vehicle to divide the year into manageable periods with discrete goals.

As students, grade levels, and content areas work to meet the goals outlined in the 90-day plan, progress should be communicated frequently and in ways that are understandable to diverse stakeholders. The school can provide data literacy training for teachers so that they might work towards the DASH goals and communicate progress to students and families. Similarly, collaborative protocols and shared observation tools would help teachers use critical contract hours as efficiently as possible.

The school has a strong start leveraging teacher expertise for the core team; this group can help disseminate information, gather feedback, and help create systems to support the schoolwide initiatives that the leadership team chooses to prioritize.

**DOMAIN 3: INSTRUCTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

*To what degree is the school's instructional infrastructure in place, understood, and utilized by school leaders and teachers?*

**Promising Practices:**

Red Mountain Middle School has created intentional, frequent opportunities for teacher collaboration to meet schoolwide goals. These have included grade-level, department, and schoolwide professional development and data days. Grade-level pods and departments meet weekly. Content departments meet to analyze common formative assessment (CFA) data. The whole staff meets three times a year after interims to analyze data. This year's PLC PD days were used to train staff to support the new seventh-period SEL focus.

**Opportunities for Growth:**

At Red Mountain Middle School, data is being collected and analyzed. There is an opportunity to aid teachers in implementing instructional practices that help students meet the rigor required for grade-level proficiency. Sometimes, teachers can rely on tried-and-tested strategies that have worked for them or are low-effort to create. They may fear change or not know how to make needed changes.

The leadership team at Red Mountain has identified speaking as their DASH ELA goal, having narrowed the focus from all four language domains to one. To support teachers in creating opportunities for student talk, the administrative team will need to examine instructional materials and practices closely. When teachers are using a curricular resource that does not meet the required rigor, administrators should be able to initiate the hard conversations about how to adjust or abandon lessons and activities that no longer serve their intended purpose.

Student scores on standardized tests and benchmarks are one indicator of proficiency; classroom observations are a more timely, granular way to understand what the instructional day looks and sounds like for students. As teachers focus on meeting speaking goals, they may need modeling and support in creating protocols and small-group structures to engage more frequent student responses. Teachers may benefit from support in developing speaking rubrics and other ways of monitoring and communicating students' growth in this language domain.

**Potential Next Steps:**

The new administrative team at Red Mountain Middle School has quickly earned the trust of its faculty. To support teachers in improving instructional practices, the administrative team will need to prioritize the schedule of observations and feedback that they have developed. This standardization and follow-through will help teachers feel that their work is valued and that their leaders are interested in their continued growth. As peer observations increase, administrators can share observation protocols and suggest pairings to help teachers learn from those with similar students, content, or accommodation needs.

Finally, families and students can be powerful thought partners as the school implements new changes. To close the communication loop, see what messaging is making its way home, and enlist the expertise of constituents, the school can employ appointment cards. Communication should flow both ways and be offered in multiple languages and formats.