

# School Support and Readiness Assessment Monitoring Visit Summary Report

<b>School:</b> Mesa Elementary School	<b>LEA:</b> Central Consolidated School District
<b>School Leader:</b> Gina Jones	<b>LEA Leader:</b> Steve Carlson
<b>SSRA Team Leader:</b> Lizette Ridgeway	<b>Date:</b> April 24, 2024
<b>School Successes and Celebrations</b>	
<p>The school leader and team shared many successes and celebrations of the past year for Mesa Elementary School (MES). A concerted effort has been made to refine and enhance information sharing and communication structures within the school community. This commitment to transparency and openness extends beyond the instructional staff to encompass all school members, including parents, custodians, and kitchen staff. Through initiatives such as the open door policy, The Dash, and regular updates shared with everyone in the building, the school has cultivated open lines of communication, enabling meaningful dialogue and mutual understanding.</p> <p>The school has capitalized on increased opportunities for professional development (PD) outside of campus. By participating in external PD sessions, staff members can network with peers, access valuable training resources, and gain exposure to best practices that may not have been readily available.</p> <p>The school's response to being identified as a Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) campus has been marked by a collective spirit of collaboration and teamwork. While a dedicated team was established to plan and lead improvement efforts, the engagement and involvement of staff from various departments have been instrumental in driving progress toward shared goals. This inclusive approach has fostered a sense of unity and shared purpose among staff members, reinforcing the school's commitment to collective success.</p> <p>Finally, the new principal's leadership has established a strong culture of transparency and accountability. Through initiatives such as streamlining benchmarking processes and enhancing visibility around the school's 90 Day Plan and improvement focus areas, the school has cultivated a sense of urgency and shared responsibility for driving positive change. By communicating the "why" behind these initiatives, the school has galvanized support and engagement, laying the foundation for continued growth and success in the future.</p>	

## Progress Toward Next Steps Identified in SSRA Summary

### **SSRA Summary Next Step #1: Create an infographic detailing the newly approved 90 Day Plan, articulate clear expectations to the entire staff, and oversee schoolwide implementation.**

The school has made significant progress by having a member of the CSI team successfully create an infographic detailing the newly approved 90 Day Plan. This infographic visualizes the school's priorities and critical actions, offering a clear and concise overview of the objectives. The strategic placement of these infographics throughout the school, including critical locations and the MES website, ensures widespread visibility and accessibility for all stakeholders.

The school demonstrated proactive communication by sharing the infographic with parents during the Parent Advisory Committee Meeting, fostering transparency and engagement within the school community. This communication tool made it easy for stakeholders to grasp the school's focus areas and objectives. As a result, the 90 Day Plan has become an integral part of the school's culture, guiding staff members in their collective efforts toward continuous improvement. Overall, successfully creating and utilizing the infographic reflects the school's commitment to clarity, transparency, and constant improvement.

### **SSRA Summary Next Step #2: To further support mathematics instruction, deepen teachers' understanding of facilitating student discourse through Number Talks, a book study, and professional development opportunities for teachers to integrate this strategy into their classrooms.**

Progress has been made in this area despite the delay in integrating a book study into Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) until the upcoming academic year. Several deliberate efforts at MES have been made to enhance mathematical instruction and student engagement. Drawing insights from their High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) and leveraging Number Talks, the school strategically focuses on improving mathematical discourse and problem-solving skills. Principal Jones and the three teachers who attended a math conference believed it further enriched their understanding of effective instructional strategies, particularly regarding Number Talks. This knowledge will be disseminated through a professional development session scheduled for this week, allowing staff to learn and reinforce the importance of Number Talks in mathematics instruction.

All certified staff at MES have completed initial Number Talks training and are actively implementing strategies to engage students in mathematical discussions using critical Tier II and III vocabulary. Teams have initiated this process using Great Minds (HQIM) Fluency Reviews as a launch for their Number Talks, with further support and study of this instructional strategy integrated into ongoing professional development around math instruction. Principal Jones's walkthroughs, focusing on teacher practices within the framework of Number Talks, provide valuable insights into strengths and areas for growth among the teaching staff. Additionally, the school's decision to strategically introduce Number Talks this semester allows teachers to familiarize themselves with the approach and prepare for a more comprehensive implementation in the upcoming academic year.

**SSRA Summary Next Step #3: Emphasize vocabulary and word walls in ELA to bolster students' operational understanding of grade-level vocabulary.**

In PLC meetings, teachers at MES have proactively enhanced classroom instruction by implementing Word Walls for math academic vocabulary and English language arts (ELA) instruction. Notably, approximately 80% of teachers have initiated the creation of Word Walls and anchor charts for ELA, contributing to a more immersive learning environment. Principal Jones has encouraged more student involvement in creating Word Walls for the next school year to foster a greater sense of ownership among students. Looking ahead to the next school year, MES plans to further promote Word Walls by facilitating gallery walks to share different ideas and strategies among teachers. The initiative to introduce Word Walls initially in math instruction has organically expanded to other subjects such as ELA, electives, science, and heritage language, reflecting the school's commitment to interdisciplinary learning.

**SSRA Summary Next Step #4: Establish robust attendance procedures and foster productive communication between the administration and teachers.**

Mesa Elementary School is actively refining attendance policies and procedures in collaboration with the Central Consolidated School District Attendance Team. Moving forward, the school aims to establish clear guidelines and protocols for attendance management, including leveraging PowerSchool for communication with parents and delineating expectations for staff in attendance tracking. Efforts are underway to address the nuances of excused and unexcused absences, providing clarity to parents and teachers alike. Additionally, implementing revised breakfast procedures has yielded promising results in reducing tardiness, highlighting the effectiveness of proactive measures in improving attendance outcomes.

Principal Jones's committed approach to communication has significantly enhanced staff engagement and cohesion at MES. Through initiatives like The Dash, an internal slide deck for disseminating important announcements, Principal Jones ensures transparent and timely communication across the school community. Adopting the Capturing Kids' Hearts professional development program further underscores MES's commitment to fostering a positive school culture and strengthening interpersonal communication among staff members.

**SSRA Summary Next Step #5: Implement a rotating substitute system to allow teachers to observe their colleagues in action and foster a collaborative culture among teachers.**

Mesa ES has recently acquired Swivl devices, enabling teachers to record classroom instruction across various content areas. Introducing these instructional tools marks a significant step towards enhancing professional development and collaboration among staff members. Moving forward, teachers are expected to utilize the Swivl devices to capture and share video recordings of their instructional practices during Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings, fostering a culture of reflective practice and collective learning. Specifically, the focus will be on capturing components of math instruction to facilitate targeted discussions and improvements in teaching strategies.

While the implementation of rotating substitute time has not been realized at MES, plans are

underway to integrate this practice into the school schedule for the upcoming academic year. This initiative optimizes instructional time by providing teachers with collaborative planning, observation, and professional development opportunities. By effectively leveraging rotating substitute time, MES seeks to enhance teacher collaboration and instructional effectiveness, ultimately contributing to improved student outcomes.

**SSRA Summary Next Step #6: Take staff members to professional learning sessions on Capturing Kids' Hearts to impact adult interactions and foster positive atmospheres throughout the school.**

Mesa ES is gearing up for a comprehensive professional development session on Capturing Kids' Hearts, scheduled for the end of the month. This two-day training program will involve the entire staff, including teachers, custodial, and kitchen staff. The initiative aims to cultivate a positive school culture by emphasizing the importance of building solid relationships with students. Staff members who have already undergone the training actively promote the program, highlight its benefits, and advocate for its implementation across the school.

Under the leadership of Principal Jones, the school is committed to fostering a supportive and welcoming environment for all students. As part of the Capturing Kids' Hearts program, staff members have begun implementing practices such as greeting students by name and conducting brief check-ins at the classroom door. These efforts reflect a proactive approach to behavior management, focusing on nurturing positive interactions between adults and students to create a conducive learning environment. Through the upcoming PD session and ongoing implementation of Capturing Kids' Hearts principles, MES aims to strengthen its school community further and enhance student engagement and success.

**SSRA Summary Next Step #7: Focus on teachers' ongoing professional development through the 6-step unit planning process to deepen understanding of academic standards and enhance instructional effectiveness.**

Principal Jones and the CSI team recognized the need for a more streamlined approach, moving from a complex 12-step process towards a more accessible framework for lesson planning support. The goal was to develop a simplified yet effective tool that teachers could consistently utilize to enhance their instructional practices. A fluid and adaptable document was created through collaborative efforts, guiding teachers in their planning endeavors.

Under the guidance of a consultant, teachers have been actively refining their unit planning processes using a structured six-step template during PLC sessions. This approach has facilitated shared data analysis and the implementation of cohesive instructional plans across math classrooms. Recent resources on lesson design from Solution Tree have been introduced, providing further support and strategies to enhance teaching practices. As teachers navigate this evolving process, the focus remains on ensuring intentional instruction while minimizing transition times to maximize instructional opportunities within the classroom.

**School Leader's Next Steps**

Moving forward, Mesa ES intends to maintain many of the focus areas of the current 90 Day Plan, recognizing its effectiveness in guiding school improvement efforts. The focus will remain on implementing and refining Number Talks for math instruction, with a commitment to delve deeper into this instructional strategy. Additionally, attention will be directed toward further refining the attendance program and continuing to foster a positive and inclusive school culture.

Principal Jones is committed to ensuring that all students, particularly English Learners (ELs), benefit from high-leverage strategies. Despite the availability of resources, the challenge lies in optimizing instructional time. Therefore, the school is deliberately trying to choose and implement strategies that impact student learning most while maintaining a positive and supportive school environment.