

## School Improvement and Transformation Monitoring Visit Summary Beginning of Year (SITM-BOY)

<b>School:</b> Thoreau Middle School	<b>LEA:</b> Gallup-McKinley County Schools
<b>School Leader:</b> Nadine Gonzales	<b>LEA Leader:</b> Wade Bell
<b>SITM Team Leader:</b> Robyn Cook	<b>Date:</b> October 16, 2024
<b>School Description</b>	
<p>Thoreau Middle School, located on the southeastern edge of the Gallup-McKinley County School District, serves grades six through eight. Enrollment has grown from approximately 235 students in the 2023-2024 school year to around 268 students for 2024-2025. The staff includes three English language arts (ELA) teachers, one ELA special education resource teacher, four math teachers, two social studies teachers, two science teachers, one low incidence disability special education (LIDS) teacher, one home language and culture teacher, one broadcasting/computer teacher, one physical education teacher, a special education program assistant, two special education personal care assistants (PCAs), a counselor, health assistant, registrar, bookkeeper, liaison, library assistant, three custodians, three kitchen staff members, a principal, a part-time dean (two days per week), and two safety staff members shared across three schools.</p> <p>The student body includes 53 students who qualify for special education services, 11 in the gifted and talented education (GATE) program, 10 in the LIDS program, and 32 in the resource/inclusion program. The student demographics are predominantly Native American (83%), with 5% Caucasian, 0.3% Asian, and 11% identifying as Other. The school has an average attendance rate of 92%. One challenge from the enrollment growth is larger class sizes, with some reaching 31 students. Additionally, 42% of the student population are English learners (ELs).</p> <p>Thoreau Middle School's vision is to create a safe, community-oriented environment that fosters personal growth and success for all learners. Its mission is to challenge every student to reach their full potential through goal-driven, purposeful learning. The school emphasizes differentiated instruction to support individual student growth and prioritizes a positive school culture that engages students and families. Family involvement has significantly increased over the past three years, with a rise in attendance at parent nights, and discipline referrals have steadily decreased from 305 in 2021-2022 to 170 in 2023-2024, partly due to positive behavior interventions and support (PBIS) and incentive programs.</p> <p>Despite progress, the 2024-2025 school year presents several challenges as the school navigates a transition period. The leadership team has only one returning member, and seven new teachers have joined, including an entirely new ELA department and half of the</p>	

math department. Additionally, the district discontinued the PBIS program, which is integral to the school's culture, and the replacement program needs to meet previous standards. Increased district expectations for teachers have also added pressure, making it difficult to maintain the positive atmosphere of earlier years.

Discipline is an ongoing concern for the principal, who is proud of the improvements made through the Kickboard behavior management system. However, with the district ending this partnership, the school is exploring alternatives such as Class Dojo. The principal also noted the impact of losing a full-time dean, who is now shared with the high school. Empower, a partner organization, is working with the school to provide support through an Empower coach and professional development in SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL.)

The principal highlighted a shift since COVID-19, with students beginning to demonstrate better behavior and settle into routines, though the school still faces challenges with large class sizes.

### **School Successes and Celebrations**

Over the past three years, Thoreau Middle School's successes have been deeply rooted in its strong, positive school culture, driven by a servant leadership philosophy for students and staff. Building meaningful relationships with students is a key priority, ensuring every student feels seen, valued, and safe. The school has implemented effective systems like the PBIS framework for discipline and a thriving school store, which have played a crucial role in shaping this culture. The leadership team has also grown significantly, taking on more responsibility and becoming true leaders within the school community.

Despite being small, Thoreau Middle School has expanded its extracurricular offerings. After-school programs now include a bike club, MESA (Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement), yearbook, and sports such as volleyball, football, cross country, basketball, and track. The school is also considering adding a solar club and mental health activities to enrich student experiences further. Community involvement has increased through initiatives like "Coffee with the Principal," which initially had a low turnout but evolved into afternoon "Tea & Talk Time @ THM," attracting more parents, students, and community partners. Attendance at regular parent nights and community events has steadily grown.

In addition to fostering a strong school culture, the school has improved its practices around data-driven instruction (DDI) and literacy, positively impacting student achievement. The principal's goal is to make a lasting impact by improving student outcomes and academic performance, enhancing teachers' instructional practices, or creating a welcoming, supportive atmosphere for the entire school community.

The school has also implemented quarterly field trips as incentives based on students' attendance, zero office referrals, and grades. However, funding limitations this year have

shifted the focus to in-school events like field day and partnerships with organizations like Explora. Additionally, the school has introduced partner reading to help build students' background knowledge for formative assessments. It has linked similar strategies to math instruction, continuing to work on increasing academic rigor across subjects.

Through a supportive, servant leadership model and continuous community engagement, Thoreau Middle School celebrates its progress in building a vibrant, inclusive environment for its students and staff.

## **NM DASH Development and Implementation**

The school's 90-Day Plan addresses academics and culture. The school has identified three contributing factors to low-performance rates: (1) lack of backward planning, (2) lack of small group interventions, and (3) lack of differentiated instruction.

The desired outcomes include:

### **ELA & Math**

- 100% of teachers will utilize the data analysis protocol weekly to analyze and monitor assessment data, progressing into analyzing reteaching data to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional strategies, leading to informed instructional decisions and improved student outcomes.
- 100% of teachers will effectively utilize weekly formative and three-week assessment data to implement targeted small-group instruction, ensuring differentiated learning that meets each student's needs and promotes academic growth.

### **Science**

- By December 2024, 100% of teachers will develop facilitation PowerPoint slides (lesson plans) aligned to the Year at a Glance (YAG) and based on the gradual release of responsibility following established instruction priorities to support layer one instruction and intervention.

### **ELP**

- 100% of teachers will implement sheltered instruction strategies to support and improve academic outcomes for the EL population.

## **School Progress**

## Current Three-year Data Trends

### NM-MSSA - ELA Percentage Proficient

	School	6th	7th	8th
2022	15	15	17	13
2023	28	29	26	30
2024	26	17	32	29
2025 (Goal)	36	36	29	42

### ELA

- Current 6th-grade students showed 24% proficiency on the 23-24 NM-MSSA summative assessment.
- 7th-grade students showed 17% proficiency, and
- 8th grade showed 32%.
  
- Within these groups, 6th-grade ELs showed 10% proficiency on the 23-24 NM-MSSA assessment,
- 7th-grade showed 12%, and
- 8th-grade showed 29% proficiency.
  
- Within these groups, all special education groups scored 0% proficiency.

### Summative ELA Goals

- The growth goals for the 24-25 NM-MSSA summative assessment will be for each grade level to improve proficiency by 12% to increase reading proficiency.
  - The 6th-grade goal is to reach 36% proficiency.
  - The 7th-grade is to reach 29% proficiency.
  - The 8th-grade is to reach 42% proficiency.

### Monitoring Goals

- On the 2024 EOY iMSSA benchmark assessment, current 6th-grade students showed 29% proficiency, 7th grade showed 16%, and 8th grade showed 34% proficiency.
- The growth goals for the 2025 EOY iMSSA assessment are for
  - The 6th-grade goal is to be a minimum of 39% proficiency.
  - The 7th-grade is to be a minimum of 28% proficiency.
  - The 8th-grade is to be a minimum of 46% proficiency.

### MSSA - Math Percentage Proficient

	School	6th	7th	8th
2022	11	16	8	8
2023	10	13	8	9
2024	9	16	7	5
2025 (Goal)	25	27	28	19

**Math**

- Current 6th-grade students showed 15% proficiency on the 23-24 NM-MSSA summative assessment.
- 7th-grade students showed only 16% proficiency, and
- 8th grade showed 7%.
  
- Within these groups, 6th-grade EL students showed 10% proficiency on the 23-24 NM-MSSA assessment,
- 7th-grade 15%, and
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade 0% proficiency.
  
- In these groups, 6th and 7th-grade special education groups scored 0% proficiency, and
- 8th-grade scored 11%.

**Summative Math Goals**

- The growth goals for the 24-25 NM-MSSA summative assessment will be for each grade level to improve proficiency by 12% to increase reading proficiency.
  - The 6th-grade goal is to reach 27% proficiency.
  - The 7th-grade is to reach 28% proficiency.
  - The 8th-grade is to reach 19% proficiency.

**Monitoring Goals**

- On the 2024 EOY iMSSA benchmark assessment, current 6th-grade students showed 21% proficiency, 7th grade showed 30%, and 8th grade showed 17% proficiency.
- The growth goals for the 2025 EOY iMSSA assessment are for are:
  - 6th-grade proficiency to be a minimum of 33% proficiency.
  - 7th-grade to be a minimum of 42% proficiency.
  - 8th-grade to be a minimum of 29% proficiency.

**NM-ASR - Science Percentage Proficient**

2022	16
2023	15

<b>2024</b>	18
<b>2025 (Goal)</b>	30

**Science**

- 18% of 8th-grade students scored proficient on the 2023-24 NM-ASR assessment.

**Summative Goal**

- Students will increase by 12% on the 2024-25 NM-ASR, with a goal of 30% proficient.

**Monitoring Goal**

- 8th-grade students will consistently demonstrate an increase of 4% on each interim assessment, with a 12% total increase by the end of the third quarter.
  - BOY will increase from 18% to 22%,
  - MOY will increase from 22% to 26%, and
  - EOY will increase from 26% to 30%.

**iMSSA - Reading Percentage Proficient**

	<b>School</b>	<b>6th</b>	<b>7th</b>	<b>8th</b>
<b>2022 EOY</b>	12	9	16	10
<b>2023 EOY</b>	26	19	34	26
<b>2024 EOY</b>	26	16	34	29
<b>2024 BOY</b>	18	12	13	29
<b>2025 MOY (Goal)</b>	24	18	19	35
<b>2025 EOY (Goal)</b>	30	24	25	41

**iMSSA - Language Usage Percentage Proficient**

	<b>School</b>	<b>6th</b>	<b>7th</b>	<b>8th</b>
<b>2023 EOY</b>	21	24	22	17
<b>2024 EOY</b>	21	17	31	14
<b>2024 BOY</b>	10	10	9	11
<b>2025 MOY (Goal)</b>	16	16	15	17
<b>2025 EOY (Goal)</b>	22	22	21	23

**iMSSA - Math Percentage Proficient**

	School	6th	7th	8th
2022 EOY	3	8	0	1
2023 EOY	13	10	13	16
2024 EOY	22	30	17	18
2024 BOY	14	14	9	18
2025 MOY (Goal)	20	20	15	24
2025 EOY (Goal)	26	26	21	30

**Course Failure Rates****ELA**

- 2021-2022 – 49
- 2022-2023 – 21
- 2023-2024 – 32

**Math**

- 2021-2022 – 5
- 2022-2023 – 26
- 2023-2024 – 33

**Science**

- 2021-2022 – 40
- 2022-2023 – 14
- 2023-2024 – 36

**Social Studies**

- 2021-2022 – 54
- 2022-2023 – 34
- 2023-2024 – 52

**Attendance Rate Percentages**

	School	6th	7th	8th
2022	73	76	75	68
2023	90	91	90	89

<b>2024</b>	90	92	90	90
<b>2025 (Goal)</b>	93	94	92	92

**English Language Proficiency (ELP)**

- 3% of 5th-grade ELs scored proficient on the Language EOY iMSSA assessment.
- 0% of ELs scored proficient on the 22-23 WIDA assessment.
- 6% of 6th-grade ELs scored proficient on the EOY iMSSA Language assessment.
- 0% of students scored proficient on the 23-24 WIDA assessment.
- 24% of 7th-grade ELs scored proficient on the EOY iMSSA assessment.
- 8% of students scored proficient on the 23-24 WIDA assessment.

**Summative Goals**

- 10% of 6th grade ELs will score proficient on the 24-25 WIDA assessment.
- 10% of 7th-grade students will score proficient on the 24-25 SY WIDA assessment.
- 18% of 8th-grade students will score proficient on the 24-25 SY WIDA assessment.

**Monitoring Goals**

- All 6th-grade ELs will consistently demonstrate an increase of 4% on each quarterly Language interim assessment, with at least 15% proficiency by the end of the 3rd quarter.
- All 7th-grade ELs will consistently demonstrate an increase of 4% on each quarterly Language interim assessment, with at least 18% proficiency by the end of the 3rd quarter.
- All 8th-grade ELs will consistently demonstrate an increase of 4% on each quarterly Language interim assessment, with at least 36% proficiency by the end of the 3rd quarter.

**EL iMSSA - Reading**

	<b>Needs Support</b>	<b>Near Target</b>	<b>On Target</b>
<b>6th BOY</b>	72	28	0
MOY Goal	62	38	0
EOY Goal	52	48	10
<b>7th</b>	59	34	7
MOY Goal	49	44	7
EOY Goal	39	54	17
<b>8th</b>	63	23	14



MOY Goal	53	33	14
EOY Goal	43	43	24

**EL iMSSA - Language Usage**

	<b>Needs Support</b>	<b>Near Target</b>	<b>On Target</b>
<b>6th</b>	52	44	4
MOY Goal	42	54	4
EOY Goal	32	64	14
<b>7th</b>	66	34	0
MOY Goal	56	44	0
EOY Goal	46	54	10
<b>8th</b>	41	57	2
MOY Goal	31	67	2
EOY Goal	21	77	12

**EL iMSSA - Math**

	<b>Needs Support</b>	<b>Near Target</b>	<b>On Target</b>
<b>6th</b>	64	28	8
MOY Goal	54	38	8
EOY Goal	44	48	18
<b>7th</b>	45	48	7
MOY Goal	35	58	7
EOY Goal	25	68	17
<b>8th</b>	77	18	5
MOY Goal	67	28	5
EOY Goal	57	38	10

**Goal-Setting Process:**

The goal-setting process at Thoreau Middle School began with a collaboration between the building leadership team and administration to develop the school's 90-Day Plan. Once the plan was finalized, it was shared with all teachers to ensure everyone understood the school's direction and goals for the upcoming 90 days. The district also provided feedback on the plan format to help refine the approach.

Since half of the staff is new and the other half is working to implement strategies with fidelity, the team identified key focus areas for improvement. These areas include small group instruction, reteaching, data dives to inform reteaching and small groups, partner reading, and SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) strategies.

The Collaborative Leadership Team (CLT), consisting of the principal, dean, and teachers, plays a critical role in the process. After determining the focus areas, the principal drafted an initial version of the plan and brought it back to the CLT for revisions and input before finalizing it. This ensured the plan was shaped by collective insight and aligned with the school's needs.

**Root Cause Analysis (RCA)**

The root causes at Thoreau Middle School stem from teachers needing help to effectively meet the diverse needs of all learners due to a lack of understanding and skill in backward planning. Layer one and two instruction are not effectively utilized to address students' individual needs, as most tasks are delivered at a single level. Additionally, instructional practices are not adequately supporting the EL population, as sheltered instructional strategies are not being implemented. This limits the ability to cater to students' varying levels and needs.

**Actions to Reach ELA and Math Goals**

- Teachers and the administrative team will participate in weekly PLC meetings for backward planning to improve depth of knowledge (DOK) and increase higher-order questioning during instruction and class discussions.
- Teachers will collaborate during weekly PLCs and content/grade level meetings to analyze reteaching data and instructional strategies.
- PD will be provided by consultants for small group implementation, one for beginning small groups and the other for the next steps of using data to group students.
- The administration will engage in PLC dialogue with grade-level groups and meet with the content groups during weekly meetings to reinforce conversations targeting instructional strategies and monitor student performance.
- The leadership team and administrators will provide PD for partner reading strategies focusing on all students engaging in text.
- Administrators and consultants will observe small group implementation and provide immediate feedback.
- Teachers will collaborate with grade level and content teams weekly to discuss student data, commonalities of weaknesses/strengths, and strategies to support them.
- The administrative team will monitor and support the implementation of small group and partner reading using the CWT tool.

**Actions to Reach Science Goals**

- The administration will create a facilitation PowerPoint (PPT) template and provide PD for teachers to ensure the gradual release of responsibility.
- The administration will check the TEAMS folder weekly to ensure facilitation PPTs are submitted and follow the gradual release of responsibility is included.
- The administration will review facilitation PPTs to ensure alignment is taking place. Feedback will be provided to teachers.

**Actions to Reach ELP Goals**

- Teachers and administration will identify ELs and proficiency levels at each grade level.
- Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) PD is provided for all teachers by the Teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) trainer, with peer observations to support implementation.
- The administration will observe the continued implementation of SIOP strategies in all classes and provide immediate feedback.

The leadership at Thoreau Middle School has set specific goals to measure progress by the middle of the year (MOY) across key content areas. For ELA and math, the focus is on meeting iMSSA benchmark goals, with regular walkthroughs to ensure the implementation of small group instruction driven by data from weekly exit tickets. Additionally, increasing student talk, improving checks for understanding, and raising the rigor of questioning through depth of knowledge (DOK) are central priorities.

In science, progress will be measured through teacher-created formative assessments, with similar goals of implementing small groups, increasing student talk, and enhancing the rigor of questioning. For ELs, the goal is to improve their progress in reading and language, as measured by the iMSSA. These goals emphasize data-driven instruction and student engagement across all subjects.