

School Support and Readiness Assessment Monitoring Visit Summary Report

School: Nizhoni Elementary School	LEA: Central Consolidated School District
School Leader: Pandora Watchman	LEA Leader: Steve Carlson
SSRA Team Leader: Matt Williams, Ph.D.	Date: April 23, 2024
School Successes and Celebrations	
<p>Nizhoni Elementary has used iStation literacy data to identify and work toward growth targets. Recent data demonstrates an average progress of 2% from October to March in proficiency Levels 2, 4, and 5, indicating an improvement in student reading skills and the filling of knowledge gaps. However, this growth does fall short of the targeted 5%. Specifically, 1% of Level 1 students experienced a decrease, while 1% of Level 2 students also decreased. Conversely, 2% showed improvement in Level 3, 3% decreased in Level 4, and 3% improved in Level 5.</p> <p>Staff actively collaborates through weekly Professional Learning Community meetings (PLCs) to review student data and identify learning needs so that better planning can be done accordingly. Principal Watchman reviews PLC notes and reports that five out of six grade-level PLCs consistently review data.</p> <p>Positive communication among staff has notably improved, attributed to various channels of communication used for information dissemination. In addition to reviewing PLC notes, leadership has identified that four out of five modes of communication have been successful among blogs, emails, daily announcements, PLC meetings, and printed copies of emails. Principal Watchman reports that communication effectiveness has increased to approximately 85%-90%.</p>	
Progress Toward Next Steps Identified in SSRA Summary	
<p>SSRA Summary Next Step #1: Prioritize professional development (PD) based on teacher needs.</p> <p>The district and the school conducted professional development sessions bi-weekly to address teacher needs in math and reading. Topics included the use of Eureka (attended by 95% of teachers), iStation (95% attendance), Vector training (100% attendance), LETRS (attended by all 4th and 5th-grade teachers), and Empower Consultants (attended by all teachers). These sessions have provided teachers with strategies for fostering student growth and improvement in the classroom. Empower Consultants engaged with teachers twice during the semester to identify areas of need and demonstrate intervention strategies such as strong tier one instruction, Small Group Instruction (SGI), differentiated instruction, and math instructional</p>	

best practices.

Additionally, the school district provided coaches for Principal Watchman to support planning, feedback, and support at the leadership level. The district coach met with the principal weekly when available. At the same time, a consultant from Solution Tree observed classes and assisted the principal in areas such as PLC meetings and data analysis.

Data supporting professional development efforts includes the district's PD schedule, sign-in sheets for attendance, identified areas of need from classroom walkthroughs and observations, and records from PLC meetings. Progress is documented through the district's PD schedule, attendance sheets, walkthrough data, and formal observations in Canvas.

SSRA Summary Next Step #2: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH—a curricular program publishing company) will redo reading PD to better utilize available resources.

The district did not provide HMH follow-up PD but will be a next step to address by the end of the year.

SSRA Summary Next Step #3: Re-engage Eureka Math to provide deeper PD on resource use.

The district provided Eureka Math online training focused on math fluency, attended by 90% of teachers. Teachers found the training informative and expressed interest in future sessions. This training emphasized fluency practices to enhance student learning in math, incorporating strategies like sprints, counting, and using whiteboards. Following the district's recommendation, Nizhoni shifted math instruction to the morning in the second semester.

SSRA Summary Next Step #4: Collaborate among the leadership team to identify and provide team-building PD.

Throughout the year, leadership provided various professional development opportunities. These included sessions facilitated by the district focusing on identifying True Colors personality types to enhance interpersonal dynamics. Over 95% of staff were in attendance. The principal also organized exclusive meetings for the Educational Assistants (EAs), with 100% attendance, to reaffirm their commitment to their roles, clarify responsibilities, and emphasize their valuable contributions to classrooms. The principal plans to continue these meetings to integrate the voice of EAs into the school community. Principal Watchman reports that the leadership team has been effective and positive this year and plans to keep the same members for next year.

SSRA Summary Next Step #5: Conduct classroom visits with the entire staff to observe exemplars of expectations.

Teachers were tasked with observing classrooms as outlined in the 90 Day Plan. While some expressed interest in visiting classrooms outside the school, Principal Watchman suggested prioritizing internal observations. Although these observations have not yet begun, the next step

is to pilot the process before the end of the year.

SSRA Summary Next Step #6: Use exit tickets for the leadership team to ensure clarity of expectations.

While exit tickets were not yet implemented, plans were made to address communication goals for the future. Principal Watchman proposed a monthly “blog” that would include email updates, staff calendar postings in the teacher’s lounge, and announcements based on discussions from the leadership team and weekly PLC meetings. Instead of the leadership team handling these communications, they were expected to share relevant information with their respective teams during PLCs. Expectations were outlined in the leadership team agenda for teachers to follow through and disseminate to their grade levels, with documentation stored on Google Drive. The principal attended meetings or reviewed PLC agendas to ensure that information from leadership discussions was shared.

SSRA Summary Next Step #7: Provide teachers feedback on higher-level thinking in one-on-ones and PLC settings.

Feedback regarding higher-level thinking has not been emphasized. During feedback sessions with teachers, Principal Watchman focused primarily on Small Group Instruction (SGI) and distinguishing between Layer I and Layer II instruction. It was suggested that differentiated instruction should be incorporated within Layer I, while targeted interventions should be a component of Layer II instruction.

School Leader’s Next Steps

Principal Watchman has identified priority next steps to focus on for the coming year.

The first concern is building teacher capacity in next year’s Layer I and II instruction. The focus will be ensuring that 100% of teachers prioritize SGI and differentiated interventions, utilizing student data to group students accordingly. Training with Eureka Math will continue to enhance teachers’ proficiency and confidence in implementing the curriculum.

Principal Watchman will be leveraging HMH professional development provided by the district. This PD will take place before the end of the year to improve the implementation of the HMH program and increase the percentage of teachers practicing SGI within their literacy block. This initiative will also better prepare teachers for the upcoming school year.

Walkthroughs and observations will be conducted to monitor the utilization of Eureka strategies. The school staff will focus on differentiation by using SGI for Layer I instruction and continuing to practice targeted Layer II interventions. A plan is in place to measure the implementation of these strategies through data collected during walkthroughs and observations.

The final aspect of this plan is the implementation of teacher peer observations. Three

exemplary teachers will be selected to showcase specific strategies to colleagues needing support. This initiative will be expanded among the staff in the coming academic year.

Developing leadership and systems at Nizhoni will continue to be a focus. The leadership team convened twice monthly to address team-building needs, notably focusing on enhancing communication. While a vendor was considered for staff training, it was decided to implement monthly professional development sessions throughout the upcoming academic year.

Implementing exit ticket protocols at the close of each leadership team meeting still needs to be done. These exit tickets will identify three key action steps for dissemination to their respective teams. Principal Watchman will incorporate data from classroom walkthroughs and observations into each leadership team meeting to inform discussions, monitor progress in identified focus areas, and recognize achievements.