



Colorado's Unified Improvement Plan for Schools

Elizabeth Middle School UIP 2023-24 | School: Elizabeth Middle School | District: Elizabeth School District | Org ID: 0920 | School ID: 2604 |
Framework: Performance Plan | Draft UIP

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Executive Summary



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Root Cause

- Teacher turnover
- Curriculum Alignment



Major Improvement Strategies

- Incorporation of Zearn math - building wide
- Shared staff goal incorporating math instruction

- Teacher turnover

- Incorporation of Zearn math - building wide

Access the School Performance Framework here: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolview/performance>

Improvement Plan Information

Additional Information about the school

The Elizabeth School District is a rural school district on the Eastern Plains of Colorado. Elizabeth Middle School currently has 400 students in grades 6-8. It is a comprehensive middle school that focuses on skill building along with growth in each content area, recently adopting the Homegrown Talent Initiative grant to support this work. Each year, teachers incorporate learning around growth in our "Cardinal Competencies," which focus on the areas of effective communication, resiliency, empathy and collaboration, as well as being an independent learner, leader, and entrepreneur.

The middle school student population by race and ethnicity is as follows: 79% White, 16% Hispanic, 1% African American, and 4% of our students are 2 or more races. The principal, assistant principal and school accountability committee are involved in the preparation of the UIP, and the UIP is shared with the building leadership team. Building leadership consists of the Principal, Assistant Principal, Counselors, Team Leaders, and the Office Manager.

Narrative on Data Analysis and Root Cause Identification

Description of School Setting and Process for Data Analysis

The Elizabeth School District is a rural school district on the Eastern Plains of Colorado. Elizabeth Middle School currently has 400 students in grades 6-8. It is a comprehensive middle school that focuses on skill building along with growth in each content area, recently adopting the Homegrown Talent Initiative grant to support this work. Each year, teachers incorporate learning around growth in our "Cardinal Competencies," which focus on the areas of effective communication, resiliency, empathy and collaboration, as well as being an independent learner, leader, and entrepreneur.

The middle school student population by race and ethnicity is as follows: 79% White, 16% Hispanic, 1% African American, and 4% of our students are 2 or more races. The principal, assistant principal and school accountability committee are involved in the preparation of the UIP, and the UIP is shared with the building leadership team.

Prior Year Targets

Provide a summary of your progress in implementing the Major Improvement Strategies and if they had the intended effect on systems, adult actions, and student outcomes (e.g. targets).

Last year's improvement focus; We are also looking at increasing individual student growth through a new MTSS system in the building that provides a clear referral system for teachers who identify students that need tier 2 or tier 3 support. According to the beginning of year staff survey, only 15.4% responded "agree" in regards to what the RTI system is in the building and how to refer a student when they need to, 0% responded "strongly agree." Only 23% responded "agree" or "strongly agree" to understanding the building PBIS system, this along with MTSS is a building focus and a goal will be for this staff data to show improvement as well.

Update; When surveyed at the end of the '22-'23 school year, the responses of "agree" and "strongly agree" to the PBIS system improved from 23% to 77.5%, the responses regarding the RTI system improved from 15.4% to 85%. These programs have improved greatly over the past two years, which has led to improved culture and more targeted academic support for individual students. This past year, our iReady reading data showed an average growth across the school in of nearly two grade levels worth of growth (192%), greatly exceeding our goal of one year's growth (100% is one year's growth on the iReady system). This achievement was also seen through CMAS results, with EMS testing into the 80th percentile in the state last year ELA achievement scores.

Based on your reflection and evaluation, provide a summary of the adjustments that you will make for this year's plan.

Along with the increased effectiveness of school programs, the Language Arts scores were also able to increase due to the implementation of the Accelerated Reader program. While math scores were not concerning, they were not to the level of LA (math showed a 51st percentile score). As a result, we've adjusted our focus this year to continue working to improve school culture along with reading and writing, but putting an additional focus on math implementation. We have agreed to become an "anchor school" for Zearn math this year, and have a coach assigned to our building to ensure effective implementation.

Current Performance

- The main area of focus for our school this year will be math, who tested into the 51st percentile as a school. This year we have scheduled co-taught classes which will have additional interventions available to the students in order to support learning growth. Because this is a school-wide goal, all staff are helping in some way, including team teachers devoting one advisory class each week to math intervention.

While analyzing the math data further, certain trends appear that will be addressed this year. The main area of focus within this content is geometry, as much of the data is very positive compared to state data, but geometry standards were often under the state average. For 8th grade, 5 out of 5 categories were below, as well as 2 out of 2 categories for both 6th and 7th grade.

Additional Trend Information:

Regarding achievement in both math and language arts, EMS showed improvement after remaining at the same place for each of the two years prior to this data. Math was up to the 51st percentile after two years at the 47th percentile, language arts rose to the 80th percentile after two years at the 76th. It is our goal that due to low staff turnover and additional interventions in place this year, that this trend will continue this next year, in particular with math growth.

Priority Performance Challenges and Root Causes



Priority Performance Challenge: Math Growth

Being that there are more resources allocated to the math department than in past years, it is the goal of the school to fill in learning gaps while challenging students that are on grade level and advanced.

Area of Focus: Math growth



Root Cause: Teacher turnover

The math department has had new teachers for 6th and 7th grade each of the past few years, needing a long term sub to cover 6th grade math for the 2nd semester last year. We were fortunate to hire full time certified teachers for both positions this year, which should provide stability to the department.



Root Cause: Curriculum Alignment

The curriculum used by the math department had not been updated in several years. It no longer matched state standards as well as it needed to, causing teachers to have to create their own materials to meet these needs.



Priority Performance Challenge: Math Achievement

For the same reasons as listed in the math growth goal, we expect achievement scores to be higher this year across all three grades.

Area of Focus: Math



Root Cause: Teacher turnover

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Magnitude of Performance Challenges and Rationale for Selection:



Math was chosen as it is a building wide focus this year, and because there is a belief that our students can perform well above the state average. The incorporation of new school systems to support math growth along with the adoption of new curriculum added to why this focus would make sense for our building this year.

Magnitude of Root Causes and Rationale for Selection:



It has been very difficult to provide high quality instruction and vertical alignment for a department that lacks consistency. This year, a stable department has allowed for vertical alignment and consistency between classes.

Action Plans

Planning Form



Incorporation of Zearn math - building wide

What will success look like: As a Zearn anchor school, we will be receiving bi-weekly coaching, allowing the coach and Principal to review grade-level data and make necessary adjustments to meet our goals. Success in the interim will look like the majority of students completing 3 or more lessons per week, which will put them on pace to reach the desired amount for the year. Success will also include iReady diagnostic data showing a minimum of 100% (one grade level's worth) growth after the spring assessment.

Describe the research/evidence base supporting the strategy and why it is a good fit: Data shows that students who complete the required amount of lessons throughout the year show significant growth, at least one grade level's worth and typically more if they follow the program diligently.

Strategy Category: Research-based Instructional Practices

Associated Root Causes:




Curriculum Alignment:

The curriculum used by the math department had not been updated in several years. It no longer matched state standards as well as it needed to, causing teachers to have to create their own materials to meet these needs.

Implementation Benchmarks Associated with MIS

IB Name	Description	Start/End/ Repeats	Key Personnel	Status
 iReady diagnostic scores	Diagnostic growth for the year will exceed 100%.	09/01/2023 05/23/2024 Quarterly	Math department teachers	In Progress
 Zearn math implementation	70% of students will average the intended 3 lessons per week or higher target.	09/01/2023 05/23/2024 Quarterly	Math department teachers	In Progress

Action Steps Associated with MIS

Name	Description	Start/End Date	Resource	Key Personnel	Status
 Zearn math implementation	Zearn will be used as our primary curriculum, and was implemented at the beginning of the year in August. Being that geometry was an area of need, this unit was taught first this year, whereas it had been taught after CMAS testnig in the past.	09/01/2023 05/23/2024	Zearn online resources, student resource books, bi-weekly meetings with our Zearn coach.	Principal, math department members, grade level teams (advisory implementation), and Zearn coach.	In Progress



Advisory class
support

One day each week will be devoted to math intervention and enrichment for every advisory class in the school.

09/01/2023
05/23/2024

Zearn online
platform, iReady
math instruction.

Advisory teachers In Progress



Shared staff goal incorporating math instruction

What will success look like: The shared goal for the staff reads as follows; Math Intervention - We will make mathematical ties to our content whenever possible. We will collaborate with colleagues to provide math goal setting and intervention to increase the percent of students who meet their growth goal in 2023-24. Success looks like each team devoting advisory time to focus on Zearn math, and making cross-curricular connections whenever possible.

Describe the research/evidence base supporting the strategy and why it is a good fit: Zearn math shows that three lessons per week are required for maximum effectiveness, which is why teams engaging in the same goal will relieve the burden on math teachers.

Strategy Category: Curriculum and Content

Associated Root Causes:



Curriculum Alignment:

The curriculum used by the math department had not been updated in several years. It no longer matched state standards as well as it needed to, causing teachers to have to create their own materials to meet these needs.

Implementation Benchmarks Associated with MIS

IB Name	Description	Start/End/ Repeats	Key Personnel	Status
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Action Steps Associated with MIS

Name	Description	Start/End Date	Resource	Key Personnel	Status
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School Target Setting





Priority Performance Challenge : Math Growth



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: Academic Growth

MEASURES / METRICS: M

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE TARGETS

2023-2024: A minimum of 100% growth in iReady math spring diagnostic data for the whole school, at least the 50th percentile for CMAS math growth.

2024-2025: A minimum of 100% growth in iReady math spring diagnostic data for the whole school, at least the 50th percentile for CMAS math growth.

INTERIM MEASURES FOR 2023-2024: A minimum of 50% growth in iReady math winter diagnostic data for the whole school.



Priority Performance Challenge : Math Achievement



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: Academic Achievement (Status)

MEASURES / METRICS:

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE TARGETS

2023-2024: At least the 55th percentile for CMAS math achievement scores for the whole school. At least 50% of the geometry - specific areas at or above the state scores.

2024-2025: At least the 60th percentile for CMAS math achievement scores for the whole school. At least 75% of the geometry - specific areas at or above the state scores.

INTERIM MEASURES FOR 2023-2024: iReady math data shows at least 70% of students at or above grade level on the spring iReady diagnostic.