Improving Literacy Scores at Bucyrus Elementary Through a Vocabulary Focus

Internship Implementation Project

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Certification of Authorship: I certify that I am the author of this paper and that any assistance I received in its preparation is fully acknowledged and disclosed in the paper. I also have cited any sources from which I used data, ideas, or words, either quoted directly or paraphrased. I certify that this paper was prepared by me specifically for the purpose of this assignment, as directed.

Section 2:   Abstract

This project was intended to improve the performance of 2nd grade students at Bucyrus Elementary School on reading diagnostics especially related to vocabulary as reported on the state report card. All 2nd grade students were included in this project in an effort to raise the percentage of students on track. The project was developed using data from the state report card and released test questions from the 2017-2018 state tests, which led to the decision to target reading with a focus on vocabulary. Research showed that explicit instruction using word-learning strategies, interactive read-alouds, and frequency of exposure would give the largest gains in vocabulary acquisition. The formative assessments included the fall, winter, and spring administration of the NWEA MAP test, graphic organizers, and classroom observation. The data from the NWEA test show an increase from fall to winter of an 11-point gain in reading and a 10-point gain in vocabulary. There is another 4 point projected gain for the spring administration using normative data, pointing to a high probability of an increased percentage of on track students on the reading diagnostics. The implications of this project show that explicit vocabulary instruction is effective in raising reading diagnostic scores.

Section 3:   Introduction

Bucyrus City Schools in Bucyrus, Ohio is located in central Ohio about half way between Cleveland and Columbus. Bucyrus City Schools has a total of about 1340 students in the district. The district is comprised of six square miles and divided into only two buildings with 775 students at the elementary building and 565 students at the secondary building. There has been a steep decline in enrollment due to open enrollment, and this has negatively impacted the district.

Bucyrus is considered a rural low socioeconomic school. Even though the school is a city school, it is considered rural since the city and district are surrounded by farmland and countryside. The constituency of the school includes 91% Caucasian students, 4% multiracial students, and 2% Latino students. Additionally, there are 23% of Bucyrus students who have disabilities, and the non-student with disabilities population also struggles academically. The grade card from the state generally ranges from C-F with clear difficulties in both reading and math. Many children have difficulty passing the state tests. There is an after-school program offered to those children who struggle academically, which is a large portion of the students. Many students have disciplinary issues, so this also hinders learning. 67% of Bucyrus students are economically disadvantaged and come from low income homes. Every child receives free breakfast, many of our children receive free lunches, and those students who attend the afterschool program receive free dinner. There is also a backpack program for students who may not have food over the weekends throughout the school year.

There is very little parental involvement at Bucyrus City Schools. At the elementary school, there is a PTO that is run by three or four parents. There are a few

parents who volunteer to serve as teachers' aides. Another problem is that parents

frequently do not show up for IEP meetings, parent-teacher conferences, or school-wide

events. There are many factors that contribute to this lack of parent engagement. Like

many communities, Bucyrus has a severe drug problem. Many parents suffer from

addiction and several have been arrested for dealing drugs. Over the past several years,

there have been a handful of parents who have succumbed to drug overdoses. There are

also many parents who are incarcerated for other reasons. Yet another issue that many

families in the district face is that they are fixed into the cycle of poverty.   It is also

likely that many parents in the district do not place high value on education.

Fortunately, Bucyrus has strong business community engagement. "The Leader

in Me" Initiative was recently started, and the $50,000 program cost was funded by

community businesses. Also, recently built in Bucyrus was the Crawford Success

Center, a branch of North Central State College, to conveniently service high school

graduates who would like to attend college in town. Crawford 20/20 Vision has also

been founded in Crawford County and is centered in Bucyrus. This group uses

collaborative efforts to draw on the strengths of the community including schools,

churches, and businesses. In addition, the school works with community counselors,

community mentors, and community therapists to service those children in need within

the school. The local Elks Lodge provides a yearly grant to fund the backpack program

for children who are in need of food over the weekend. The local police department

provides a resource officer for the district and they offer various professional

development opportunities for teachers throughout the school year. The business

community definitely shows a vested interest in seeing the students and school do well since this will build a stronger community.

Additionally, the school and district have placed a focus on reading at the elementary, especially on emergent literacy. Two years ago, we partnered with community agencies to implement "Crawford Reads 20", a program to get books into the hands of children and encouragement for parents to read to their children twenty minutes each evening. Additionally, the district partnered with four neighboring districts to apply for the "Striving Readers Grant" from the state. As a consortium, we won this grant and have begun professional development trainings dealing with reading. The first session was on improving nonfiction reading in the content area presented by Kylene Beers and Robert Probst. Most recently, there was a professional development session on phonological awareness highlighting the work of Dr. Michael Heggerty.

Section 4:   Project Description and Alignment with School's Improvement Plan

Eight years ago, Bucyrus City Schools was given the assistance of a State Support Team under the Ohio Improvement Process to improve state testing scores. While our district has improved and been given an independent rating this year, we still use the Ohio Improvement Process to create goals for the district with the assistance of the State Support Team. Each year, the process begins with the District Leadership Team who uses the previous year state report card to determine areas of growth. The Bucyrus City Schools multi-tiered OIP Single Goal District actions plan for 2018-2021 as determined by the District Leadership Team includes:

(a) Embedding students in the Integrated Comprehensive Services (ICS) model

(b) Increasing the performance index score. (See Appendix A).

The goal of embedding students in the Integrated Comprehensive Services Model was determined from the data that follows. Bucyrus City Schools recently finished a cycle of monitoring from the state regarding our special education programming due to our large percentage of students in the special education population. The district averages 23% of students identified as needing special education services. The state evaluated our paperwork systems, implementation, and monitoring of special education processes like Individualized Education Plans and Least Restrictive Environments. Through the focus on these processes, previous School Improvement Plans included Integrated Comprehensive Services, which is an inclusion of nearly all students in the general education classroom. As the state report card shows, our scores for special education have increased over the past several years. (*See Figures 1, 2, and 3*). Figure 1 shows progress for students with disabilities in 2015-2016 was rated a "D".   Figure 2 shows an increase to a "B" in 2016-2017. Then, figure 3 indicates that the progress of students with disabilities in 2017-2018 increased to an "A".
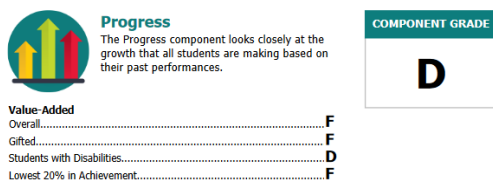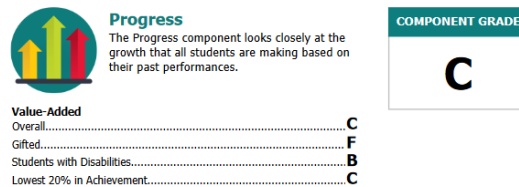

Figure 1: 2015-2016 Progress

Figure 2: 2016-2017 Progress

Overall
This measures the progress for all students in math, ELA, and science using tests in grades 4-8 and some end-of-course exams.

Gifted Students
This measures the progress for students identified as gifted in reading, math, science, and/or superior cognitive ability.

Students in the Lowest 20% in Achievement
This measures the progress for students identified as the lowest 20% statewide in reading, math, or science achievement.

Students with Disabilities
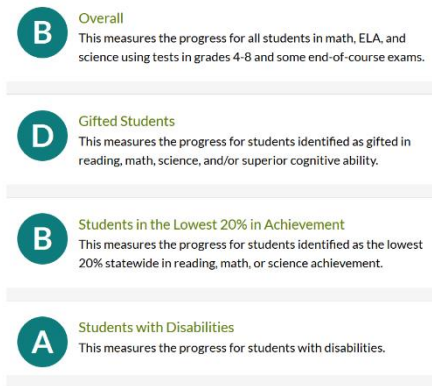This measures the progress for students with disabilities.

Figure 3: 2017-2018 Progress

While there has been much progress in the this area, the DLT has determined that this needs to reamin a focus of the Bucyrus Schools OIP goals as to continue to make progress in this area. Therefore, ICS (Integrated Comprehensive Services) remains on the district Ohio Improvement Process Single-Goal Action Plan just as it was on the past 3-year action plan. While my Internship Implementation Project (IIP) does not specifically address ICS, it is still a factor in my project as almost all students are serviced in the general education classroom and my project will be implemented schoolwide.

2017-2018 Report Card Data and Analysis

The DLT analyzed the state report card data to narrow the focus of school improvement goals, leading to a more narrow goal of improving the performance index of the state test scores. "The Performance Index measures the achievement of every student, not just whether or not they reach 'proficient.' Districts and schools receive points for every student's level of achievement. The higher the student's level, the more points the school earns toward its index. This rewards districts and schools that improve

the performance of highest- and lowest-performing students" (Ohio Department of Education, 2018). There is continued room for growth of all students in our district.

Further, the Building Leadership Team has taken the OIP Goals determined by the District Leadership Team and further narrowed it to a building-level focus. This goal is to increase reading scores across the board on the state tests. The specific goal states that "During the 2018-2019 school year, Bucyrus Elementary 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students will increase from an average of 38% achievement in reading to 58% achievement in reading as measured by the American Institute of Research (AIR) test." This goal was determined by analyzing data from the 2017-2018 state report card.

Achievement. In the area of achievement, the first section to be analyzed was that of Indicators Met. "The measure represents student performance on state tests. It is based on a series of up to 23 state tests that measure the percent of students proficient or higher in a grade and subject" (Ohio Department of Education, 2018). The grade shows that no indicators were met for English Language Arts. (*See Figure 4*). 40.6% of 3rd grade students passed the English Language Arts test, while likewise, 40.5% of 4th grade students passed the English Language Arts test. Finally, more positively, 63.2% of 5th grade students passed the English Language Arts test, but this still does meet the state indicator showing evidence that reading and reading skills need to be addressed at Bucyrus Elementary.

Indicators Met

Indicators Met measures the percent of students who have passed state tests. It also includes the gifted indicator and the chronic absenteeism indicator. Test results are reported for each student in a grade and subject. The passage rate for each test indicator is 80% and the End of Course (EOC) Improvement Indicator is 25%.

F **11.1%**
1 out of 9

| Indicators | Comparison | Achievement Levels | Trend |

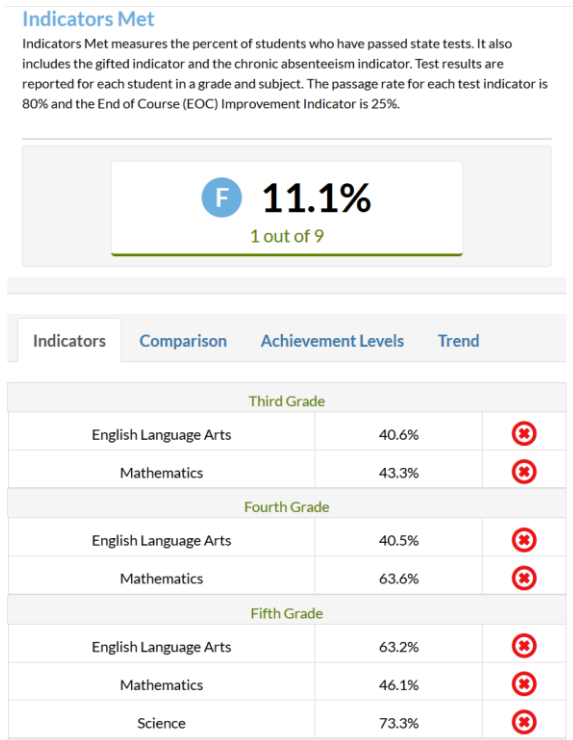| Third Grade		
English Language Arts	40.6%	⊗
Mathematics	43.3%	⊗
Fourth Grade		
English Language Arts	40.5%	⊗
Mathematics	63.6%	⊗
Fifth Grade		
English Language Arts	63.2%	⊗
Mathematics	46.1%	⊗
Science	73.3%	⊗

Figure 4

To analyze the data further, grade level comparisons were made between Bucyrus Elementary and the state average. In 3rd grade, the English Language Arts scores were more than 20% lower than the state average. (*See Figure 5*). This gap increases as the 4th grade English Language Arts scores were over 25% lower than the state average. (*See Figure 6*). Finally, while there is only a 7% difference in the 5th grade English Language Arts scores, it still shows a deficit as compared the state average. (*See Figure 7*).
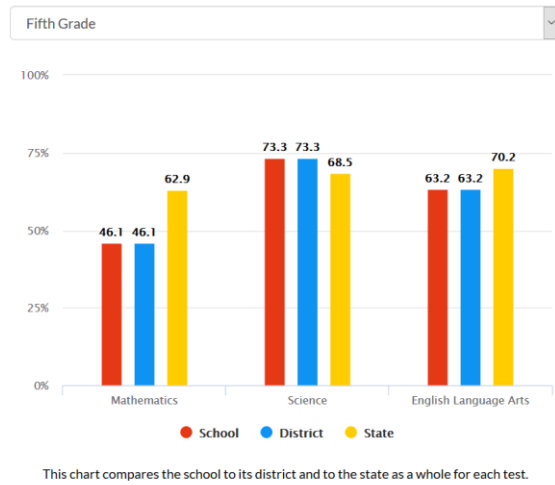
Figure 5

Figure 6

Figure 7

Actual Achievement Levels of the students were also examined. The possible

achievement levels in order of highest performance to lowest performance include

Advanced Plus, Advanced, Accelerated, Proficient, Basic, and Limited. In 3rd grade,

there were 38.6% of students scoring in limited category and 20.8% of students scoring in

the basic category. (*See Figure 8*).   In 4th grade, 35.1% of students scored in the limited

range, and 24.3% of students scored in the basic range. (*See Figure* 9). In both 3rd grade

and 4th grade, those students scoring limited was, by far, the largest group. When

considering these students combined with those who scored in the basic range, this indicates that less than half of the students in 3rd and 4th grades scored proficient or above. 5th grade fared somewhat better with 31.6% scoring in the accelerated range and 25% scoring in the proficient range. (*See Figure 10*).
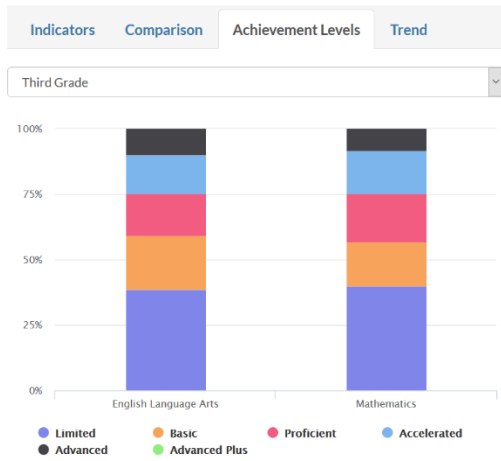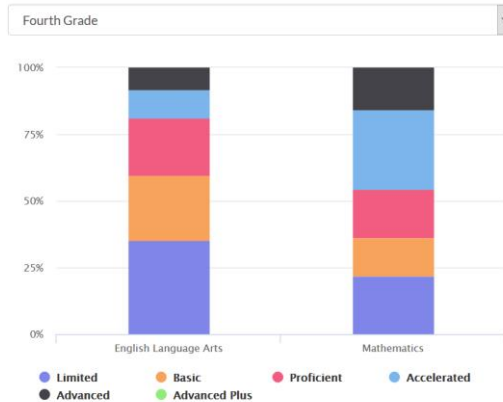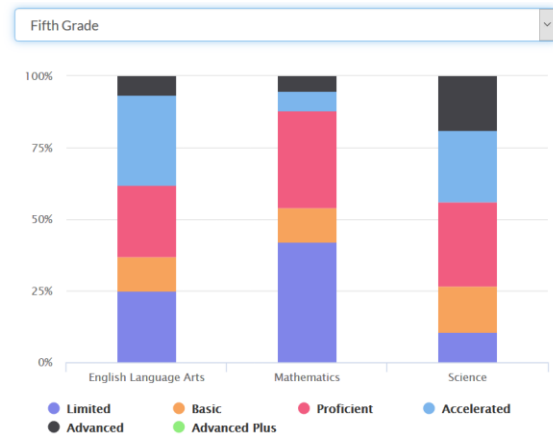

Figure 8

Figure 9

Figure 10

Examining Trend Data shows that there was a large drop in testing scores for 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades in 2016. This could be, at least in part, due to the change in the testing format in 2016. 3rd scores, though, have remained basically stagnant with the scores of 42% proficient or higher in 2016, 42% proficient or higher in 2017, and a slight drop to

40.6% proficient or higher in 2018. (*See Figure 11*). 4th grade has similar scores with 45.6% of students scoring proficient or higher in 2016, 44.2% of students scoring proficient or higher in 2017, and 40.5% of student scoring proficient or higher in 2018. (*See Figure 12*). Finally, the 5th grade scores have headed in an upward direction since 2016 with 48% of students scoring proficient or higher in 2016, 58.5% of students scoring proficient or higher in 2017, and 63.2% of students scoring proficient or higher in 2018. (*See Figure 13*).
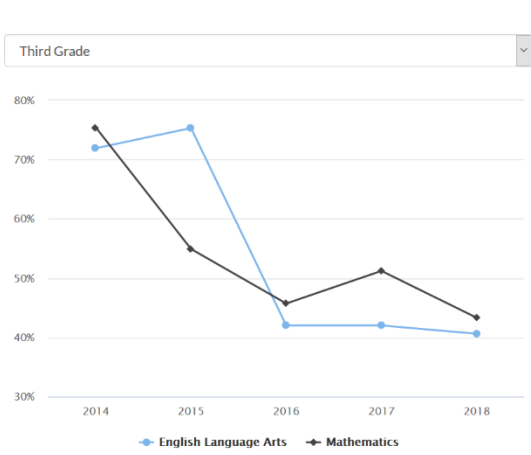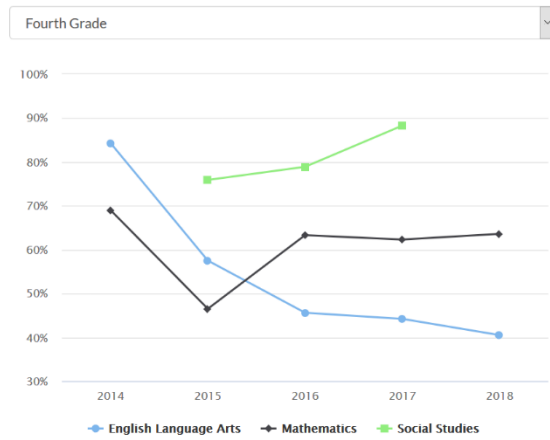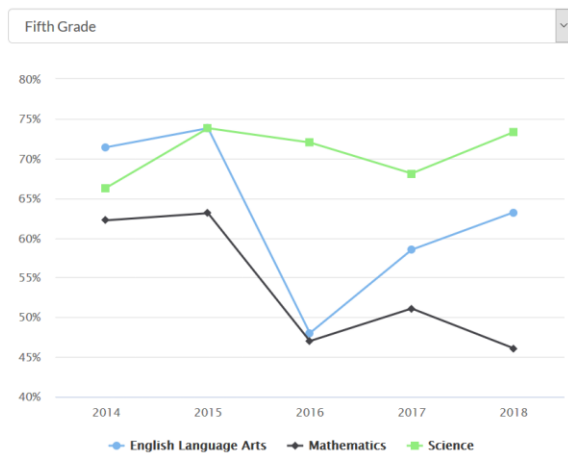

Figure 11

Figure 11

Figure 13

Progress. Bucyrus Elementary did very well when progress is considered. We scored "A's" and "B's" in every subcategory. This is one that we should highlight. When specifically looking at progress of the students in English Language Arts, they are in varying ranges compared to one another. (*See Figure 14*). Overall, the progress made was similar to that of others who took the test. 4th grade students made less progress than expected while 5th grade students made more progress than expected.

Progress Details

These tables show the Progress scores by test grade and subject for students in grades 4-8 and some end-of-course tests, and includes up to three years of data as available.

Test Grade	Progress			
	English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	All Tests
All Grades				
4th Grade				
5th Grade				
6th Grade				
7th Grade				
8th Grade				

Figure 14

Gap Closing. As far as gap closing in English Language Arts, the school is in the midrange for Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) at a letter grade of "C". "Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) compare the performance of each student group to the expected performance goals for that group to determine if gaps exist" (Ohio Department of Education, 2018). Figure 15 shows that both the "All Students" subgroup and the "White/Non-Hispanic" subgroup scored 72.5 out of 120, which is a "D". These subgroups have the same score since the district does not have a large enough population

of minority students for them to be recorded as a subgroup. Additionally, the

"Economically Disadvantaged" subgroup scored 67.6 out 120, while the "Students with

Disabilities" subgroup scored 48.2 out 120. These scores indicate room for much growth.
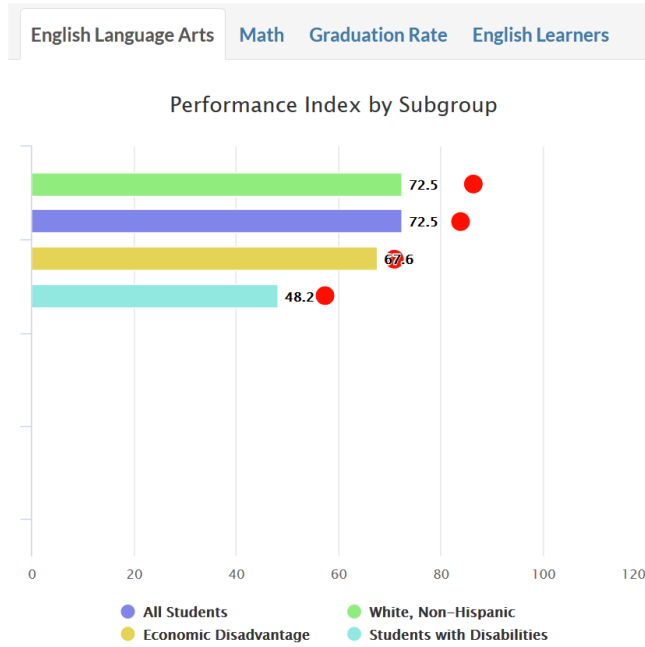
Each student subgroup has its own interim goal. Meeting the subgroup goals is one of the ways
to meet Annual Measurable Objectives. Subgroups with fewer than 25 students are not rated
and do not appear on the graphs.

Figure 15

Improving At-Risk K-3 Readers. At Bucyrus Elementary, the percentage of

K-3 students on track according to the reading diagnostic is 33.6% for a letter grade of a

"D" with 128 starting off track and 48 moving to on track throughout the year. Figure 16

shows the breakdown by grade level. Only 46.5% of students were on track for reading

by the end of the year in Kindergarten. This improves greatly in 1st grade to 86.6% of

students on track, but drops again in 2nd grade with only 46.9% of students on track. 3rd

grade students are heading in the right direction with 67% of them being on track.
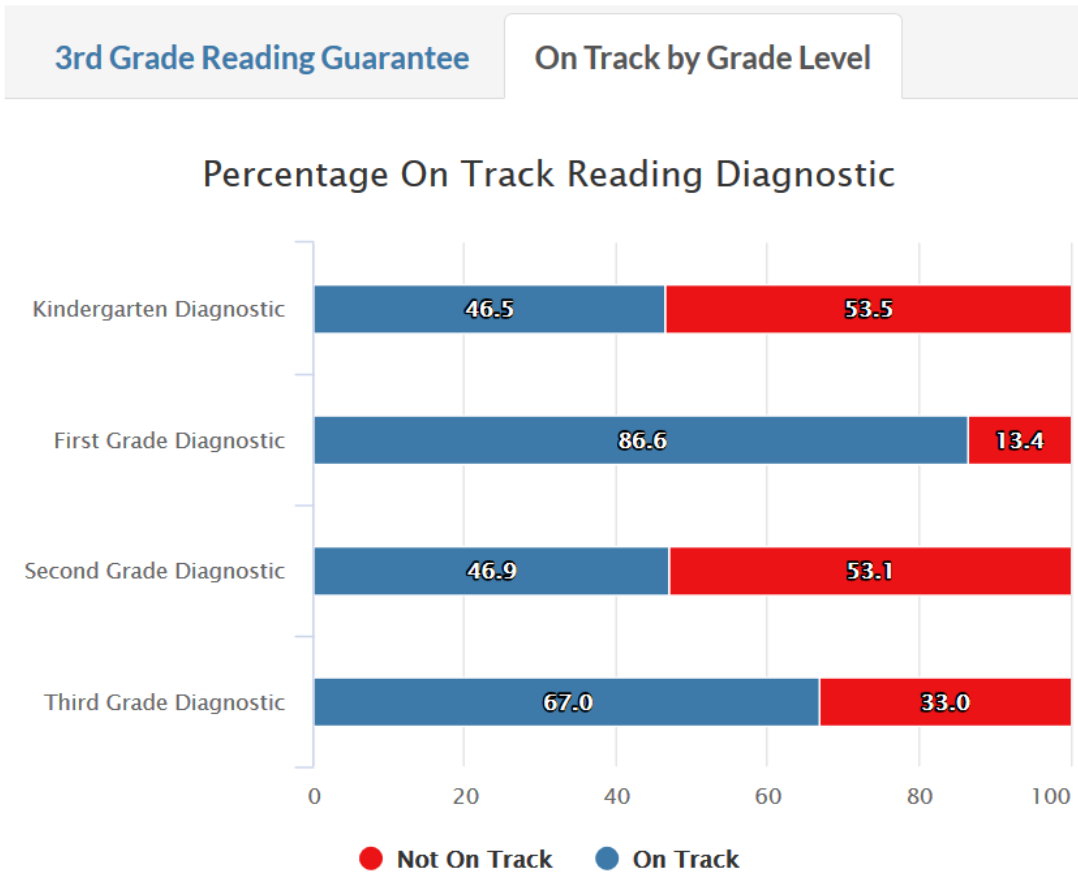
Figure 16

While 97.4% of 3rd grade students met the requirements of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee in order to be promoted to 4th grade, only 40.6% of 3rd grade students scored proficient on the state English Language Arts Test. (*See Figure 17*). This, plus all of the other state report card information, shows the need for a focus of literacy in Bucyrus Elementary School.

3rd Grade Reading Guarantee	On Track by Grade Level

How many third graders met the Third Grade Reading Guarantee requirements for promotion to 4th grade? — **97.4%**

How many third graders scored proficient on the state English language arts test? — **40.6%**

Ohio's Third Grade Reading Guarantee ensures that students are successful in reading before moving on to fourth grade. Schools must provide supports for struggling readers in early grades. If a child appears to be falling behind in reading, the school will immediately start a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan. The program ensures that every struggling reader gets the support he or she needs to learn and achieve.

Students have multiple opportunities to meet promotion requirements including meeting a minimum promotion score on the reading portion of the state's third grade English language arts test given twice during the school year. Students have an additional opportunity to take the state assessment in the summer, as well as a district-determined alternative assessment.
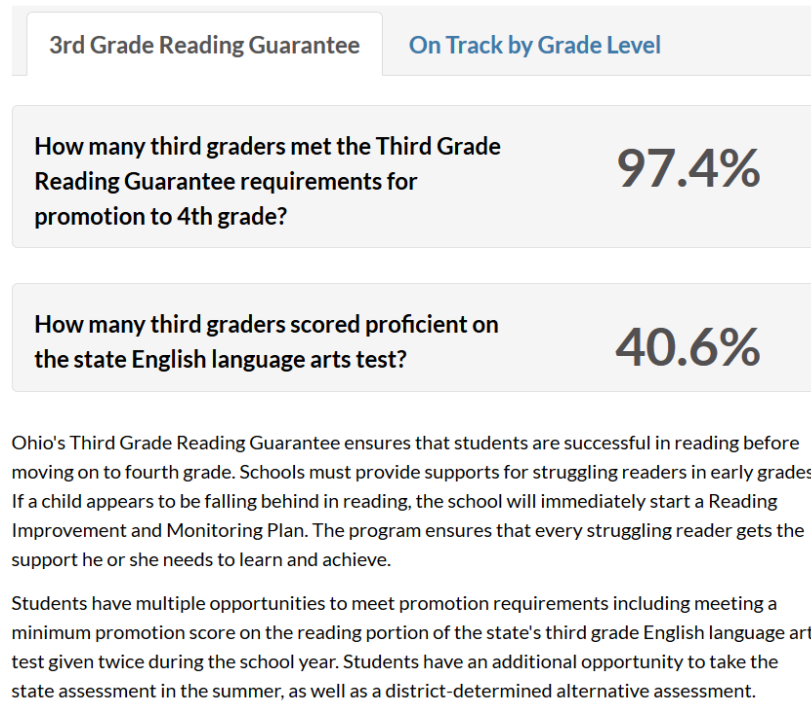
Figure 17

Following analysis of the state report card scores by the BLT, released test questions from the 2017-2018 testing year were analyzed for patterns of strengths and areas of need. The BLT analyzed questions from the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade reading tests. The item analysis showed which types of questions needed the most emphasis and support in order to try to improve student achievement on the state tests.   The types of questions that were determined to need a focus of instruction were vocabulary (highlighted in pink) and compare/contrast (highlighted in green). (*See Appendix B*). Therefore, the BLT has determined that both vocabulary and compare/contrast should be an intense focus of instruction throughout the school year.

My Internship Implementation Project (IIP) was designed using the data analysis above in order to stay directly aligned with the district goals. The IIP uses literacy with a specific focus on vocabulary instruction at Bucyrus Elementary, which is specific school

goal that was developed out of the district goals. This was a year-long, school wide project with a more thorough monitoring of 2nd grade, although each grade was expected to take part in the project. Through the implementation of evidence-based practices such as explicit instruction and the use of formative assessments throughout the year, like Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Testing, the goal focused on improving vocabulary, thereby improving state English Language Arts test scores.

Section 5: ELCC Building-Level Standards Addressed

The Educational Leadership Constituent Council has developed standards that indicate areas in which a building-level principal should be able to operate comfortably and in which administrative interns should work to gain experience. The ELCC Standards provide a framework for administrative interns to build upon in the Internship Implementation Project. "Without a doubt, the better one understands what excellence looks like, the greater one's chances are for achieving – or surpassing - that standard" (ELCC, 2011). There are six standards that include (1) Vision, (2) Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, (3) Management, (4) Relationships, (5) Ethical Leadership, and (6) Advocacy and Influence (ELCC, 2011). These standards are broken into sub-standards giving more specific areas in which interns should gain experience.

Standard 1: Vision

A building-level education leader applies knowledge that promotes the success of every student by collaboratively facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a shared school vision of learning through the collection and use of data to identify school goals, assess organizational effectiveness, and implement school plans to achieve school goals; promotion of continual and sustainable school improvement; and evaluation of school progress and revision of school plans supported by school-based stakeholders.

My IIP addressed vision since the IIP was fully aligned to the district and school

building goals. "In schools where all organizational members genuinely share a vision,

the vision serves as a compass, lending direction to organizational members' behavior"

(Robbins & Alvy, 2004, para. 12). The District Leadership Team (DLT) met prior to the

beginning of school, and through their vision, they determined that a district goal would

be to improve the performance index of state tests as determined by data from previous

tests while also providing Integrated Comprehensive Services. The Building Leadership

Team (BLT) narrowed this goal, and through an aligned vision with the DLT, they

determined that the Bucyrus Elementary goal would be to improve of reading test scores

specifically. Through a test question analysis, it was determined that questions involving

vocabulary and compare/contrast needed addressed. I continued this vision through a

goal that aligned with both the DLT and BLT visions and chose vocabulary as a focus for

my IIP. Through a focus on vocabulary instruction, I promoted continual school

improvement with the ultimate goal of raising literacy test scores.

Standard 2.0: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

*A building-level education leader applies knowledge that promotes the success of
every student by sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to
student learning through collaboration, trust, and a personalized learning environment
with high expectations for students; creating and evaluating a comprehensive, rigorous
and coherent curricular and instructional school program; developing and supervising
the instructional and leadership capacity of school staff; and promoting the most effective
and appropriate technologies to support teaching and learning within a school
environment.*

My IIP addressed creating success for every student through the use appropriate

curriculum and evidence-based strategies. All students in the building were given high

expectations as they were all expected to take part in the IIP. The instructional

programming for the IIP was based on research and evidence. For example, explicit

instruction has been proven to be an effective strategy for vocabulary instruction. In the

development and supervision of leadership of the school staff, I used the expertise of the

literacy coach to assist teachers in the implementation of the IIP. I promoted effective

and appropriate technologies, such as the district's use of Integrated Comprehensive

Services to improve achievement of all students through research-based strategies such as

Universal Design for Learning (UDL). UDL sets that stage for multiple strategies to be

used in the instruction of the students in order to reach the most students. Formative

assessments were used for the duration of the IIP to guide instruction. "Good teachers

assess and adjust their teaching based on their assessment and share assessments with

their students, so students can adjust their performances to meet criteria and expectations.

Ongoing assessment does much more than inform evaluation; one of assessment's

functions is to drive instruction" (Moeller, 2005, p. 80).

Standard 3.0: Management

A building-level education leader applies knowledge that promotes the success of every student by ensuring the management of the school organization, operation, and resources through monitoring and evaluating the school management and operational systems; efficiently using human, fiscal, and technological resources in a school environment; promoting and protecting the welfare and safety of school students and staff; developing school capacity for distributed leadership; and ensuring that teacher and organizational time is focused to support high-quality instruction and student learning.

My IIP addressed management through basic management techniques and the

implementation of the project. I used human resources and distributed leadership as all

staff were involved in making sure the students received high-quality instruction. The

literacy coach determined strategies to be used by the teachers, which teachers were to

implement which strategies, when the strategies were to be implemented, in addition to

determining and being responsible for the implementation of formative assessments.

Teachers had opportunities to implement strategies and formative assessments in a way

that makes them feel comfortable. They were given the opportunity to use the data from

these formative assessments to inform instruction. My main job in the IIP was to oversee

the process while allowing all of the people involved to do their jobs.

Standard 4.0: Relationships

A building-level education leader applies knowledge that promotes the success of every student by collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources on behalf of the school by collecting and analyzing information pertinent to improvement of the school's educational environment; promoting an understanding, appreciation, and use of the diverse cultural, social, and intellectual resources within the school community; building and sustaining positive school relationships with families and caregivers; and cultivating productive school relationships with community partners.

Building relationships is an important part of leading a building. My IIP included

many components of building relationships. I built a relationship with the teachers on the

second grade team who were the grade-level for the focus of data collection for the IIP.

It was important to have continued positive relationships with all school staff in order to

make the best learning situation for the students. I welcomed suggestions and concerns

from staff so that they had a voice in the process. For teachers to be vested in the project,

they needed feel that I was vested in them. They also needed to be able to come to me

with questions and concerns.

Additionally, there needed to be positive relationship with parents and the

community. My IIP included parental involvement. Parents were invited to take part in a

family literacy night as well as be involved in strategies to help students improve

vocabulary. Communications regarding tasks parents can do to help improve vocabulary

were sent home on a regular basis. The goal was for these communications to be a piece

in creating positive relationships with parents. "Every communication exchange,

regardless of format, should reflect a thoughtful, planned approach and should be viewed

as an opportunity…to promote parent partnerships and, ultimately, to support student

learning" (Graham-Clay, n.d., p. 127).

Standard 5.0: Ethical Leadership

A building-level education leader applies knowledge that promotes the success of every student by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner to ensure a school system of accountability for every student's academic and social success by modeling school principles of self-awareness, reflective practice, transparency, and ethical behavior as related to their roles within the school; safeguarding the values of democracy, equity, and diversity within the school; evaluating the potential moral and legal consequences of decision making in the school; and promoting social justice within the school to ensure that individual student needs inform all aspects of schooling.

Harsh and Casto (2007) found that "All school personnel, of course, are

responsible for creating and maintaining a community conducive to academic, emotional

and social learning, but the principal is the primary architect and promoter of the values

and standards that ensure everything and everyone in the school building function

according to the highest ethical standards" (as cited by Kocabas & Karakos, 2009). My

IIP will reflected ethical leadership in various ways. The district goal that includes the

use of Integrated Comprehensive Services (ICS) provides a framework for success for not

only every student's academic success but also for their social success. Teachers

implemented evidence-based vocabulary strategies to help the students succeed in

gaining vocabulary in order to improve reading test scores. Through ICS, the use of

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) ensured that differentiated methods of teaching

and learning occurred to allow all students to succeed. In UDL, materials were presented

in multiple ways so that there was a means for all students to grasp the material. Also,

the use of formative assessments throughout the IIP by the teachers guided their

instruction for continued improvement and modifications where needed. Finally, the IIP

also reflected student confidentiality. Proper handling of student information was addressed with the staff.

Standard 6.0: Advocacy and Influence

A building-level education leader applies knowledge that promotes the success of every student by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context through advocating for school students, families, and caregivers; acting to influence local, district, state, and national decisions affecting student learning in a school environment; and anticipating and assessing emerging trends and initiatives in order to adapt school-based leadership strategies.

Id provide advocacy for the students by creating a situation in the classroom that was conducive to their learning. "Effective principals ensure that their schools allow both adults and children to put learning at the center of their daily activities" (The Wallace Foundation, 2013, p. 8). While the main goal of the IIP was to increase understanding of vocabulary for all students, the school goal was to increase the number of students passing the state reading tests. To gain higher scores on state tests, the IIP needed to focus on those students who did not pass or had low scores on the tests. By using evidence-based strategies, this provided advocacy for students in an effort to improve achievement. I also advocated for parents to be a participant in their children's educations through family engagement nights and through communications home.

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Section 6: Vision

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The vision of Bucyrus City Schools is "We, the Bucyrus School Community, are inspired to achieve excellence, realize limitless potential, discover passions, and be outstanding members of society" (Bucyrus City Schools, 2016). The Bucyrus

Elementary School vision was designed with this in mind and states, "We, at Bucyrus

Elementary School, strive to be leaders, engage in learning, and seek to help others so

that we can be our best" (Bucyrus Elementary School, 2015). While these vision

statements seem to be more geared toward final outcomes, the processes in reaching this

vision involve enabling students to obtain academic success.

One of the ways the district leaders have chosen to address these vision

statements is through the OIP Single Goal District action plan. As stated earlier, the

Bucyrus City Schools multi-tiered OIP Single Goal District action plan for 2018-2021 as

determined by the District Leadership Team includes:

(a) Embedding students in the Integrated Comprehensive Services (ICS) model

(b) Increasing the performance index score. (See Appendix A).

The Internship Implementation Project for Bucyrus Elementary School followed the

district goal and the Bucyrus Elementary vision of engaging in learning. Through

engaging in learning, the students were able to excel at the school goal of improving state

reading test scores and the IIP goal of increasing vocabulary acquisition and

understanding.

To meet these goals, the staff implemented evidence-based strategies to help the

students improve in their understanding of vocabulary. They used data that they

collected from activities used during the implementation of these strategies to inform

their instruction in order to gain larger increases in student performance. Students

"engaged in learning" as stated in the Bucyrus Elementary School vision statement

though participating in the lessons and activities planned by the teachers, through self-

assessments of their learning, and through setting goals.

Section 7: Stakeholders

As with any project, initiative, or plan implemented in schools, there were multiple stakeholders involved. These stakeholders ranged from the people who implemented the plan, such as teachers, to those that benefited from the plan, such as students. The following list contains the stakeholders and their part in the implementation plan.

- Intern-I worked with the staff to direct them in the IIP process. I presented my plan first to the BLT and then the TBTs, specifically at the 2nd grade level, as this was the grade where I performed data collection. I monitored this data and work with the staff to make modifications to the plan as necessary. I also planned and led professional development sessions.

- Administration-The principal and assistant principals ensured that I had time allotted for professional development sessions with the staff. They also provided coverage for staff when the need arose for them to have release time to work on aspects of the IIP.

- Literacy Coach-The literacy coach worked with teachers in determining effective evidence-based strategies and strategy implementation with the teachers. She also provided ideas for further growth of the students in their understanding of vocabulary.

- BLT-The Building Leadership Team took information that they gained regarding the IIP back to their TBTs. They were supportive of the plan while providing supports to other members of the team during implementation. Additionally, they brought me any questions or concerns that members of their TBTs may have had.

- Teachers-All teachers in the building were responsible for the implementation of the IIP strategies. Second grade teachers, specifically, were responsible not only for the implementation of the IIP strategies but also for giving formative assessments and providing data gained from these assessments. All teachers attended professional development sessions about evidence-based strategies for vocabulary instruction.

- Students-Students were encouraged to do their best to engage in learning and using the information they were taught to become better at vocabulary and literacy. They were encouraged to take an active part in their own learning and be responsible for participating in the activities provided by the teacher. They were encouraged to read at home every evening.

- Parents-Parents were encouraged to take part in their children's learning through attending parent engagement nights. Through attendance at these, they learned strategies they could use at home to help children with vocabulary. They were also encouraged take an active role in reading to their children or having their children read at home every evening.

Section 8: Research Supporting Project

Vocabulary acquisition is an integral part of students' comprehension and overall learning and academic progress. Marzano (2004) found the importance of students' prior knowledge, or background knowledge, in allowing the students to make connections to new vocabulary. There is often a gap in the background knowledge of students from low socioeconomic families to as compared to students from more well-to-do families. Students from low socioeconomic families, like many of those students in Bucyrus, often

times do not have experiences that allow them to gain background knowledge. "This disadvantage can affect their literacy abilities, their interest in reading, and their development of important mental processes" (Marzano & Simms, 2013, p. 11). Additionally, Hirsh (2003) determined that the gap that grows in student achievement as they progress through school is actually a gap in language development. Therefore, it was important to provide focused support on vocabulary to Bucyrus Elementary School students in order to narrow this gap.

This need for focused support in vocabulary to Bucyrus Elementary students was also confirmed from an analysis of data including released test questions from the state reading tests. Through this analysis, it was determined that students at Bucyrus Elementary showed room for continued growth in the area of vocabulary. Support in helping students improve in vocabulary achievement was given to students in this IIP through evidence-based strategies such as explicit instruction and more specifically, interactive read-alouds, frequency of exposure, and word learning strategies.

Explicit Instruction

Explicit vocabulary instruction, also referred to as direct vocabulary instruction, can be effective in helping students make significant gains in vocabulary acquisition. Marzano and Simms (2013) found that there is a strong correlation between explicit instruction and the learning of vocabulary. Likewise, Hirsch (2003) determined that, to see the most gains in vocabulary achievement, it is important to provide explicit vocabulary instruction and to not rely solely on incidental vocabulary acquisition. Additionally, Beck, McKeown, and Kuncan (2013) stated that "A robust approach to

vocabulary involves directly explaining the meanings of words along with thought-provoking, playful, and interactive follow-up" (p. 3).

"Students who are not spending time reading independently need this direct teaching to help increase their vocabulary. Without the direct, in-depth teaching of key words, most students will face difficulties understanding what they read" (Hanson & Padua, n.d., p. 12). Even though there has been a strong push over the past several years to encourage Bucyrus Elementary students to read at home and for parents to read to their children, the reality is that many children do not read at home. Beck, McKeown, and Kuncan (2013) found that although explicit instruction is effective and has benefits for students at multiple achievement levels, it is even more important that it be used with students who do not read a great deal and those who have difficulty with reading. Vocabulary learning gaps for disadvantaged students increases as the students get older unless focused interventions like explicit instruction are implemented (Hirsch, 2003).

There is research that provides frameworks for the teaching of vocabulary through explicit instruction, and multiple strategies can be used in this teaching. The following section will outline some of these strategies. Each strategy can be taught, at least in part, using explicit instruction, and the strategies listed were implemented in the IIP.

Interactive Read-Alouds. Using interactive read-alouds is a strategy that can include explicit instruction. Marra (n.d.) found that through read-aloud discussions, new vocabulary can be discussed, allowing students to relate prior knowledge to this new information. By making connections, students will more likely retain the meaning of the new vocabulary. Kindle (2009) suggested that when engaging students in interactive read-alouds, teachers should formulate questions that will lead students to determine the

meaning of unknown words. The retention of information gained is most likely due to, at

least in part, to the fact that the students are engaged in the discussion. Justice (2012)

determined that teachers who engage children in interactive read-alouds should (a) ask

open-ended questions, (b) help children to retell the story, and (c) discuss new words. As

an explicit strategy, interactive read-alouds were included as part of the IIP to help

Bucyrus Elementary students improve their vocabulary understanding and acquisition.

     Frequency of Exposure. Frequency of exposure to targeted vocabulary words is

a strategy that increases student retention of vocabulary. Butler et al. (2007) found that

students who had more contact with specific, targeted vocabulary words made more

progress in defining and retaining their meanings. In her research on exposure to new

vocabulary words, Young-Davy (2014) concluded that the frequency words appear in text

corresponds to the likelihood that students will remember them. Zimmerman and Reed

(2017) stated that "Revisiting the word multiple times in different contexts will help to

incrementally improve students' knowledge and repair any misunderstanding" (para. 3).

Students at Bucyrus Elementary were given multiple exposures to new vocabulary so that

they could retain these words and make gains in their learning.

     Word-Learning Strategies. Teaching the students methods for word-learning is

a strategy that will help them to learn to determine the meanings of unknown words.

Through this method, students can figure out unknown vocabulary on their own with

little to no assistance. Chung (2012) found that word-learning strategies including using

context clues and morphological analysis can help students determine the meanings of

new vocabulary words. Teaching about context clues includes instructing students to use

pictures and text (paragraphs, sentences, phrases, and words) to define words. Graves

(2006) found using context clues to be a very effective strategy to determine definitions

of unknown words. Likewise, morphological awareness, or being able to determine word

parts, was found by Hanson & Padua (n.d.) to be an integral part in students being able to

figure out meanings of unknown words. They also found that explicit instruction in

morphological awareness was needed for this strategy to be effective. As these have

been proven to be effective, word-learning strategies were used in the IIP to help Bucyrus

Elementary students improve in vocabulary acquisition.

Section 9:   IIP SMART Goal and Action Plan

Internship Implementation Project (IIP)
SMART Goal
Ohio: Internship in School Leadership Internship I and II – EDL 6983|EDL6984

Intern: Sarah Martin   Internship School: Bucyrus Elementary   Year: 2018-2019

Basis (Need) for Your IIP:

State the goal from your school's school improvement plan (SIP), related to the improvement in student achievement in either the area of <u>literacy</u>, <u>numeracy</u> or <u>social/emotional development</u>: All students will improve in reading, specifically through a focus on vocabulary and compare/contrast.

State the existing student performance or student achievement data which supports the need for your IIP: 46.5% of students were on track for reading by the end of the year in Kindergarten. This improves greatly in 1st grade to 86.6% of students on track, but drops again in 2nd grade with 46.9% of students on track. In 3rd grade, 67% of students were on track. This is a pattern that has occurred for several years. With the drop at the 2nd grade year, there needs to be a focus at this level.

IIP SMART Goal:

IIP SMART Goal: By May 2019, Bucyrus Elementary School 2nd grade students will show an increase of 10% annually through explicit instruction in reading, especially related to vocabulary as measured by reading diagnostics and reported on the state report card.

Internship Implementation Project (IIP)
SMART Goal - Action Plan
Ohio: Internship in School Leadership I and II – EDL 6983|EDL 6984

Step #	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Resources	Timeframe	Evidence of Completion
Number each step.	*List the steps necessary to achieve the IIP goal. (Must include professional development, family engagement, formative assessment, summative evaluation, and reflection steps).*	*List who will be responsible for each step.*	*Indicate the resources required to accomplish each step. (Include financial, materials, and human resources)*	*Indicate the timeframe in which each step is to be accomplished.*	*Describe the evidence which will demonstrate that the step was completed.*
1.	Analyze district state report card data	DLT	State Testing Results	June 2018	OIP Goal
2.	Analyze of building state report card data	BLT	State Testing Results	June 2018	Building Goal
3.	Analyze of released test questions from state tests	BLT	Released Test Questions	August 2018	Building Focus on Vocabulary and Compare/Contrast
4.	Provide professional development session with staff regarding building focus of vocabulary and compare/contrast resulting from test question analysis.	SST 7	Released Test Questions	September 2018	Staff PD Evaluation
5.	Meet with literacy coach to discuss vocabulary as a year-long focus	Intern	Building Focus Data	September 2018	Vocabulary Resources
6.	Meet with 2nd grade team leader to discuss possibility of using second grade as the focus	Intern	Building Focus Data, Vocabulary Resources	September 2018	Internship Implementation Project Members

	Internship Implementation Project team			
7.	Develop Internship Implementation Project goal with a focus on vocabulary	Intern	Building Focus Data, Vocabulary Resources	September 2018	SMART Goal
8.	Research evidence-based strategies on vocabulary instruction	Intern	Laptop, Journals, Books, Articles	October 2018	Evidence-based practices in vocabulary instruction
9.	Meet with BLT to present initial action plan draft for review	Intern	Action Plan Draft	November 2018	Final Action Plan
10.	Inform and/or conduct training with BLT on practices that will be implemented in the classrooms and the schedule for when these practices will be implemented.	Intern	Evidence-Based Practices Rough Implementation Schedule	November 2018	Final Implementation Schedule
11.	Inform/train TBTs of practices that will be implemented in the classrooms.	BLT	Evidence-Based Practices	November 2018	Formative data from classroom implementation
12.	Gather pre-assessment (Fall NWEA) vocabulary results with a special focus on 2nd grade	Curriculum Director	NWEA Website	November 2018	Pre-assessment results
13.	Provide schoolwide professional development session on evidence-based practices	Intern	Evidence-Based Practices	November 2018	Staff PD Evaluation
14.	Implement vocabulary "word of the week" focusing on tier 2 and tier 3 words	Intern, Librarian	Tier 2 and Tier 3 Words	December 2018	Vocabulary
15.	Meet with 2nd grade team to discuss more in depth evidence-based strategies to be implemented in their classrooms	Intern	Evidence-Based Strategies	December 2018	Formative data from classroom implementation

16.	Provide coaching to 2nd grade team (others as needed) on the implementation of evidence-based strategies	Literacy Coach, Intern	Evidence-Based Strategy Demonstration and Observation	December 2018-April 2019	Coaching schedule
17.	Prepare bi-monthly documents to send home to parents regarding vocabulary strategies that can be used with children at home	Intern	Vocabulary strategies	February 2019-April 2019	Vocabulary Strategies Documents
18.	Provide a literacy engagement evening where parents can learn about and practice using vocabulary strategies with children	Family Engagement Team	Funding, Staffing	February 2019	Parent Evaluations
19.	Gather NWEA mid-year assessment data	Curriculum Director	NWEA Website	February 2019	Mid-Year Assessment Data
20.	Provide time to staff for academic vocabulary alignment	Grade-level teams, Intern	Grade-level standards	March 2019	Aligned Academic Vocabulary
21.	Gather NWEA end-of-the-year data	Curriculum Director	NWEA Website	April 2019	End-of-the-year Assessment Data

Section 10: Professional Development

There were varied professional development activities that took place as part of this IIP.

Mizell (2010) found that for professional development to be effective, it must enable educators

to improve their methodology in order to improve student learning (p. 10). Therefore, the

professional development activities implemented as part of the IIP focused on methodology.

These PD opportunities took place in multiple forms allowing the teachers to gain knowledge,

experience, and expertise. Types of PD ranged from whole group sessions to less formal

contexts "such as discussions among work colleagues, independent reading and research,

observations of a colleague's work, or other learning from a peer" (Mizell, 2010, p. 5). These

assisted the teachers in being able to improve student learning.

The first professional development session in the IIP was a large group session presented

by State Support Team 7. Previously, the BLT analyzed data from the released test questions

from the AIR test in the spring of 2018. The BLT determined areas of need to include

vocabulary acquisition skills and compare/contrast skills. "Analyzing student work

collaboratively gives teachers opportunities to develop a common understanding of what good

work is, what common misunderstandings students have, and what instructional strategies may

or may not be working and for whom" (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017, p. 17). The

goal of this large group professional development session was to inform the staff of the

reasoning behind the focus on vocabulary as a goal of the school. The analysis of the AIR test

scores that resulted in this determination was presented to help propel teachers to a focus on

vocabulary strategies that were more effective in student achievement.

The next professional development session was another large group session led by me,

the intern. The purpose of this session was to debrief the staff on various vocabulary strategies

to use with the students in an effort to raise student achievement.   Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) found that effective professional development that is content-focused shows a positive effect on student achievement (p. 5). Strategies that were presented included evidence-based vocabulary practices such as interactive read-alouds, multiple graphic organizers, repeated exposure, and Total Physical Response.

The final method of professional development included coaching and individualized teacher assistance. Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) defined coaching as expert support involving "the sharing of expertise about content and evidence-based practices, focused directly on teachers' individual needs" (p. 6). The literacy coach assisted teachers in the implementation of vocabulary strategies. The teachers also encouraged to request assistance or more instruction on specific strategies on an individual as-needed basis. These requests were addressed through individual consultation, on-line courses or research, or peer observation.

Section 11:   Family Engagement

Family engagement was an integral part of student learning and success. Henderson and Map (2002) found that "Effectively engaging families and communities around student literacy can lead to increased reading and writing skills for students" (as cited by Ohio Department of Education, n.d., p. 1). As part of the IIP, there were several family engagement activities that aimed to get parents involved in their children's educations, namely literacy with a focus on vocabulary acquisition. Steward and Goff (2004) stated that "Literacy activities conducted at home can positively influence development in the areas of oral language, vocabulary, print awareness, comprehension, and children's values related to reading" (as cited by National Institute for Public Practice, 2016, para. 3).

The focus activity for family engagement was a one-time family literacy night that occurred on February 28, 2019. At this event, parents were able to view demonstrations about how to discuss vocabulary with their children in the context of a shared book reading. Blewitt, Rump, Shealy and Cook (2009) found that "frequent shared book reading leads to vocabulary growth and, in turn, later success in reading and other academic areas (as cited by Sim & Berthelson, 2014, p. 50). Parents were trained in this context to use effective methods for discussing vocabulary with their children while reading with them. Other sessions at this event included activities for families such as learning vocabulary games like Scrabble, Scattergories, Charades, and Pictionary that could be easily accessed in the home setting. These games could also be easily modified to include appropriate vocabulary for any level of student. Also, at this event there was a "Make It, Take It" session where families made vocabulary jars to take home. This was an easy way to engage children in age appropriate vocabulary words in the home.

"Parent involvement means more than getting parents into school. This type of limited involvement is often available to parents who are not in full-time employment and involves only a small percentage of the children's parents" (National Institute for Public Practice, 2016, para. 2). As part of the IIP, there was parent engagement that was accessible to all parents, not just those that were able to attend events at the school. There were bi-monthly parent communications sent home to notify parents of methods of engaging children in conversations with age-appropriate vocabulary. For example, a bulletin containing the SSTaRS method of vocabulary acquisition showed parents a method for reinforcing vocabulary instruction with their children (The Hanen Center, 2014, p. 1-4). (See Appendix C). The consistency of sending these notifications will help parents to work on vocabulary with their children on a more regular basis than if only one literacy night was offered.

Section 12:   Formative Assessment and Analysis

Formative assessment is an integral part of the educational process. Boston (2002) found

that when planning instruction, teachers should consider what formative assessments they will

use to allow students to demonstrate what they have learned, and then they should use this

information to adjust their teaching in an effort to promote more efficient learning (p. 5).

Formative assessment is about the process of increasing student learning rather than the final

outcome. Additionally, Chappus and Chappus (2007-2008) found that "Both the teacher and the

student use formative assessment results to make decisions about what actions to take to promote

further learning" (para. 9).

As part of this IIP, multiple formative assessments guided student learning. The

following table outlines the formative assessments that were used and the timeline that was used

for these assessments.

Formative Assessment	Description	Timeline
NWEA MAP Test	This computerized assessment was given as a preassessment to determine current achievement in vocabulary use and acquisition, as well as word recognition.	October 2018
Vocabulary Organizer	**Students used graphic organizers to record their knowledge about specific vocabulary words.**	**Ongoing: This assessment occurred throughout the duration of the IIP.**
NWEA MAP Test	This computerized assessment was given as an assessment to determine gains made and areas of need in achievement in vocabulary use and acquisition, as well as word recognition.	February 2019
Classroom Observation	**Teachers will observe students during classroom**	**Ongoing:**

	interactive read-alouds for use of specific vocabulary words in student dialogue. A teacher created rubric was used to record these observations.	This assessment occurred throughout the duration of the IIP.
NWEA MAP Test	This computerized assessment was given as an assessment to determine further gains and areas of need in achievement in vocabulary use and acquisition, as well as word recognition.	April 2019

The NWEA MAP Assessment (Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress) was given three times throughout the year. The first administration took place in October 2018. There was also an administration in February 2018 and another in April 2018. There was a specific component of the MAP assessment that focused on vocabulary achievement. Included in this component of the assessment were questions that dealt with students being able to use context clues and sight words. There were also questions that focused on base words, prefixes, and suffixes as well as compound words and contractions. Additionally, there were questions regarding synonyms, antonyms, homophones, homonyms, and homographs (Northwest Evaluation Association, 2013, p. 4). The results of this component of the NWEA MAP assessment were analyzed after each administration to determine areas or strength and areas of need. Areas of need were addressed through adjustment of the evidence-based strategies during instruction. For example, if the assessment showed weakness in synonyms and antonyms, then strategies for teaching these were employed.

Vocabulary organizers were used by both teacher and student as a means of formative assessment. There are many types of organizers that allow students to organize their thoughts

about vocabulary with definitions, pictures, sentence writing, note taking, and self-evaluations. These organizers allowed not only the teacher but also the student to see progress in vocabulary understanding and acquisition. The Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) is a self-evaluation organizer that shows students in a clear manner where they have strengths and where they have weaknesses. Stahl and Bravo (2010) found that this method "is sensitive to incremental vocabulary growth" (as cited by Conderman, Hedin, & Bresnahan, n.d., p. 33-34). (See Appendix D). Students were able to monitor their own learning, and as they learned more vocabulary and became more accustomed to using the words, they incrementally moved upward on the scale. They were able to determine where they had strengths and where they had areas of weakness.

Another formative assessment that was used was the observation of interactive read-alouds. Oral vocabulary use may be easier for some students than written vocabulary use in a type of assessment like the Vocabulary Knowledge Scale or the MAP Assessment. In an oral assessment, predetermined questions were asked to the students during the read-aloud. The teacher then listened to students as they talked with each other in pairs. The main goal was for the teacher to listen for the number of times that specific vocabulary word was correctly in the conversation. A teacher-created rubric was used to record the number of times students used targeted words. This allowed teachers to establish if students are not only able to use new vocabulary words but also if they could use those words correctly. The teacher could then use this data to determine whether reteaching was needed or if new vocabulary could be covered.

Section 13:   Summative Evaluation

Summative assessment is an overall means of assessing long-term progress. "The key is to think of summative assessment as a means to gauge, at a particular point in time, student

learning relative to content standards" (Garrison & Ehringhaus, n.d., p. 1).   The SMART Goal

for this project states that 2nd grade students should show an increase of 10% in reading on the

state report card according to the reading diagnostics. By the end of the year, summative data

reported on the state report card performance index should show an increase of 10%. "Because

[summative assessments] are spread out and occur *after* instruction every few weeks, months, or

once a year, summative assessments are tools to help evaluate the effectiveness of programs,

school improvement goals, alignment of curriculum, or student placement in specific programs"

(Garrison & Ehringhaus, n.d., p. 1). As the students' assessment data will be compiled at the end

of the year or later, the data from this will show the progress the students have made over the

year and help to guide the focus of the following instructional year. The amount of increase

achieved, no matter if the goal is reached, exceeded, or not reached, will then be reported to the

public on the state report card. "Because they are broader in scope and measure learning over a

longer time period, summative assessments tend to have higher stakes" (Derrell, 2015, para. 6).

Multiple evidence-based strategies such as explicit instruction, frequent exposure, word-

learning strategies, and interactive read-alouds were used in conjunction with formative

assessments including vocabulary graphic organizers and classroom observation. These

strategies were implemented for a four-month period. Data from classroom observations were

collected on a continual basis, but not necessarily at regular intervals. Data from graphic

organizers were collected on a weekly basis, but the NWEA Map assessment was the main

means of measurable data for a formative assessment.

The NWEA Map assessment was administered in the fall and winter, and it will be

administered again this spring. As the overall goal is to raise the reading performance index on

the state report card but with a focus on vocabulary, both reading and vocabulary scores from the

NWEA were analyzed in order to determine the effectiveness of the evidence-based strategies employed. Figure 18 shows the overall Reading scores and the goal area scores of Vocabulary Acquisition and Use for 2nd grader students in Fall 2018. This chart shows that 42% of students were on track in reading with an average RIT mean of 170 and 44% of students were on track in vocabulary with a mean RIT score of 170. On track students were considered those that scored average, high average, or high.
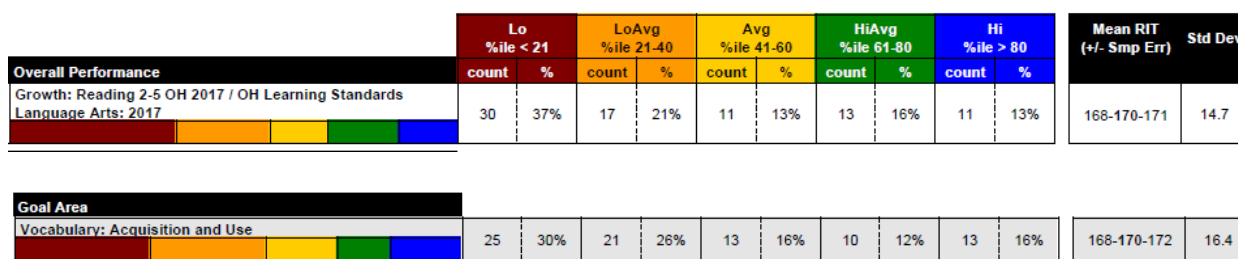
	Lo %ile < 21		LoAvg %ile 21-40		Avg %ile 41-60		HiAvg %ile 61-80		Hi %ile > 80		Mean RIT (+/- Smp Err)	Std Dev
Overall Performance	count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%		
Growth: Reading 2-5 OH 2017 / OH Learning Standards Language Arts: 2017	30	37%	17	21%	11	13%	13	16%	11	13%	168-170-171	14.7

Goal Area												
Vocabulary: Acquisition and Use	25	30%	21	26%	13	16%	10	12%	13	16%	168-170-172	16.4

Figure 18

The second grade teachers used this information to group students with like achievements. For example, students in the low category received instruction in reading and vocabulary with other students whose scores also ranked in the low category. For one selected 2nd grade classes, the teacher chose six groups according to the fall NWEA results. (See Figure 19).

Group 1: Student A, Student B, Student C, Student D
Group 2: Student E, Student F, Student G, Student H, Student I
Group 3: Student J, Student K, Student L, Student M
Group 4: Student N, Student O, Student P
Group 5: Student Q, Student R, Student S
Group 6: Student T, Student U

Figure 19

Figure 20 shows the overall Reading scores and the goal area scores of Vocabulary Acquisition and Use for 2nd grade students in Winter 2019. This chart shows that 51% of students were on track in reading with a mean RIT score of 181 and 49% of students were on track in vocabulary with a mean RIT score of 180.

	Lo %ile < 21		LoAvg %ile 21-40		Avg %ile 41-60		HiAvg %ile 61-80		Hi %ile > 80		Mean RIT (+/- Smp Err)	Std Dev
Overall Performance	count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%		
Growth: Reading 2-5 OH 2017 / OH Learning Standards Language Arts: 2017	24	29%	17	21%	16	20%	13	16%	12	15%	179-181-182	14.4

Goal Area												
Vocabulary: Acquisition and Use	23	28%	19	23%	16	20%	13	16%	11	13%	178-180-181	15.4

Figure 20

For the selected 2nd grade class as shown in Figure 19, the teacher used the data from the Winter

NWEA to regroup the students into five groups according to the fall NWEA results. (See Figure

21). The data allows the teacher to facilitate teaching reading topics, including vocabulary, in

like ability groupings. The students identified bold increased in their score enough to be placed

in a higher group. The student in italics did not make expected gains and were placed in a lower

group. All other students made expected gains and remained in the same groups.

Group 1: Student A, Student B, Student D, *Student I*
Group 2: **Student C**, Student F, Student H, *Student M*
Group 3: **Student E, Student G**, Student J, Student K
Group 4: **Student L**, Student O, Student P, *Student S*
Group 5: **Student N**, **Student Q**, **Student R**, Student T, Student U

Figure 21

Figure 22 is a graph that depicts the growth of the 2nd grade students' mean RIT scores

from the 2nd grade NWEA fall and winter assessments. The scores for reading and vocabulary
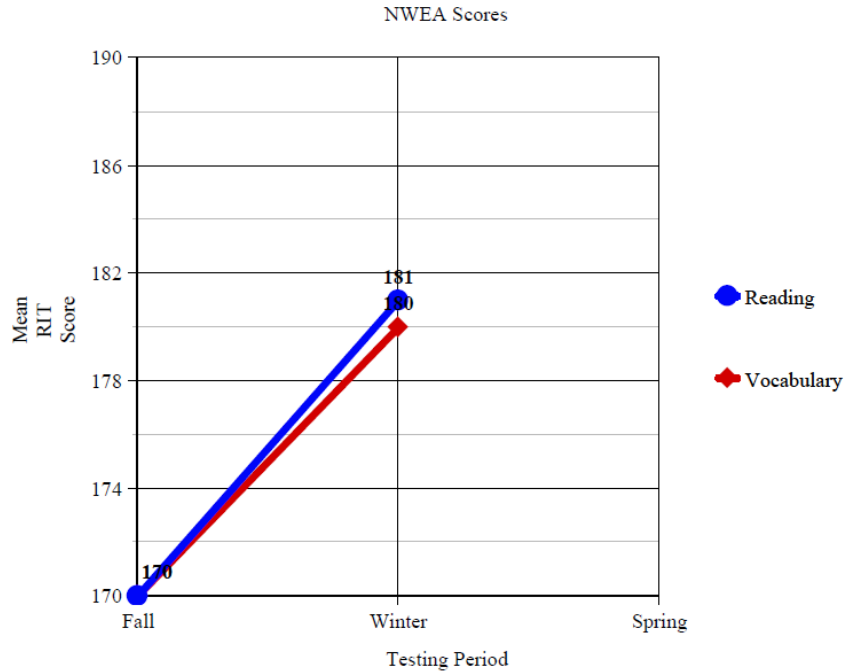
are nearly identical.

Figure 22

As we will not see Ohio Report Card summative results until next fall, the formative

NWEA Map test scores will be used to project the students' achievement toward "Improving K-3

Literacy" on the Ohio Report Card. When the Ohio Report Card summative results are released,

a full data analysis will be completed. According to NWEA Student Status Norms (2015), 2nd

grade students generally score mean RIT scores of 174.7 on the fall administration, 184.2 on the

winter administration, and 188.7 on the spring administration. Since the spring test has not yet

been taken, from the data that we know and from this NWEA Student Norm data we can project

that Bucyrus Elementary 2nd grade RIT scores on NWEA reading will be 185 on the spring

administration. Additionally, we can project scores specifically on NWEA vocabulary to be 184

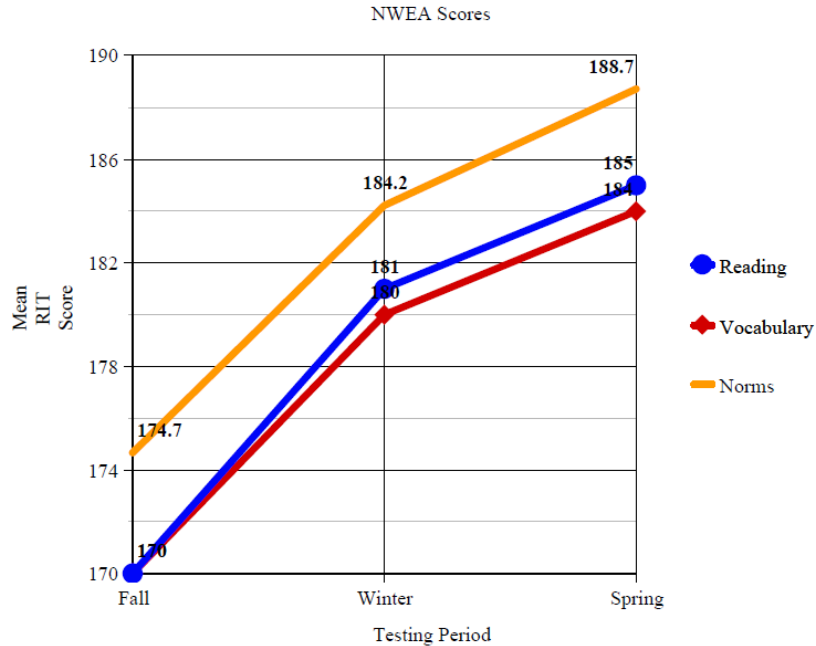on the spring administration. (See Figure 23).

NWEA Scores

Figure 23

This IIP's impact on student achievement shows that student scores on reading and vocabulary increased 10 to 11 points, which aligns to the amount of increase for the status norms. These scores, however, are 3 to 5 points lower than the status norms. Using this data, we can predict that the spring NWEA scores will rise at the same rate as the norm (4 to 5 points) but remain lower than status norm.

Figure 24 shows student growth by percentages of on track students. In the fall, 42% of students were on track in reading and 44% of students were on track in vocabulary. In the winter, 51% of students were on track in reading and 49% of students were on track in vocabulary. While the increase in both reading and vocabulary are similar, there was a larger increase in reading overall than vocabulary.
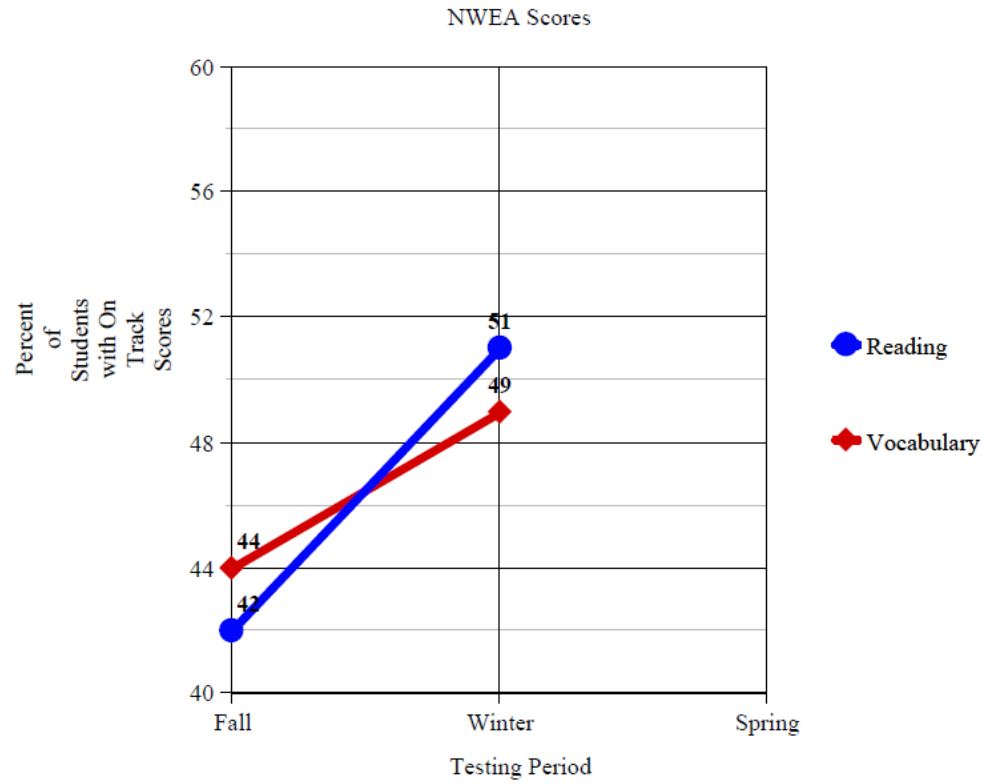
Figure 24

These student percent increases combined with the RIT score increases are promising and may reflect the 10% needed performance index increase on the Ohio Report Card. While the RIT scores are not as high as the status norms, they do show steady growth. "The Performance Index measures the achievement of every student, not just whether or not they reach "proficient." Districts and schools receive points for every student's level of achievement. The higher the student's level, the more points the school earns toward its index. This rewards districts and schools that improve the performance of highest- and lowest-performing students" (Ohio Department of Education, 2018).

All of the above data is based on the mean of student performance. When considering individual student scores, it is important to note that the standard deviation ranges from 14.7 to 16.4 depending upon the administration cycle and whether it was the overall reading score or the

vocabulary score. The lowest performing student on the fall administration earned an overall

RIT score for reading of 144 and was in 3rd percentile. This student's score improved to a RIT

score of 169 on the winter administration moving up to the 17th percentile. This is a large gain.

When using the status norms, the spring administration is likely to increase to 173. The highest

performing student on the fall administration scored a RIT score for reading of 212 and was in

the 99th percentile. On the winter administration, the student's score was 221 remaining in the

99th percentile. When using the status norms, the spring administration is likely to increase to
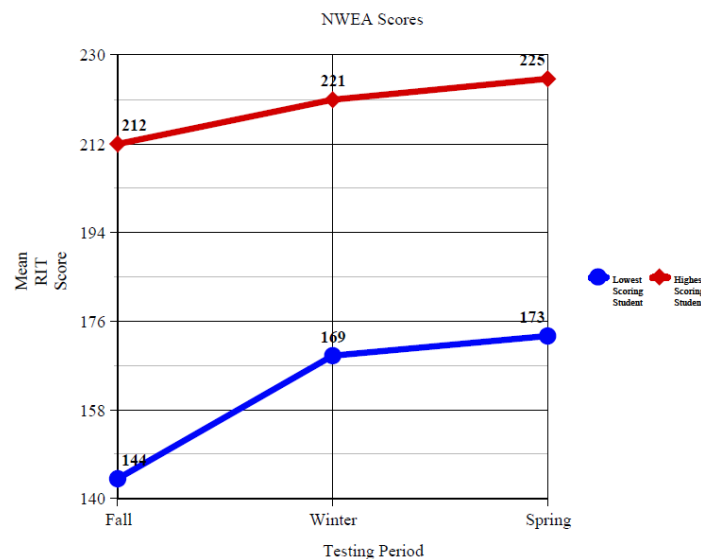
225. (See figure 25).

Figure 25

Section 14:   Reflection

As the developer, implementer, evaluator, and leader of this project, I have learned a

great deal. While the project seemed daunting at the beginning, it brings a great sense of

accomplishment to have facilitated a school-wide, yearlong project. The development was one

of the most difficult parts of the process. Wrapping my head around all of the information from

the data analysis to the research behind the project to the action plan was a lot to take in at one

time. Working on it piece by piece helped to make feasible goals. After each goal section was completed, I was able to build on that and move on the next section.

As the implementer of the project, I was not always comfortable in telling others what to do. While I do not have any issue giving direction to musical groups, I was somewhat out of my comfort in giving direction about a project on vocabulary. I felt like almost everyone had a greater knowledge than I did in the area of vocabulary instruction. This is when I needed to rely on the research that I had done and others to do their jobs. I had to view myself as only the organizer and facilitator, not necessarily the one who knew all the answers.

As the evaluator of the project, I have a greater understanding in reading and using data. Prior to this project, I had little experience in using either state report card data or NWEA data. I now feel quite comfortable being able to analyze both of these types of data on multiple levels. I also see the importance of using the data to determine areas of need and to show improvement throughout the school year.

As the leader of the project, I am very proud how all the staff embraced the project and of the high value that was placed on the project. Since my project was part of my school's OIP goal, both administrators and teachers were completely vested in the project. For the most part, there was little resistance in anything I asked the staff to do. The Word of the Week portion of the project seemed to be embraced and used by most staff members.

This project had a definite impact on student achievement in both reading and vocabulary acquisition. While Bucyrus Elementary students scored consistently lower the norms, the trajectory of our students' scores followed that of the norms. Therefore, the prediction can be that Bucyrus Elementary students' scores increased the same amount as those of the norms, although they still remain lower. Ideally, it would be advantageous to see the gap between BES

students and the norms decrease, but this cannot be determined until final NWEA assessment is given.

My project was aligned to ELCC standards and through this, I learned a great deal. Of particular note is that of vision and management. The vision of this project was multi-faceted. Firstly, it had to be aligned to district goals and then to school goals. This alignment took the efforts of many people. For the project to be successful, a clear vision had to in place from the beginning. This included knowing the background information of the district and the school, and then doing research to be sure that all pieces of the project were in place prior to implementation.

As stated earlier, the management of this project was somewhat stressful at times, not because of the staff I worked with, but because of my own feelings of shortcomings in the knowledge of the project. This turned out not to be an issue, though, because the staff was very gracious and accepting of any tasks that I assigned to them. Because of the background research I had done on the project, I knew enough to be able to adequately manage the project.

Overall, my project was very successful and most of my plans were implemented as specified in the original proposal. Only a few changes had to be made. One of the main changes was that the observation of students using vocabulary words in conversation with other students did not really work out as I had planned. The teachers read a story with the designated word and then instructed students to talk to a neighbor and use the newly learned word. Students were not able to converse about it well, if at all. At best, they used the word in a sentence or just gave its definition. If we do a project like this in the future, this will be something that will need modified.

Another setback was that at the onset of the project, the plan was to present vocabulary strategies at an already scheduled Family Literacy Night that occurs every year. The staff, who

plan that event, would not open a station for this topic, so an additional evening had to be planned. In working with the afterschool program, a literacy night was offered to these families only. However, it was very close to the school-wide Family Literacy Night, so there was poor attendance. Then, upon attendance at the school-wide event, it turned out to be more of a family fun night with food, games, photos, and a book fair. There were no curricular stations or actual literacy involved. This was highly disappointing. This is something that should be addressed for future years. Perhaps the organizers need assistance in determining appropriate topics and stations for the event, and then vocabulary could be included in this.

This project was of great benefit to the school. As stated before, it fulfilled a portion of the district OIP goal. Because so much emphasis was placed on this project, it drew the staff together as we knew we were all working toward a common goal. The Word of the Week was a consistent reminder that vocabulary was our focus for this year. Because teachers were continually reminded of the vocabulary focus, they more likely spent more time than they probably would have otherwise. This played into the improvements that we saw in student achievement in vocabulary and reading. As this is the first year of our three-year OIP cycle, hopefully we will be able to keep the momentum for the next two years and close the gap in our students' NWEA vocabulary and reading scores as compared to that of the norms.

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Section 16:   Appendix A

Bucyrus City Schools OIP Single Goal District Action Plan

OIP Single Goal District Action Plan   August 2018-June 2021

Bucyrus City Schools

DISTRICT GOAL

Goal 1:

By the end of the 2018-2021 improvement cycle, BCS PreK-12 students will be embedded in an integrated comprehensive services model (ICS) as measured by district created measures and an increase in its Performance Index score from the baseline of 75.2 out of 120 (62.6%).

IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES AND INDICATORS

Strategy 1.1: Revise, implement and monitor systems, structures and supports that create and hold firm the belief that ALL students deserve and are entitled to a high quality education inclusive of rigorous, evidence/research-based methods and standards/curricula.

Educator/TBT Implementation Indicator:
100% of TBTs will utilize action research practices for measuring the impact of
- fidelity implementation (focus on standards)
- evidence/research based innovations
- professional development high impact learning for all student populations (emphasis on outcome of instruction on small group populations).
- deliver person-centered IEPs/WEPs/RIMPs/Success Plans

Student Performance Indicator:
100% of students will increase achievement (or maintain high achievement) in reading and mathematics as measured by national, state and local assessments. Growth expectations from Spring 2018 baselines are:

Strategy 1.2: Utilize active implementation practices to monitor, provide feedback and support to the system that ensures structures for effective leadership teams [BLT & TBT].

DLT Implementation Indicator:
At least quarterly, the DLT will lead the collection and analysis of information used by leadership teams to assess performance, progress on implementation of innovations, delivery of outputs, achievement results and impact/use of resources.

BLT/TBT Performance Indicator:
100% of Leadership Teams (BLT & TBT) will utilize the Ohio Improvement Cycle, as evidenced by the 5 Step Process protocol to evaluate how evidence/research-based innovations are being implemented. Leadership teams will determine whether the target populations are being reached, students are receiving the intended services and whether the innovations are being implemented effectively and with fidelity.

ACTION STEPS

1.1.1: With DLT support, BLTs will provide HQPD and follow-up support (including monitoring) on ICS understandings, concepts and philosophies, to include:
- *BES*- Depth of Knowledge and increasing rigor for all
- *BSS*- research and evidence based non-fiction comprehension reading strategies and vocabulary acquisition strategies in support of students making progress in our Depth of Knowledge initiative.

1.1.2: With DLT support, BLTs will provide professional development and follow-up support (including monitoring) on research- and evidence-based instructional strategies related to:
- *BES*- ELA College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards #4 and #9.
- *BSS*- non-fiction comprehension reading strategies and vocabulary acquisition

1.1.3: With DLT support, BLTs will facilitate standards review, alignment and mapping in all grade levels to identify gaps in rigor of delivery. Phase One: Standards Audit/Review; Math and Early Literacy. Phase Two: Assessment Mapping

1.1.4 With DLT support, BLTs will increase understanding and use of:
- *BES*- the concept of Performance Index calculations, encouraging team/classroom use.
- *BSS*- quarterly Performance Index Calculations by utilizing the PI calculation for all MAP Growth and ALEKS test results.

1.2.1: The DLT will create and implement a data analysis, action step, and targeted support plan which will be monitored at least quarterly, evaluated and revised on an annual basis.

1.2.2: The DLT will create, introduce, and utilize implementation strategies to increase systemic protocols, providing clarity to work at classroom/building/district levels.

1.2.3: The DLT will lead and monitor systemic feedback protocols, with tool revisions as needed.

Appendix B

Average Scale Scores on the Grade 3 English Language Arts Test: Bucyrus ES and Comparison Groups, Spring2018

Name	Average Scale Score
Ohio Department of Education	710
Bucyrus City SD (043687)	683
Bucyrus ES (011732)	683

Performance on the Grade 3 English Language Arts Test, by Item: Bucyrus ES, Spring2018

Item #/Content Statement	Percent 0 Points Earned	Percent 1 Point Earned	Percent 2 Points Earned	Percent 3 Points Earned	Percent 4 Points Earned
Reading Informational Text					
8. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	32	68	0	0	0
9. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	39	61	0	0	0
10. Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	50	50	0	0	0
11. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	20	80	0	0	0
12. Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic. - Point(s) Possible: 2 Points	76	20	4	0	0
13. Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	88	12	0	0	0
15. Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	50	50	0	0	0
16. Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	39	61	0	0	0
17. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning word and phrases based on grade 3 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	60	40	0	0	0

Average Scale Scores on the Grade 4 English Language Arts Test: Bucyrus ES and Comparison Groups, Spring2018

Name	Average Scale Score
Ohio Department of Education	715
Bucyrus City SD (043687)	687
Bucyrus ES (011732)	687

Performance on the Grade 4 English Language Arts Test, by Item: Bucyrus ES, Spring2018

Item #/Content Statement	Percent 0 Points Earned	Percent 1 Point Earned	Percent 2 Points Earned	Percent 3 Points Earned	Percent 4 Points Earned
Reading Informational Text					
7. Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	65	35	0	0	0
8. Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	71	29	0	0	0
9. Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	51	49	0	0	0
10. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	35	65	0	0	0
11. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	65	35	0	0	0
12. Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	53	47	0	0	0

Average Scale Scores on the Grade 5 English Language Arts Test: Bucyrus ES and Comparison Groups, Spring2018

Name	Average Scale Score
Ohio Department of Education	719
Bucyrus City SD (043687)	702
Bucyrus ES (011732)	702

Performance on the Grade 5 English Language Arts Test, by Item: Bucyrus ES, Spring2018

| Item #/Content Statement	Percent 0 Points Earned	Percent 1 Point Earned	Percent 2 Points Earned	Percent 3 Points Earned	Percent 4 Points Earned
Reading Informational Text					
6. Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	32	68	0	0	0
7. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	25	75	0	0	0
8. Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	50	50	0	0	0
9. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	26	74	0	0	0
10. Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. - Point(s) Possible: 2 Points	69	8	24	0	0
11. Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	49	51	0	0	0
12. Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	90	10	0	0	0
13. Compare and contrast the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in two or more texts. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	56	44	0	0	0
15. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area. - Point(s) Possible: 1 Point	21	79	0	0	0

Appendix C

Shoot for the SSTaRS!

To be ready for success in school, young children need to have a strong foundation of **early literacy skills** – the skills required *before* a child starts to read or write. Studies have shown that children who start school with higher levels of these skills go on to have greater academic success.

Building your child's early literacy skills can be both easy and fun when you know what to do. With a few simple strategies, you can make literacy-learning a natural and enjoyable part of the everyday routines and activities you're already doing with your child.

Vocabulary – A Key Building Block of Literacy
One of the important early literacy skills your child needs to be prepared for school is **vocabulary**. The larger a child's vocabulary in preschool, the easier it will be for her to read and understand stories later on.

But it isn't just about how many words your child knows. How well she *understands* those words is important as well. To build your child's understanding of new words, you'll need to "Shoot for the SSTaRS".
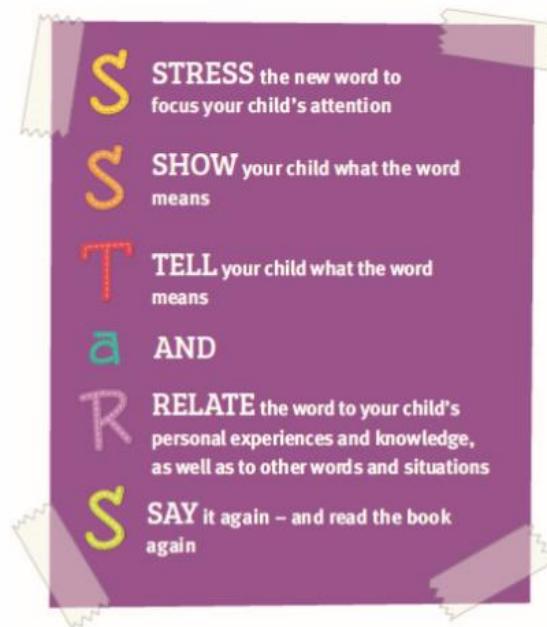
Stress

To stress a word, pause for a moment before and after the word. Also, emphasize the word by using a louder or quieter voice when you say it. For example, "He was feeling... *exhausted*... after all that running."

Show... and Tell

Show your child what the word means by:
- Pointing to pictures in the book.
- Using facial expressions.
- Using actions or gestures (for example, slump your shoulders when saying "exhausted")

Tell

Tell your child what the word means by:
- Explaining its meaning. For example, "He's *selfish*. 'Selfish' means that he only cares about what *he* wants, and not about what other people want."
- Talking about the category the word belongs to. For example, "an eggplant is a vegetable."
- Describing what the word is and what it's not. For example, "A passenger is someone who rides in a bus, a car, a train or a plane. But a passenger can't be a driver."

And

Relate

Relate the word to familiar words or experiences.
- Words – Describe the word using simpler words your child already knows. For example, when talking about the word *exhausted*, use more familiar words like "tired" or "sleepy".
- Experiences – If you come across the word "exhausted" in a book, remind your child of the time the two of you were *exhausted* after running to catch a bus.

Say

Say it again – The more times your child hears a word, the more likely she'll be to understand and remember it. Repeat the word by:
- Reading the same book several times.
- Using the word in different situations throughout the day.
- Using the word before or during book reading (e.g. while looking at a picture) or after book reading while having a conversation about the story.

Example of Shooting for the SSTaRS with "pedestrian"

Stress

Pause before and after the word, and draw attention to it by using a louder or quieter voice	"Looking out the school bus window, she could see many… *pedestrians*… on the sidewalk."

Show

Point to a picture	Point to a picture of a pedestrian in the book.
Act it out	Pretend you're walking down a street like a pedestrian.

Tell

Name the category or define the word	"A *pedestrian* is a person who gets from one place to another by walking."
Use familiar Step 1 words	"This woman is a *pedestrian*. She is walking on the sidewalk."
Provide details	"Most streets have sidewalks just for *pedestrians* so they're safely away from the cars and trucks."
Talk about what the word is and what it is not	"A *pedestrian* is someone who is walking on the sidewalk, but not someone who is driving or riding a bike on the road."

and Relate

Relate the word to your child's experiences or knowledge	"When we walked to the grocery store yesterday, we were *pedestrians*. Can you think of another time that you were a pedestrian?"
Talk about other situations in which the word could be used	"Sometimes a bridge is built only for people to walk on, not for cars. This kind of bridge can be called a *pedestrian* bridge."

Say it again

Use the word before, during and after the book reading	*Before the reading* tell your child you are going to read a book about a pedestrian – "That means a person who is walking on the sidewalk." *During the reading* talk more about the meaning of the word "pedestrian" as it comes up in the book. *After the reading* use the word again as you relate it to your child's experiences. For example, talk about the crosswalk for pedestrians that's in front of your child's school.
Read the book again	Give your child the chance to contribute more and more to the conversation as she becomes familiar with the word "pedestrian."
Use the word again throughout the day	When out for a walk, talk about being a pedestrian and point out other pedestrians. Talk about the rules that you must follow as pedestrians.

What other early literacy skills does your child need to learn?

Conversation - A child's ability to use and understand speech is directly related to her literacy development. The better her conversational skills now, the easier it will be for her to understand what she reads later on.

Vocabulary – The more words a child knows, the easier it is for her to learn new words and to gain meaning from the stories she reads.

Story comprehension – Experience listening to and understanding stories will eventually make it easier for a child to read and write stories on her own.

Print knowledge – Before a child can read and write, she must understand how print works. For example, she'll need to know that print is made up of letters of the alphabet, that letters combine to make words and that print is read from left to right.

Sound awareness – To be prepared to read, children must understand that words can be broken down into syllables and smaller sounds, and that letters correspond to certain sounds.

To learn more about what you can do to build these critical skills, visit www.hanen.org/Getting-Ready-To-Read

Founded in 1975, The Hanen Centre is a Canadian not-for-profit charitable organization with a global reach. Its mission is to provide parents, caregivers, early childhood educators and speech-language pathologists with the knowledge and training they need to help young children develop the best possible language, social and literacy skills. This includes children who have or are at risk for language delays, those with developmental challenges such as autism, and those who are developing typically. For more information on The Hanen Centre and its programs and resources, visit www.hanen.org.

Appendix D

Points Awarded > Section ⌄	1	2	3	4	5
Word	I've never seen this word before.	I've seen this word, but I do not know what it means.	I think it means . . .	I know this word. It means . . .	I can use this word in a sentence. My sentence is . . . (You must also fill in Column 4.)