

Education YES! Report

Aspen Ridge Middle School

Ishpeming, Michigan, United States

Prepared for the Michigan Department of Education

Submitted: January 16, 2009

Reviewed: January 16, 2009

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Introduction

Purpose of the Report

Education YES! provides both a snapshot of current school performance and a ladder for educators, supplying feedback and directions to assist them on a path of meaningful change. The Education YES! School Performance Indicators are based on the School Improvement Framework. Based on a review of the research on school improvement, rubrics to measure 40 key characteristics have been selected as having the most effect on student achievement. The Education YES! School Performance Indicators engage the school community in an in-depth assessment of each of the 40 Key Characteristics. In completing the report, the school identifies the level of achievement on each Key Characteristic, and documents the evidence used to support the level of achievement. The self assessment helps the school identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

Michigan Department of Education began publishing both the school's self-rating and the evidence reported for each indicator in 2005. The school's self-rating for each characteristic, and the evidence provided, is available to the public on the School Report Card.

Structure of the Report

The Education YES! report is organized by the School Improvement Framework Strands and Standards. For each standard, the report addresses a set of key characteristics and evidence. Each characteristic has four levels of achievement: Getting Started, Partially Implemented, Implemented, and Exemplary. The school should use the rubrics for each characteristic as an opportunity to ask itself tough questions and to respond with accurate answers geared toward self-improvement. The process for assigning a rating involves reading the rubric descriptors that correspond to each rating, and clicking on each descriptor box that accurately describes activities or processes in place at your school. The system is designed to display a check mark for the highest level in which your school has completed all the descriptors. In addition to assigning a rating, the school must list or describe the evidence used that supports the rating on each characteristic. Sample evidence is provided that school users may highlight, copy, and paste into the evidence box. Ample space is provided to list additional school-specific evidence that supports the level of achievement. For each key characteristic in which a rating of "Getting Started" or "Partially Implemented" is earned, schools must also check the content area impacted by this characteristic's rating. After completing the 40 Indicators in EdYES!, a summary page is available so the school can quickly see areas of strength and opportunity.

School Information

School:	Aspen Ridge Middle School
District:	Nice Community School District
Public/Non-Public:	Public
Grades:	6-8, Spec
School Code Number:	08500
City:	Ishpeming
State/Province:	Michigan
Country:	United States

Strand I - Teaching For Learning

The school holds high expectations for all students, identifies essential curricular content, makes certain it is sequenced appropriately and is taught effectively in the available instructional times. Assessments used are aligned to curricular content and are used to guide instructional decisions and monitor student learning.

Standard 1 - Curriculum

Schools/districts have a cohesive plan for instruction and learning that serves as the basis for teachers' and students' active involvement in the construction and application of knowledge.

Key Characteristics

Benchmark A: Aligned, Reviewed and Monitored

School/district written curriculum is aligned with, and references, the appropriate learning standards (MCF, AUEN, ISTE, GLCE, HSCE, METS, etc.).

I.1.A.2 Standards Alignment: The local curriculum framework is based upon and organized around the adopted state and local curriculum documents.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

Curriculum guides reference Michigan Curriculum Framework for each subject area including the Arts Curriculum guides have been updated for the 2008 - 2009 school year documenting evidence of a curriculum aligned to the new GLCES for those disciplines with published GLCES. School Improvement Meeting Minutes as well as Professional Development Day minutes reflect progress related to alignment. In disciplines where GLCES are not available, the curriculum has been aligned with the most recent standards or benchmarks available.

Benchmark B: Communicated

School/district curriculum is provided to staff, students, and parents in a manner that they can understand.

I.1.B.1 Staff: Communication and articulation about the curriculum is a high priority for the entire staff. A dialog is promoted between and across grade levels and content areas. Particular emphasis is paid to the curriculum dialog of teachers from one instructional level to the other.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

Minutes from staff meetings across grade levels to discuss curriculum and resource materials utilized k-12.
 Minutes from Professional Development Days document alignment of course content with the GLCES
 Newsletters and memos are utilized to show cross grade level curriculum involving teaming.
 Communications through our Family Resource Institute keep parents and community updated

I.1.B.2 Students: The school makes a concerted effort to assure that all students have a clear understanding of what they are studying and why they are studying it.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

Course syllabi are utilized to show expectations to students and parents. Teacher created Protopages (web based) showing parents what students are studying at any given time. Family access is given through school based program called Skyward which gives parents a "look" at students assignments and individual grades on assignments. Homework Hotline, through phone system, allows parents to access daily assignments. The teachers school e-mail addresses are available to parents and several teacher/parent communications are in place.

Standard 2 - Instruction

Intentional processes and practices are used by schools and teachers to facilitate high levels of student learning.

Key Characteristics

Benchmark A: Planning

Processes used to plan, monitor, reflect and refine instruction that supports high expectations for all students

I.2.A.1 Content Appropriateness: The content of the curriculum is directly aligned and consistent with the district's curriculum framework. Processes used to develop cohesive and essential content require articulation within and across grade levels and content areas.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

Minutes from staff meeting across grade levels to discuss curriculum and resource materials utilized k-12. Faculty create lesson plans that are based on GLCES. Disciplines without published GLCES have curriculum aligned to the most recent Michigan Curriculum Frameworks and Benchmarks. Pacing guides are created at each grade level that correspond to appropriate GLCES. School improvement team discusses ways in which to develop cohesiveness across content areas. A pacing chart is posted in the Teacher Workroom for each discipline for the purpose of promoting integrated units of study

I.2.A.2 Developmental Appropriateness: Instructional planning is focused upon ensuring student success. Instructional practice is designed around the needs, interests and aptitudes of the individual students that



results in a curriculum that allows students to derive meaning from all of their educational experiences.

Response:

Exemplary

Evidence:

Faculty create lesson plans that are based on GLCES. In disciplines where GLCES are not available, curriculum is aligned with the most recent Michigan Frameworks and Benchmarks. Pacing guides are created at each grade level that correspond to appropriate GLCES. Co-teaching takes place at all grade levels. Students who need help in math have access to additional math tutors to help reinforce misunderstood math concepts. Our newly adopted Holt Mathematics Series provides tutorial to students and parents via online assistance and/or CD support. Students who require tests to be read to them have access to qualified staff who proctor tests to students. Various methods of instruction are utilized to include lecture, hands on, lab activities, and projects which involve varying methods of grading such as rubrics or peer coaching. In partnership with Life Skills class and Guidance Counselor, all eighth graders work with My Dream Explorer and produce Educational Development Plans as part of their pre-enrollment to High School. Special Education students and their parents will be informed about personal curriculums during their transitional IEP's between eighth and ninth grade.

I.2.A.3 Reflection and Refinement: A collaborative culture that incorporates a philosophy of continuous improvement exists at the school. Staff members work as teams to gather and analyze information and make decisions regarding the modification of their instructional practice.

**Response:**

Implemented

Evidence:

Members of School Improvement team are from across grade levels. Minutes from staff meeting across grade levels to discuss curriculum and resource materials utilized k-12. Professional development is teacher centered with collaborative teams providing input. Data obtained from Gates/MacGinitie, STAR Reading Test, and MEAP are utilized to make school wide decisions regarding changes in instructional practices. Grant monies and workshops such as Math Grant, Algebra Initiative, and TAH workshop are utilized to incorporate a philosophy of continuous improvement. Common prep times among staff allow cross curriculum teachers to meet and modify their instructional practices to benefit student learning by creating grade level projects

Benchmark B: Delivery

Instructional practices are used to facilitate student learning.

I.2.B.1 Delivered Curriculum: The school assures that students have the supports they need to meet the required standards/expectations. Teachers expect and provide opportunities for students to use many and varied approaches to demonstrate competency. The school continuously adapts curriculum, instruction, and assessments to meet its students' diverse and changing needs.

**Response:**

Implemented

Evidence:

Common prep times among staff members allows cross curriculum teachers to meet and modify their instructional practices to benefit student learning by creating grade level projects. Various methods of instruction are utilized to include lecture, hands on, lab activities, and projects which involve varying methods of grading such as rubrics, multiple choice tests, or peer coaching. Co-teaching takes place at all grade levels. Students who need help in math have access to additional math tutors to help reinforce misunderstood math concepts. The newly adopted Holt Math Series provides students and parents with concept tutorials via the internet or support CD's. Students identified through low reading scores and/or teacher recommendation receive extra support through a program called The Jamestown Project. Teachers attempt to do integrated projects across subject areas whenever applicable

I.2.B.2 Best Practice: There is a strong belief within the school community that all students can succeed. This is demonstrated in the broad use at both the school and classroom levels of a variety of best practices designed to meet the differentiated needs of individual learners. Technology is a key component of instructional practice.

**Response:**

Implemented

Evidence:

Teachers create projects that utilize computer programs such as Hyperstudio, PowerPoint, Word Perfect, and Excel. Administrative "walk-throughs" as well as formal evaluations document faculty utilizing best practice strategies. Grade level meetings with middle/elementary faculty allow science lab techniques to be highlighted which utilize the use of various forms of technology. Faculty create lesson plans that are based on GLCES and on Michigan Curriculum Frameworks where GLCES are unavailable. Higher level thinking as well as critical thinking is encouraged through activities and projects as frequently as possible and appropriate. Aspen Ridge Middle School has been a collaborative site of practice and inquiry (CSPI) and has had grants for teachers to study and implement collaborative units.

I.2.B.3 Student Engagement: School staff believe that active student engagement is a key feature of their school and there is an expectation that all teachers at the school will design lessons and assessments that engage their students.

**Response:**

Implemented

Evidence:

Administrative "walk-throughs" and formal observations document faculty utilizing best practice strategies. Student projects emphasize higher order thinking skills. Varying methods of grading such as rubrics, multiple choice tests, or peer coaching are utilized which demonstrate knowledge and skills. Opportunities for students to obtain real world learning experiences are provided through service learning assignments and in eighth grade through Job Shadowing experiences.

Standard 3 - Assessment

Schools/districts systematically gather and use multiple sources of evidence to monitor student achievement.

Key Characteristics

Benchmark A: Aligned To Curriculum and Instruction

Student assessments are aligned to the school's curricula and instruction.

I.3.A.1 Alignment/Content Validity: Assessments are aligned with the curriculum and instruction. They have been designed by matching the appropriate measurement method to the type of learning targets (knowledge, reasoning, skill, performance or disposition.)



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

Varying methods of grading such as rubrics, multiple choice tests, or peer coaching are utilized to assess curricular content covered. Authentic evaluations as well as standardized testing are implemented. Data sources of assessment also include MEAP, STAR Reading Test, and Gates/MacGinitie. A new HOLT mathematics series for the 2008/2009 year, which is very closely aligned to the GLCES, contains appropriate assessments.

I.3.A.3 Multiple Measures: The school views student assessment as an essential component in the monitoring of student achievement and incorporates into daily practice aligned standardized assessments, periodic benchmark assessments as well as a variety of culminating assessments. In addition, teachers use frequent formative assessment activities to inform instruction.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

Student assessment is viewed in the broad sense as ongoing and includes: Group critiques in art, peer coaching in Language Arts, daily typing and keyboarding tests, performance tests in band and physical education, Daily practice tests in band, rubrics, standardized tests (including those tests produced through our new HOLT mathematics series), and authentic evaluations. Our school also participates in major assessments including MEAP, STAR Reading Test, Gates/MacGinitie. Physical fitness assessments are conducted in conjunction with physical education class and Healthy Life Styles class.

Benchmark B: Data Reporting and Use

Student assessment results are communicated to, and used by, staff, students and parents to improve student achievement.

Strand II - Leadership

School leaders create a school environment where everyone contributes to a cumulative, purposeful and positive effect on student learning.

Standard 1 - Instructional Leadership

School leaders create and sustain a context for learning that puts students' learning first.

Key Characteristics

Benchmark A: Educational Program

School leaders are knowledgeable about the schools educational programs and act on this knowledge.

II.1.A.1 Knowledge of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment: School leaders are regarded as experts within and outside their school and are frequently consulted by others who are making decisions regarding curriculum, instruction, or assessment.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

Tenured master teachers serve as mentors for new teachers. Tenured teachers serve as supervising teachers for pre-service student teachers enrolled in teacher education at local universities (mainly Northern Michigan University). Principal has supervised a number of internships for teachers pursuing degrees in Educational Administration. Principal and members of the teaching staff have served as adjunct professors at Northern Michigan University. Mathematics teachers involved with Northern Michigan University in Math Grant Program and Algebra Initiative Program. Social Studies teachers involved with Northern Michigan University in Teaching American History Program. Aspen Ridge Middle School has representation in Middle Start/Upper Peninsula Middle School Association. Principal and mathematics teacher have published articles relating to mathematics. Teachers have received professional awards as outlined yearly in the school's annual education report. Staff members hold memberships in professional organizations as outlined in the school's annual education report.

II.1.A.5 Knowledge of Adult Learning: School leaders have a strong belief in the value of developing and sustaining professional learning communities. The enhancement of professional knowledge and growth is supported as well as modeled by the leaders themselves.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

Administration and teaching staff participate in professional development for the purpose of keeping current as well as certified as evidenced by their professional development logs. School leaders have professional development days built into the school calendar such as the Fall Conference, guest speakers, in-services from colleagues, and cross grade level reporting. Administrators receive training through local MARESA.

II.1.A.7 Focus on Student Results: School leaders base all school improvement decisions on data. School leaders provide a wide range of types and sources of data on which staff base their decisions regarding the effectiveness of curriculum and instructional and assessment practices.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

Data sources: STAR test for reading, MEAP Test results (analyzed and disaggregated), Gates-MacGinitie Test, classroom rubrics, standardized tests, and original assessments. 3-5 Year School Improvement Plan contains goals based upon student performance. District Level and Building Level School Improvement Teams, as well as Middle School Staff, meet regularly to monitor and modify the course of the educational program and make curriculum adjustments based upon student achievement data and new information from standardized tests results and new GLCES.

Benchmark B: Instructional Support

School leaders set high expectations, communicate, monitor, support and make adjustments to enhance instruction.

II.1.B.1 Monitoring: School leaders have a visible presence throughout the school. They have a well-established system for monitoring instruction, guiding school improvement and assessing school climate.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

Principal and Assistant Principal supervise students in the gymnasium and cafeteria (breakfast program) before school each morning and again at lunch time during closed campus. Assistant Principal is present in the hallway during each class change throughout the day. Principal is present at as many class changes as possible throughout the day and is present in the hallway each morning accessible to students and staff. Principal maintains an open door policy and is accessible to students, parents, and staff throughout the day and after school. Principal maintains a regular schedule for teacher evaluations (formal) and conducts numerous informal evaluations. Principal participates in the "Walk Through" program interacting with students in classes while monitoring the curriculum. Principal and Assistant Principal are both members of the District Level School Improvement Team as well as the Building Level School Improvement Team which the Assistant Principal chairs. With a combined total of 47 years experience at the middle school level in this school district, the Principal and Assistant Principal are able to assess and monitor the school climate daily and make any needed adjustments.

II.1.B.4 Clear Expectations: School leaders are able to clearly and consistently communicate and articulate the high expectations for instruction to all with whom they come in contact. The result of this effort is demonstrated in its shared belief by all stakeholder groups.



Response:

Exemplary

Evidence:

Mission Statement: The staff believes that all students can learn with appropriate support and partnership with home, school, and community. Principal communicates regularly (almost daily) with staff and students the high expectations for students to be critical thinkers and life long learners. These beliefs are shared with parents and community members at open houses, parent conferences, school improvement meetings, staff meetings, and all oral and written school communications including school and district newsletters, and school website.

Standard 2 - Shared Leadership

Structures and processes exist to support shared leadership in which all staff has collective responsibility for student learning.

Key Characteristics

Benchmark A: School Culture and Climate

Staff creates an environment conducive to effective teaching and learning.

II.2.A.4 Collaborative Inquiry: A spirit of collaboration, inquiry, risk-taking, and reflective practice is incorporated into the school culture. School staff members collaborate frequently to dialog about and investigate their teaching practices. The school functions as a collaborative learning community in which every member contributes to whole-school improvement, including teacher development and student outcomes.

**Response:**

Implemented

Evidence:

Aspen Ridge Middle School has been a Collaborative Site of Practice and Inquiry and has been the recipient of a grant for such work over a 4-year period within the past eight years. Staff members of grade level teams make use of the modified block schedule to collaborate and integrate units of study as much as possible and whenever possible. Staff members develop integrated units of study using a quarterly sequencing chart that teachers, of each discipline, update in the teacher workroom enabling teachers to see what topics of study are upcoming in other disciplines. This affords teachers the opportunity to plan integrated units of study whenever possible.

II.2.A.5 Data-Driven Culture: All decisions affecting student achievement are based on data. All instructional staff are involved in this data-based decision-making which incorporates data from state, district, school, and classroom assessments.

**Response:**

Implemented

Evidence:

Staff and administration gauge instruction based on data from the following sources: STAR Reading Test, Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test, MEAP Test, Standard and Poors, Standardized Tests, and authentic assessments (rubrics). This process originates with the school improvement team and extends to the full staff.

II.2.A.6 Collaborative Decision-Making Process: Membership on the school improvement committees is a common expectation for all teachers, administrators, and support staff. Shared ownership and responsibility for the implementation of the decisions is evident by the collective actions of the members.

**Response:**

Implemented

Evidence:

Decisions regarding curriculum, school climate and culture, and student well-being and safety are made in the following collaborative forums: District Level School Improvement Meetings, Building Level School Improvement Meetings, Monthly Staff Meetings, short impromptu staff meetings, administration meetings, student staffings, student assistance meetings, special education Individual Education Plans, grade level / subject level team meetings, as well as meetings with the student council.

Benchmark B: Continuous Improvement

Staff engages in collaborative inquiry focused on continuous improvement to increase student achievement.

II.2.B.4 Monitored: Monitoring of the school improvement plan is the responsibility of all staff implementing strategies as the result of the plan. Data analysis occurs on a continuous basis and staff frequently collaborate to make adjustments in the plan based upon the data analyzed.

**Response:**

Implemented

Evidence:

Data from previously mentioned sources is continuously monitored first by school improvement members and then entire staff to determine whether we are on track with our school improvement goals. Adjustments to the schools 3-5 year school improvement plan goals are made based on the results of data from the sources mentioned in Standard 2, Benchmark A, KC 5. Staff members composing the action teams monitor the content and instruction of their own courses on a regular basis based on information gathered from data sources. Adjustments to the curriculum (unless very minor) are brought to the school improvement team and if necessary to the full staff. Our major project for 2008-2009 is to construct a new 3-5 Year School Improvement Plan to reflect any new requirements and/or modification of goals.

Standard 3 - Operational and Resource Management

School leaders organize and manage the school to support teaching and learning.

Key Characteristics

Benchmark A: Resource Allocation

School leaders allocate resources in alignment with the vision, mission, and educational goals of the school.

II.3.A.4 Time: Decisions regarding the allocation of instructional time and planning time are data-driven and focused on the attainment of school goals. School leaders develop the weekly schedule with a high priority placed on collaborative team planning time within the school day.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

Staff members plan course content individually and in grade level/subject level teams making time to meet the goals of the school improvement plan, GLCES, benchmarks, and standardized test results. Time for collaborative team planning is not an extra planning period as yet, however, much attention has been given to scheduling members of the academic team at each grade level to the same prep time. Likewise, teachers of subjects called "specials" - physical education, art, computers, life career and employability skills have common prep time. All staff has common prep time at the conclusion of each day and many chose to arrive early in the morning on their own time to do extra planning.

Benchmark B: Operational Management

School leaders develop, implement and/or monitor policies and procedures for the operation of the school.

Strand III - Personnel and Professional Learning

The school has highly qualified personnel who continually acquire and use skills, knowledge, attitudes and beliefs necessary to create a culture with high levels of learning for all.

Standard 1 - Personnel Qualifications

School/district staff qualifications, knowledge and skills support student learning.

Key Characteristics

Benchmark A: Requirements

Staff meet requirements for the position held.

Benchmark B: Skills, Knowledge and Dispositions

Staff has the professional skills to be effective in their positions.

III.1.B.1 Content Knowledge: Staff members have extensive knowledge of their content area and/or grade level and maintain this knowledge through accessing frequent professional development opportunities. They seek frequent opportunities to share this knowledge through collaboration with other staff.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

All Middle School Staff are appropriately certified and highly qualified in their area of assignment. Our 8th grade science teacher was asked to teach science concepts to Elementary Education Students from local university. Grade level meetings with middle/elementary faculty allow science lab techniques to be highlighted which utilize the use of various forms of technology. Middle School science department provides in-service demonstrations to Elementary teachers so that a better understanding of science concepts can be accomplished. Middle School staff has received training in the content of reading and writing across the curriculum from an outside resource (Former Language Arts staff member from Westwood High School). Staff members of various disciplines have been involved in initiatives with Northern Michigan University in their respected subject areas and some have served as adjunct instructors at the University.

Standard 2 - Professional Learning

Professional learning is conducted with colleagues across the school/district on improving staff practices and student achievement.

Key Characteristics

Benchmark A: Collaboration

Professional development is conducted with colleagues across the school/district on improving staff practices and student achievement.

III.2.A.1 Staff Participates in Learning Teams: Professional development is seen as a collaborative staff activity. Teams of staff members are provided regularly scheduled time in order to collaborate around common professional development opportunities.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

Minutes from staff meetings across grade levels to discuss curriculum and resource materials utilized k-12 are available to all stakeholders. Agenda and minutes from Professional Development day workshop are utilized to realign curriculum to GLCES. Grant monies and workshops such as Math Grant, Algebra Initiative, and Teaching American History (TAH) workshop are utilized to incorporate a philosophy of continuous improvement. Common prep times for grade level team members are scheduled to allow staff time for collaboration and planning integrated units of study whenever and wherever practical.

Benchmark B: Content and Pedagogy

Professional development at schools/districts emphasizes both content and pedagogy of teaching and learning.

III.2.B.1 Uses Best Practices: Professional development initiatives lead teachers to reflect on their content and pedagogy. These initiatives inform and strengthen the connection between classroom application and student achievement.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

Minutes from staff meetings across grade levels to discuss curriculum and resource materials are utilized k-12. Agenda and minutes from Professional Development day workshops are used to realign curriculum to GLCES are available. Individual staff member professional development logs are on file in school district Central Office. In-district professional development day agendas and minutes document professional development initiatives for teachers.

III.2.B.3 Induction/Mentoring/Coaching: To enhance the quality of instruction at the school, each new staff member participates in an extensive induction program prior to the beginning of school. A mentor/coach with common responsibilities is assigned to each new staff member and maintains a mentoring relationship over time.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

Each new staff member meets with the Principal, Assistant Principal, and a member of their disciplinary department who will be their mentor. Approximately 3+ days are spent on orientation of incoming staff members. The school district possesses a mentoring guide produced by MARESA staff. New staff member progress is monitored regarding new teacher induction and mentoring. Creation of a new Teacher Induction Manual is in progress with the creation of a new Middle School Teacher Guide.

Benchmark C: Alignment

School/district professional development is needs-based, aligned, job-embedded, and results-driven.

III.2.C.1 Aligned: Professional development is strategically aligned with the school improvement plan. The expected outcome from these initiatives is an increase in student achievement.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

District Level School Improvement Team coordinates professional development aligned with district school improvement goals and data from MEAP assessment. Building Level School Improvement Team fine tunes the professional development goals established by the District School Improvement Team making them specific to the Middle School needs and goals. Former Language Arts staff member from Westwood High School conducts professional development activities to enhance skills in reading and writing across the curriculum in individual content areas. Staff participates in Curriculum Reviews within our building as well as across grade levels.

III.2.C.2 Job-Embedded: Professional development is an essential component of the school improvement plan. Its job-embedded nature has been accepted as an integral part of the school culture. The professional needs of the staff and adult learning theory drive professional development pedagogy.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

School Improvement Plan provides opportunities for peer training with staff members to share results of any recent professional development with appropriate staff. Staff members conduct in-service training in various methods of technology use. School district partners with MARESA to remain current in areas of technology, State mandated training and reporting. Training is reflected in professional development logs and professional development day agendas and summaries.

III.2.C.3 Results-Driven: Teacher input is a key feature in the analysis of professional development initiatives. Results are solicited and analyzed based upon the changes in classroom practice, implementation of the curricular and instructional program, and the impact on student achievement.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

Minutes from staff meetings across grade levels to discuss curriculum and resource materials that are utilized k-12. Agendas and summaries from professional development day activities document the progress. Staff evaluations are administered to evaluate effectiveness of professional development with respect to school improvement goals and student performance and test scores. Professional development evaluations and future planning is continuously monitored by district and building level School Improvement Teams

Strand IV - School and Community Relations

The school staff maintains purposeful, active, positive relationships with families of its students and with the community in which it operates to support student learning.

Standard 1 - Parent/Family Involvement

Schools actively and continuously involve parents and families in student learning and other school activities.

Key Characteristics

Benchmark A: Communication

School/parent/family communications are two-way, ongoing and meaningful.

IV.1.A.2 Diversity: The school places particular value on the diversity of its population. It demonstrates this belief through the diversity of its communication systems taking into account language, culture, economic status, and belief systems. Staff members are constantly looking for ways to bridge the gap between the culture at home and the school in order to develop meaningful conversations.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

Cultural differences are limited in our district to economic status, race, and religious beliefs. Economic status: Communications are via e-mail, Parent Access to school grading program, U.S. Postal Service, telephone, homework hotline, personal meetings, and occasionally home visits. Religious beliefs: Communications are made in advance through a variety of above mentioned media to alert parents of all religious beliefs of any special activities that they may find offensive with an option for an alternative activity. Racial Minority Students: School Staff is alert and watchful of any situations that appear to be racially connected. Such situations are dealt with on an individual basis.

Benchmark B: Engagement

Schools have a systematic approach that encompasses a variety of meaningful activities/actions that engage parents/families as partners in helping students and schools succeed.

IV.1.B.2 Extended Learning Opportunities: The school is seen as a "learning organization" and the parents are an integral part of this philosophy. Numerous extended learning opportunities are provided to parents in order to enhance their own education, as well as to reinforce and support their children learning at home.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

Aspen Ridge Middle School provides extended learning opportunities through the following venues: Parenting presentations sponsored by the District's Family Resource Institute are housed in our building, library of parenting materials is housed in the Family Resource Room which is staffed daily by paid employees, Open House, Parent Conferences, PTO volunteers are involved as assistants in activity classes (Ex: Life Skills class, REAL marketplace, chaperones for outdoor activities) Tutors, Parent sponsored programs (Ex: Astronaut John Blaha's visit) Parent Meetings with Principal, Assistant Principal, and Guidance Counselor for students experiencing academic problems. Several parents chaperone a three day and two night trip to Clear Lake Outdoor Education Center and serve as outdoor class assistants. During the 2008/2009 school year, our Middle School has adopted the HOLT mathematics series containing an on-line tutorial for parents as well as a CD to assist parents with the current concepts being taught.

IV.1.B.3 Decision-Making: The school believes that parents and families are partners in helping students and the school succeed. In this role, they serve an important function as participants in the decision-making process. Particular efforts are made by the school to assure that the demographics of parents in leadership roles represent the diversity of the school population.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

Aspen Ridge Middle School provides opportunities for all parents to be involved in the decision making process through the following venues: Parent representation on District and Building level School Improvement Teams, Parent representation on District Sinking Fund Committee, Active PTO headquartered in the Family Resource Room on site, Frequent parent communication regarding academics, attendance, and discipline, Open door policy for parent comment and suggestion

Standard 2 - Community Involvement

The community-at-large is supportive and involved in student learning and other school activities.

Key Characteristics

Benchmark A: Communication

Communications within the community are welcoming, visible, purposeful and take into account diverse populations.

IV.2.A.2 Diversity: In order to benefit the diverse student body represented at the school, the school reaches out to community organizations that reflect this diversity. The voice of community organizations are represented in the school.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

The District respects Monday as "church activity" day and avoids Monday evening school activities.

School makes every effort to select alternate special activities (reward programs like a movie) if a program conflicts with a student's religious beliefs. The school schedules a variety of activities through our community use of school facilities program including: athletics, Boy and Girl Scouts, church groups, as well as individual parent requests. The school is involved with such community agencies as Pathways, Child and Family Services, Community Partnerships, Marquette County Sheriff's Department (Project GREAT), Michigan State Police, and community resource speakers

Benchmark B: Engagement

The school and community work collaboratively and share resources in order to strengthen student, family, and community learning.

IV.2.B.3 Community Agencies: Community agencies play a key role at the school in providing services to students and families. They work collaboratively and share resources with the school to strengthen the comprehensive network of support.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

Aspen Ridge Middle School works collaboratively sharing resources with the following community agencies: Pathways (formerly Community Mental Health), Juvenile Court Diversion Program, Child and Family Services (before and after school program, tutoring, counseling), MARESA, Family Resource Institute (award winning NICE babies welcome program, parent volunteers, parent and family support network), Protective Services, Michigan Protection and Advocacy, School Social Worker, Community Partnerships (help with careers and job shadowing), Marquette County Health Department (immunizations and screening) Local Law Enforcement Agencies (Michigan State Police, Ishpeming Township Police and Marquette County Sheriff's Department involving Project GREAT)

Strand V - Data and Information Management

Schools/districts have a system for managing data and information in order to inform decisions to improve student achievement.

Standard 1 - Data Management

The school has policies, procedures and systems for the generation, collection, storage and retrieval of its data.

Key Characteristics

Benchmark A: Data Generation, Identification and Collection

Schools have a process for the generation, identification and collection of student and school information.

V.1.A.2 Systematic: There is systematic generation, identification, collection, and storage of relevant data about the operation of the school, including its staff and students.



Response:

Exemplary

Evidence:

Data and information management survey given to all faculty. School is SRSD - Compliant with MARESA . Relevant information is stored and accessed on Skyward program for all students 6th - 8th grade updated daily, weekly, quarterly, or yearly. Relevant information is stored and accessed on Accelerated Reading program for all students 6th - 8th grade. All 8th grade Language Arts students are required to take the Gates MacGinitie test. All data is stored, accessed, and retrieved on a relevant computer program. Relevant information is taken from the State of Michigan website regarding MEAP data which is then utilized by faculty to plan changes to curriculum where needed. REP Report is filed from the Central Office. 3 - 5 year School Improvement Plan and Annual Education Report are filed yearly. Attendance is taken each period by all middle school teachers and submitted to the office electronically. Lunch program is electronic with the option for parents to submit payments electronically or in person and parents are able to monitor their child's account balance and food choices from home.

Content areas that this impacts:

English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies

V.1.A.4 Multiple Sources: The school generates, identifies, collects, and stores data from many different sources for use in determining the technical quality of the data, supporting more robust analyses, and supporting more accurate data-based decision-making.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

Administrative software (Skyward) is utilized to collect data such as grading information, absences and tardies, and other pertinent information. Demographics, Parent Survey Sheets , SRSD, REP Report , Data from MEAP, STAR Reading Test, and Gates MacGinitie is analyzed yearly and curriculum adjustments are made as needed. Special attention is given to analyzing student progress longitudinally on MEAP reports.

Benchmark B: Data Accessibility

The appropriate information and data is readily accessible.

Benchmark C: Data Support

The system provides multiple types and sources of data.

V.1.C.1 Process: Defined / documented data support processes exist for the use of the data system and the management of the school's data resources.

**Response:**

Implemented

Evidence:

Data and information management survey has been given to all faculty. Adjustments to the data support process are ongoing as a result of the needs of the staff. Appropriate data and entry personnel receive training through SKYward and SRSD which is provided through MARESA. District Technology Coordinator and outside support service (Computer Mechanics) are accessible for daily technology support.

Standard 2 - Information Management

The school/district staff collaborate to derive information from data and use it to support decisions.

Key Characteristics**Benchmark A: Analysis and Interpretation**

Staff use appropriate methods to examine data and collaboratively determine its possible meaning.

V.2.A.1 Analysis: Staff is trained in and uses data analysis techniques that include consideration of such factors as multiple types of data, multiple sources, comparisons across groups, benchmarking and longitudinal data. The data system allows for efficient use and manipulation by collaborative teams.

**Response:**

Implemented

Evidence:

Data and information management survey has been given to all faculty. MEAP data is taken from State of Michigan website and is disaggregated on a yearly basis for the purpose of utilizing information to alter relative curriculum. MEAP Data analysis/disaggregation is available through MI-Tracker and used to

update teaching and class curriculum. A portion of each of the District Professional Development Days is devoted to analyzing MEAP results and curriculum adjustment/realignment.

V.2.A.2 Dialog About Meaning: The school community is engaged in dialog about the meaning of the information derived from the analysis of their data.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

A data and information management survey has been given to all faculty. The minutes from staff meetings, across grade levels, discuss curriculum and resource materials utilized k-12 with an emphasis on disaggregated data taken from State of Michigan web site i.e. MEAP data. District and Building Level School Improvement Teams analyze data and recommend any needed changes in instruction/curriculum. Administration have been trained on MI-Tracker for data analysis.

Benchmark B: Applications

Data is used to inform school decisions including monitoring and adjusting teaching for learning.

V.2.B.1 Dissemination: The information and meaning resulting from the analysis and interpretation of the school's data is shared in a variety of ways with a broad range of stakeholders in a timely manner.



Response:

Exemplary

Evidence:

The results of the MEAP scores are shared/celebrated with students and staff. All relevant MEAP data is sent home to parents via a letter which shows where student's performance is as it pertains to State average. MEAP results are placed within local newspaper. MI Tracker - data analysis capabilities are used for Annual Education Report.

V.2.B.2 Data-Driven Decision Making: Decisions are informed /supported by the careful, appropriate analysis and interpretation of sufficient data of good technical quality. Multiple types of data from multiple sources are used whenever possible.



Response:

Implemented

Evidence:

Data and information management survey have been given to all faculty. Annual Education Report shows changes to curriculum which comes from disaggregation of MEAP data in relevant areas. School Improvement Plan is the first step in the process of change. School Improvement Team monitors where changes need to be made and then works on change required. Individual students, who require additional help, may be covered by 504 plans, tutoring, special education support and a process called Literacy Enhancement provided by an outside source (retired Language Arts teacher from the High School). Data sources include: MEAP, STAR Reading Test, Gates MacGinitie Reading Test, Standardized Tests and Authentic Assessments including rubrics.

Report - Summary

Key Characteristics	Getting Started	Partially Implemented	Implemented	Exemplary
Strand I - Teaching For Learning				
Standard 1 - Curriculum				
Benchmark A - Aligned, Reviewed and Monitored				
I.1.A.2 Standards Alignment			✓	
Benchmark B - Communicated				
I.1.B.1 Staff			✓	
I.1.B.2 Students			✓	
Standard 2 - Instruction				
Benchmark A - Planning				
I.2.A.1 Content Appropriateness			✓	
I.2.A.2 Developmental Appropriateness				✓
I.2.A.3 Reflection and Refinement			✓	
Benchmark B - Delivery				
I.2.B.1 Delivered Curriculum			✓	
I.2.B.2 Best Practice			✓	
I.2.B.3 Student Engagement			✓	
Standard 3 - Assessment				
Benchmark A - Aligned To Curriculum and Instruction				
I.3.A.1 Alignment/Content Validity			✓	
I.3.A.3 Multiple Measures			✓	
Strand II - Leadership				
Standard 1 - Instructional Leadership				
Benchmark A - Educational Program				
II.1.A.1 Knowledge of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment			✓	
II.1.A.5 Knowledge of Adult Learning			✓	
II.1.A.7 Focus on Student Results			✓	
Benchmark B - Instructional Support				
II.1.B.1 Monitoring			✓	
II.1.B.4 Clear Expectations				✓
Standard 2 - Shared Leadership				
Benchmark A - School Culture and Climate				
II.2.A.4 Collaborative Inquiry			✓	
II.2.A.5 Data-Driven Culture			✓	
II.2.A.6 Collaborative Decision-Making Process			✓	
Benchmark B - Continuous Improvement				
II.2.B.4 Monitored			✓	
Standard 3 - Operational and Resource Management				

Report - Summary: Continued.....

Key Characteristics	Getting Started	Partially Implemented	Implemented	Exemplary
Benchmark A - Resource Allocation				
II.3.A.4 Time			✓	
Strand III - Personnel and Professional Learning				
Standard 1 - Personnel Qualifications				
Benchmark B - Skills, Knowledge and Dispositions				
III.1.B.1 Content Knowledge			✓	
Standard 2 - Professional Learning				
Benchmark A - Collaboration				
III.2.A.1 Staff Participates in Learning Teams			✓	
Benchmark B - Content and Pedagogy				
III.2.B.1 Uses Best Practices			✓	
III.2.B.3 Induction/Mentoring/Coaching			✓	
Benchmark C - Alignment				
III.2.C.1 Aligned			✓	
III.2.C.2 Job-Embedded			✓	
III.2.C.3 Results-Driven			✓	
Strand IV - School and Community Relations				
Standard 1 - Parent/Family Involvement				
Benchmark A - Communication				
IV.1.A.2 Diversity			✓	
Benchmark B - Engagement				
IV.1.B.2 Extended Learning Opportunities			✓	
IV.1.B.3 Decision-Making			✓	
Standard 2 - Community Involvement				
Benchmark A - Communication				
IV.2.A.2 Diversity			✓	
Benchmark B - Engagement				
IV.2.B.3 Community Agencies			✓	
Strand V - Data and Information Management				
Standard 1 - Data Management				
Benchmark A - Data Generation, Identification and Collection				
V.1.A.2 Systematic				✓
V.1.A.4 Multiple Sources			✓	
Benchmark C - Data Support				
V.1.C.1 Process			✓	
Standard 2 - Information Management				
Benchmark A - Analysis and Interpretation				
V.2.A.1 Analysis			✓	
V.2.A.2 Dialog About Meaning			✓	

Report - Summary: Continued.....

Key Characteristics	Getting Started	Partially Implemented	Implemented	Exemplary
Benchmark B - Applications				
V.2.B.1 Dissemination				✓
V.2.B.2 Data-Driven Decision Making			✓	