



# LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

REBECCA E. MCFALL, ED.D.  
SUPERINTENDENT

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To: School Committee

From: Rebecca McFall

Re: Strategic Plan Report

Date: May 16, 2014

In the 2013 – 2014 school year, great efforts have been made to carry out the District Strategic Plan. While we developed the Strategic Plan as a two-year plan, we now recognize that the work outlined in the plan will require many years of focused effort in order to put improved practices in place, create buy-in and ownership of new systems and approaches, and ensure that the value and understanding of the work is internalized by all faculty, staff, and administrators.

As part of the Strategic Planning Workshop for 2014 – 2015 that took place on May 13, 2014, you were provided with an update on the status of our work toward meeting the Strategic Priorities. Our conversations helped to create even greater focus for the district as we move forward.

As I have reflected on this final Strategic Plan Report, I have noted that progress updates and information on the work related to the Strategic Priorities have been provided to the School Committee throughout the school year in reports and presentations as documented on School Committee agendas. At our meeting on May 22, 2014, I will provide a general overview of where we are with the Strategic Plan and our thinking about next steps. Strategic Priority A1: Develop understanding and practices in the "Standards and Indicators of Effective Teaching Practice" among all faculty and administrators by observing lessons and analyzing student work, is an area that you have not received a lot of outcome information. On the 22<sup>nd</sup>, I will share some of the work we have done in this area to create consistent evaluation practices. Information will also be provided as part of the documents on Synergy related to evidence of practice related to the superintendent evaluation standards.

## Five Key Questions for Learning

- What evidence demonstrates that students know the **objective and/or learning target**?
- In what ways does the lesson **engage students in authentic learning**?
- What evidence is there of **meaningful exchanges** between teacher and individual students and between students?
- In what ways does the teacher **assess student understanding** related to the objective and/or learning target?
- Did the teacher **differentiate the instruction and learning experiences** to meet the range of learners in the class?



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## Superintendent/Principal Bi-Weekly School Visit Protocol (1 hour)

### 1. Observation of Teaching and Learning (30 minutes)

- a. Review the Five Key Questions for Learning (evaluator) and discuss a focus for the observation(s) based on the questions. i.e. student engagement, clarity of objectives, level of questioning, evidence of differentiation, assessment of learning
- b. Agree on a classroom(s) to observe and conduct an observation of 5 – 15 minutes. Observers take notes in the manner they each prefer.
- c. Following the observation, the superintendent and principal discuss their observations in a non-judgmental manner.
- d. The superintendent then asks the principal to share the evidence they observed related to the established focus and the Five Questions for Learning.
- e. The superintendent prompts the principal to identify the feedback he/she will give to the teacher. What will you reinforce? What will you recommend as the next step for growth? How will you deliver the feedback? The superintendent is copied on written feedback as evidence of the principal's work.

### 2. Focus on Goals (15 minutes)

- a. The superintendent checks in with the principal on his/her progress towards professional practice and student learning goals.
  - What steps have been taken since our last meeting?
  - What evidence/data do you have to share?
  - What is going well?
  - What has been challenging?
  - What support do you need?
  - What are your next steps?

### 3. Current Topics for Discussion (15 minutes)

- a. check-in on supervision of faculty, especially non-PTS faculty
- b. discuss school specific topics and concerns
- c. if additional time is needed to discuss school specific topics, an additional meeting is scheduled for that purpose.

The order of the components of this protocol may be changed depending on identified needs. In addition, at least once during the school year a two-hour observation session is scheduled with each principal to visit a number of classrooms in a school to look for themes of instructional focus.

## Observation Feedback

### Purposes of Feedback

- Reinforce actions/behaviors that you would like to see continue.
- Help the educator consider possible next steps for growth and improvement. (May be in the form of questions or suggestions.)
- Give explicit directives about what needs to improve.

### Key Points for Feedback

- Identify the most important points you want to make.
  - *Depends on the experience and level of the teacher (i.e., management, trying on new strategies, level of cognitive demand, level of student engagement, etc.)*
- Focus on high level aspects of teaching and learning whenever possible.
  - *Don't squander your opportunity to give feedback on management with an experienced teacher whose management is fine.*
  - *Consider Bloom's Taxonomy when providing feedback. What are the teaching moves that provide the greatest impact on learning?*
- Focus on student impact.
  - *Make connections to how the educator's action/behavior impacted students.*

### Claim, Evidence Impact (CEI) Format for Written Feedback

- Claim
  - *What did you observe or not observe?*
- Evidence
  - *What specific evidence do you have to support your claim (what the educator did or said or what the students did or said)?*
- Impact
  - *How did what the educator did or said affect students' ability to gain understanding, access the curriculum, carry out a task or assignment, etc.?*



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## Guiding Questions for Written Observation Feedback

1. Is the educator provided with feedback that informs him/her of the actions or behaviors he/she used that led to positive impacts on student engagement and learning?
2. Is the educator provided with feedback that helps him/her consider next steps for growth and improvement? (questions, suggestions)
3. Is the educator provided with a clear, explicit directive about what must improve? (If necessary)
4. Is the feedback appropriate based on the needs and experience of the teacher?
5. Is the feedback focused on important high level instruction and learning?
6. Does the feedback make the connection between strategies/teaching moves and impact on students?
7. Does the feedback state: the **claim**, what was observed; the **evidence**, what the teacher or student did or said; the **impact** on students?
8. Were connections made between the feedback provided and the Standards and Indicators of Effective Teaching Practice: Teacher Rubric?



# Lincoln Public Schools

Rebecca E. McFall, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

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## Administrative Council

December 3, 2013

9:00 – 11:00

**Refreshments:** Steve and Sharon

**Location:** Hartwell Multi-purpose Room

### Agenda:

**9:00 - 10:00**

#### **Observation and Written Feedback**

We will start with an opportunity to share our thoughts about the article, *7 Keys to Effective Feedback* sent via email last week. In preparation for this discussion, please read the article and be prepared to share one or two passages that resonated with you.

Please remember to add your written feedback to the google doc shared last week, *Feedback on 11/19/13 Observation*. If you need to watch the video again it can be found at

<https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/teaching-technique-group-work>

**Reminder:** Becky, Rob, Steve, Sharon, Erich, and Beth will be doing observations together in the Lincoln School today from 1 - 3pm.

**10:00 - 10:20**

#### **Calendar Discussion**

At this week's School Committee meeting, several versions of the School Year Calendar for 2014 - 15 will be presented. These will be narrowed down to 3 that will be put out to faculty and parents for input and feedback. I need your input regarding the scheduling of parent conferences. We will break into groups to discuss the possibilities for scheduling parent conferences by grade levels and by campus. In addition, if this is not a No School day for students, we will need to build in another professional day for teachers assuming we will be maintaining their 185 day work year. I would

### Observation Feedback Response Form

Descriptor	YES	NO	Somewhat
Is the educator provided with feedback that informs him/her of the actions or behaviors he/she used that led to positive impacts on student engagement and learning?			
Is the educator provided with feedback that helps him/her consider next steps for growth and improvement? (questions, suggestions)			
Is the educator provided with a clear, explicit directive about what must improve? (If necessary)			
Is the feedback appropriate based on the needs and experience of the teacher?			
Is the feedback focused on important high level instruction and learning?			
Does the feedback make the connection between teaching moves and impact on students?			
Does the feedback state: the <b>claim</b> , what was observed; the <b>evidence</b> , what the teacher or student did or said; the <b>impact</b> on students?			

## **Evidence Collection: Artifacts**

### **Purpose: DESE Implementation Guide: Strategic Collection of Evidence**

**Excerpt:** The collection must be seen as an opportunity to select a small, reflective sample of artifacts and other data that fairly represents performance and impact. It is not intended to be a record of all that the educator has done in a year. It needs to be focused on the professional practice and student learning goals, high priority standards and indicators, and the critical school priorities not addressed by the practice and student learning goals.

### **LPS Guidance:**

- Inform evaluators' judgment
- One artifact can apply to several standards or indicators
- Upload as you go along -- the list can be edited over time
- Choose only representative artifacts -- make sure they are purposeful in connecting to a standard or goal

### **BaselineEdge:**

- Artifacts should be uploaded through BaselineEdge and tagged with the standards that are relevant
- Artifacts should be accompanied by a brief description (tag, 3-4 words)
- If needed, more explanation about an artifact can be written on the Evidence Collection Form in BaselineEdge

### **Timeline:**

- December 18 Wednesday – Artifact uploading with support
- January 10 - Deadline for teachers on one year plans: first round of artifacts
- April 17 - Deadline for all teachers for uploading artifacts

### **Examples of Artifacts:**

- Family Communication
- Student work samples
- Student assessment results
- Unit/Lesson plans
- Task that provides evidence of learning
- Learning targets/look fors
- Conference notes (parent, IST, IEP meetings, etc.)
- Data about goals



## **Formative Assessment Conference Outline**

**Provisions:** Educator Action Plan w/notes, annotated rubric, notes on meetings, observations with tags or highlighting, computer access to see BaselineEdge artifacts, Proficiency standards and full rubric

### **1. Appreciate time; state purpose and structure:**

- A conversation about your work to date. Using my review of artifacts, observations, meetings, etc., I want to let you know the strengths I see, the areas that I'm unsure about, and any areas for growth in the next few months. I want to understand any concerns you may have and be responsive.
- We'll review your Action Plan to check in on goals and we'll talk over next steps. We may refer to artifacts that are relevant to your goals.
- We'll look at the rubric to see what evidence connects with each standard so far. I'll give you a sense of where you stand on standards for which I have enough evidence. We'll talk over what areas I still need to know more about and what next steps to take so I have worthwhile information about those areas.
- We may check back to the observation feedback pieces for any follow ups.
- We'll end each part with your take-aways.
- Any concerns or questions you want to make sure we address?

### **2. Action Plan Goals:**

- Review each goal and notes; reference artifacts and observations as needed.
- Confirm (or change) goal phrasing; decide when endpoint will be; predict how students will do
- Discuss what teacher next steps are in carrying out goal; revise timeline and resources if needed
- Agree to schedule a data- review meeting about goals – and may add other assessment data (like DDMs) to that meeting

### **3. Rubric Standards:**

- Show how rubric is annotated with info from artifacts, observations, and other evidence
- Discuss what is clearly evident, a strength, and needs little further info
- Note what is not well represented yet and talk over how to tune me in
- Discuss areas for growth and agree on next steps
- Reference any observation follow ups in the feedback already given

### **4. Wrap up:**

- Affirm value of conversation for me in learning more about teacher's practice and thinking; state importance of candor and good judgment. Restate some strengths
- Review my next steps
- Last Word: What are teacher's take-aways: insights, understanding of what needs addressing and next steps

**9:20 - 10:20 Formative Assessments, Becky and Mary**

We will continue our discussion of Formative Assessments. As noted in the email sent on Friday, please bring two copies of a segment of one of your written Formative Assessments. Please choose a sample that you feel exemplifies providing a teacher with meaningful feedback in a way that characterizes the teacher's work and summarizes the conversation that took place during the conference and/or provides the teacher with information about next steps in the coming months. Please don't bring a full assessment, bring just one section on either goals or standards. Please redact any identifying information and do not put your name on it either. We will use a give one, get one process to exchange samples and share their strengths in order to move closer to calibrating our practice.

When sharing our observations about the samples, we will discuss **format, voice, level of detail, and evidence of purposeful feedback**. The objective of this discussion is to further develop our decisions about what must be done consistently across all evaluators, where we can allow flexibility and individual stylistic differences, and to provide general feedback as a group about the quality of feedback provided to teachers.

Revisit Exemplary discussion.

## FORMATIVE FEEDBACK

### GUIDELINES

- ▶ How does feedback in a Formative Assessment Conference differ from feedback after an observation?
- ▶ Step back, review all evidence, and “characterize” the performance.
- ▶ Acknowledge strengths.
- ▶ Hone in on specific areas of concern with details and direct expectations.

### EXAMPLES

#### **Standard I**

In my review of artifacts, my observations, our emails and our discussions, you show evidence of strong expertise in subject matter knowledge and your capacity to share that knowledge with teachers in your role as a teacher leader. These sources of evidence also reveal highly proficient understanding of the developmental needs of students, the ways in which they learn, and their capacity to learn complex concepts. Unit and lesson plans are standards-based, well-structured with measurable learning targets, and organized to use a range of strategies to push student thinking and to ensure the acquisition of key knowledge. Two artifacts and our discussions about growth measures give evidence of your thoughtful approach to assessment design and purpose as well as adjustments to practice based on assessment results.

Next Steps: Further evidence of unit/lesson design will be shared through the student learning goal. When we review growth measures for both gr 3 and grade 4 students, let's plan to discuss the ways in which the assessments are designed to capture meaningful growth and inform the instruction between baseline and benchmark. As we review the assessments and results, we should discuss how such examples may serve as models for other teachers.

#### **Standard II**

As we discussed in our formative conference, the clarity of your expectations for students' effort and achievement, and your capacity for using every minute productively are areas for growth. The purpose of the work in any small group or 1-1 lesson should be clear right at the beginning, by using Learning Targets or lesson objectives, which you then return to during and/or at the end of the lesson (could be a discussion, exit ticket, demonstration of attainment, etc.). If students are asked, “What are you learning in this lesson?” their response should show their understanding of your expectations for the quality of their work and effort.

Next Steps: Please plan on uploading a few examples of Learning Targets and/or lesson objectives that you are using with your fourth graders and eighth graders. During any future observations of lessons, I expect to hear and see students explain what their target or purpose is and what you expect of them. If you have any questions about approaches to take or resources to consult on this aspect of teaching, please let me know.

## **Formative Assessment Samples of Written Statements about Concerns**

### **Standard I C 2 Sharing Conclusions with Colleagues**

In the course of the fall, we have discussed the need for timely and accurate collection of data about your students' reading and the importance of sharing data with colleagues to inform instruction. I expect to see and hear about team data meetings that are characterized by your active participation with evidence from your students' learning and your interest in the larger picture of instructional practices to support all students.

### **Standard II B2 Collaborative Learning Environment**

In my visits to your classes and our conversations, some aspects of effective group work and communication are evident. However as we have discussed, I strongly encourage you to monitor the "airtime" so there is less teacher talk and more productive talk among and between students that focuses on mathematical problem solving and communicating reasoning.

### **Standard III B 2 Collaboration; Curriculum Support**

Your artifacts and your website indicate some sharing of information about your curriculum program with families. In our recent conversation, you and I agreed that it is important to increase the number of more personal connections with families with a focus on strategies for parents to use at home with their young children. Please keep me informed about your efforts in this area through conversation and uploading some sample artifacts.

### **Standard IV C Collaboration**

As we have discussed in our post observation conversations, collaboration with colleagues is an area of growth for you. I expect to see and hear evidence of your positive interactions with colleagues that promote productive team effort.

### **Standard IV E Shared Responsibility**

On several occasions, as we have talked about, I have expressed my concern about the times when you have been inconsistent about holding students responsible for the rules in our social contract. I expect to see you consistently reinforce the expectations we all have for our students.

### **Standards IV F 2 Professional Responsibilities**

As you know, I have raised concerns about instances when you have inadvertently shared confidential information with colleagues and/or parents. I urge you to consider the implications of these actions and to demonstrate sound judgment with regard to sensitive information.

### **Ratings on Goals**

**Ratings:**

- ☐ Did Not Meet
- ☐ Some Progress
- ☐ Significant Progress
- ☐ Met
- ☐ Exceeded

Progress ratings of “Exceeded”, “Met”, and “Significant Progress” are all indicators of Proficient performance related to Professional Practice and Student Learning Goals. When overall ratings of performance are determined, these ratings will be considered to be one factor that contributes to a rating of Proficient or better.