

Western States Benchmarking Consortium

COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS

Developing a Strong Community

Understanding & Using Assessment Results

Providing Community-Based Learning Opportunities

Building Community Partnerships

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Note: Additions are in all caps. Deletions are in parentheses.

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Western States Benchmarking Consortium
COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS: Developing a Strong Community

Impact Question:
How does the community ensure success for all learners?

Emergent	Islands	Integrated	Exemplary
<p>District Leadership District leadership is aware of the need for collaborative efforts.</p>	<p>District Leadership District leadership is involved in some collaborative projects.</p>	<p>District Leadership District leadership is involved in ongoing collaborative efforts with community leaders and organizations.</p>	<p>District Leadership District leadership is innovative in securing district/community/government collaboration to enhance student learning through strong communities. Reciprocal participation occurs.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION: <i>Does the school district engage in partnerships with other local agencies and families to promote community development?</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>List of collaborative partnerships or Memoranda of understanding</i> • <i>Surveys of parents and community</i> • <i>Meeting minutes/agendas</i> • <i>Evaluations of partnerships</i> • <i>Development of shared community assets (product)</i> <p>IMPACT: <i>District data collection shows increase in student performance and decrease in at-risk factors.</i></p>	
<p>Communication with Government/Business Little communication between district officials and government/business leaders exists.</p>	<p>Communication with Government/Business Intermittent communication takes place between district officials and government/business leaders to define community and student issues.</p>	<p>Communication with Government/Business District and government/business agencies communicate regularly to address defined community and student issues.</p>	<p>Communication with Government/Business Government/business leaders and district officials routinely solicit advice from each other and engage in shared decision-making to meet community and student needs.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTIONS: <i>Does the school district communicate, strategically, with government and business leaders?</i></p> <p><i>Does the superintendent regularly engage community “thought leaders” to provide input to the administration and be involved in school district initiatives?</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>List of Collaborative projects/MOU’s</i> • <i>Accomplishments of representative district advisory groups</i> • <i>Board minutes/city council minutes/etc</i> • <i>Interviews with government and business leaders</i> • <i>Formal business partnerships</i> <p>IMPACT: <i>Strategic communication plan that includes government/business leaders as target audiences</i></p>	
<p>Community Planning Involvement The district is involved in community strategic planning efforts only in a limited way.</p>	<p>Community Planning Involvement The district is involved in some collaborative efforts, e.g., committees, service groups, chambers.</p>	<p>Community Planning Involvement The district is involved in ongoing collaborative strategic planning efforts in education-related areas, as well as with other issues affecting the community.</p>	<p>Community Planning Involvement The district takes initiative in organizing joint strategic planning efforts.</p>

<p>GUIDING QUESTION: How does the school district influence key decisions, public policies ,and long-range planning, that impact community development (i.e. growth management, business/industry recruitment, telecommunications infrastructure, transportation, recreation, mental health and social services)?</p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget and staff 1) seek and develop community partnerships, 2) communicate with business and governmental leader for strategic alliances. District-led initiatives that successfully engage decision-makers in improving academic achievement and quality of life for children and families. Recognition events Interviews and surveys of stakeholders <p>IMPACT: Education issues addressed in comprehensive growth management plans, land use plans, transportation plans, etc.</p>	
<p>Shared Facility Use District facilities are rarely used for community projects.</p>	<p>Shared Facility Use District facilities are used for some joint projects.</p>	<p>Shared Facility Use District facilities are used for joint projects on a regular basis. Community facilities are used by schools.</p>	<p>Shared Facility Use The district advocates community facility use to foster neighborhood and community development. Facilities may be jointly owned and operated.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION: How are school district facilities used by other community organizations?</p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facility use data. Facility use policies/procedures. Records of jointly owned/operated facilities <p>IMPACT: District data collection shows increase in student performance and decreases in at-risk factors.</p>	
<p>Community Development The district does not necessarily believe that a strong community is necessary to build strong schools. As a result, there is little shared responsibility for school and/or community development.</p>	<p>Community Development Avenues for community dialogue exist, with opportunities to express opinions and offer suggestions for improving the community and schools. Schools, neighborhood associations, churches, government, and other organizations offer training in shared decision-making, problem-solving, use of data, and strategic planning. Community members are familiar with community and school issues.</p>	<p>Community Development Elements of a participative community culture are evident. A critical mass of community members have learned how to dialogue, problem-solve, and reach consensus. Community members understand the critical issues and how they affect community effectiveness and strong schools. Community representation is evident on school improvement teams.</p>	<p>Community Development A participative culture of open communication exists in the community and schools. Many opportunities exist for dialogue, and voices are heard at the table in study groups or forums. All community members share responsibility for a strong community and successful student learning.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION: Does the school district provide a participative culture of open communication and shared responsibility for student learning?</p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal committees or workgroups – PTA, district advisory councils, ad hoc committees, planning symposia, town hall forums, etc. Voter approval of school levy and bond measures <p>IMPACT: The district's strategic plan demonstrates a commitment to a participative culture of open communication.</p>	
<p>Professional Development No district training is provided to help build a strong community.</p>	<p>Professional Development The district provides limited training and networking to support schools in understanding community needs.</p>	<p>Professional Development The district has refined its organizational structure to provide on-going support and training to build strong communities.</p>	<p>Professional Development The district provides a wide variety of opportunities for staff and community including facilitation and diversity training, conflict management, and community development.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION: Does the school district help its employees and stakeholders become community and district ambassadors and asset-builders?</p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of community needs assessment related to training issues Policies/procedures related to community development Participation rates (sign-in sheets) <p>IMPACT: Budget and staffing for staff development and outreach related to strengthening community to ensure student learning.</p>	
<p>Resource Distribution Building a strong community is not on the school district's agenda and not supported with district resources.</p>	<p>Resource Distribution Some joint district/community initiatives are supported with district staff. Leaders in the district and community plan some joint projects.</p>	<p>Resource Distribution District resources and staff are utilized to support a variety of joint projects. District and community leadership plan together strategically.</p>	<p>Resource Distribution District officials encourage and reward staff involvement in broad community efforts. The district and community participate in routine work sessions</p>

			to examine strategic needs.
GUIDING QUESTION: <i>Does the school district support strategic communication, community and government relations, and partnership initiatives?</i>		POSSIBLE EVIDENCE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Communication plan and products such as newsletters, press releases, brochures, videos, web sites, television shows, issue papers, etc.</i> • <i>Public involvement processes</i> • <i>Board minutes/public recognition</i> • <i>Meeting minutes</i> • <i>Interviews with stakeholder groups</i> • <i>Surveys or needs assessment and public report</i> • <i>Listing of successful partnership initiatives</i> IMPACT: <i>Budget commitment for professional communication/public relations staff and programs</i>	
Planning District officials are involved when invited in community development efforts.	Planning District officials are involved in some joint projects and community efforts.	Planning District officials are involved in broad community development efforts.	Planning District mission and policy require and support initiatives in community development.
GUIDING QUESTION: <i>Do administrators have key leadership roles in civic organizations, service agencies, governing boards, and political offices?</i> <i>Does the district's strategic plan include a commitment to community development?</i>		POSSIBLE EVIDENCE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Budget/staffing</i> • <i>MOU's</i> • <i>List of community leadership roles held by administrators</i> IMPACT: <i>Evidence of Board Policy and Administrative Procedure</i>	
Communication District practices primarily reactive communication. Responds to media questions. May produce newsletters for parents and employees. Communication is based on public information and persuasion models.	Communication Some schools go beyond public information and persuasion to involve staff and community in addressing issues and solving problems and reaching mutual understanding.	Communication The media understands and accurately communicates district issues. The district and schools employ multiple communication channels to reach all audiences. The district, schools and community raise questions, debate issues and engage in meaningful dialogue to reach mutual understanding.	Communication Internal communications are strategic and timely. Many different channels of communication are used to address staff communication styles. The media, district and schools mutually respect and understand each other's work and share a goal of accurate and open communication to the community. Key messages are determined. (District and schools stay on message. Key communicators help get the message out. All speak with one voice. Consistent face-to-face open communication with the goal of reaching mutual understanding is the primary communication practice.) Messages are clearly articulated and focused. District and schools stay on mutually agreed upon key messages. All voices carry the same messages. Consistent face-to-face open communication with the goal of reaching mutual understanding is the primary communication practice.
GUIDING QUESTION: <i>Does the school district involve the public and communicate in strategic ways that support its vision, mission and goals?</i>		POSSIBLE EVIDENCE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Communication responsibilities clearly defined</i> • <i>Relations with local media (interview, survey, article content analysis)</i> • <i>Evidence of proactive efforts to establish protocols or shared understandings with local media</i> IMPACT <i>Annual strategic communication plan and products</i>	
Data Use The district is aware, but does not utilize community-needs data in planning.	Data Use The district uses community-needs data in planning specific projects.	Data Use The district regularly gathers and uses community-needs data.	Data Use The district frequently gathers and examines data to determine current and future community needs.

GUIDING QUESTION:

Is there a common set of data by which the school district and the community measure progress toward community development goals?

POSSIBLE EVIDENCE:

- *Data related to key questions*
- *Systems in place for routine data collection and reporting*
- *Decisions based upon data analysis*

Western States Benchmarking Consortium

COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS: Understanding & Using Assessment Results

Impact Question: How do key stakeholders effectively use assessment results to plan and direct their work?

Emergent	Islands	Integrated	Exemplary
<p>Commitment to Using Results A “compliance” attitude regarding assessment results prevails in the system, i.e., the mentality is “the state is making us do this.”</p>	<p>Commitment to Using Results Staff and community hold frequent discussions about state assessments. Discussions are driven by the assumption that the state assessment is a likely reality for the long run. There is much less of a “this, too, shall pass” mentality.</p>	<p>Commitment to Using Results The district expects every school to communicate with the community regarding assessment results. As they do this, schools build commitment and begin to add assessment information that extends beyond state assessments. District assistance aids in interpreting and communicating assessment results.</p>	<p>Commitment to Using Results The community demonstrates that it is committed to participation in a continuous improvement strategy. There is a “no excuses, no blame” perspective regarding accountability for learning performance.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION: <i>Do the school district and community use assessment results to promote continuous improvement in student learning?</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Public notices of goals/measures.</i> • <i>Regular updates/reports to stakeholder groups.</i> • <i>Minutes/agendas show community input.</i> • <i>Use of disaggregated data</i> • <i>Communications plan and products</i> <p>IMPACT: Stakeholder groups develop goals/initiatives based upon results data from the district.</p>	
<p>Understanding Results At the school site level, a lack of awareness and understanding of the results is evident. Thus, staff lack ability to explain the results. Schools expect the central office to “handle” community response.</p>	<p>Understanding Results Some schools begin to engage both the community and staff in examining the meaning of results and developing strategies to improve results. In these schools, less of a “victim” mentality and more of a desire to help raise student achievement are present, but the role of community in this work may still be unclear.</p>	<p>Understanding Results The district expects every school to develop improvement plans based on assessment results and other data. In addition, the district engages the community in a comprehensive district-wide strategic improvement plan that includes assessment planning and results. A research base is developed and shared.</p>	<p>Understanding Results Each building principal actively engages the school’s community in reviewing and understanding assessment results and in designing whole school improvements. Research base is utilized. Results are interpreted and provide both individual diagnostic information as well as longitudinal systemic information.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION: <i>How does the school/district engage the community in comprehensive improvement planning? (process)</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Community input/feedback sessions.</i> • <i>Reports are comprehensive - - by individual/subgroups/longitudinal</i> • <i>Systematic structure for community input exists and is articulated.</i> • <i>References to research on key district initiatives.</i> <p>IMPACT: District/School/Department improvement plans are congruent and have been developed with key stakeholder groups based upon data.</p>	

<p>Alignment with Results Little, if any, serious attention is given to aligning curriculum and instruction with assessment results. Thus, few defined improvement strategies are in place and virtually no community dialogue occurs about continuous improvement.</p>	<p>Alignment with Results Some schools or teacher factions begin to align curriculum and instruction with assessment results.</p>	<p>Alignment with Results The district has launched ongoing district-wide efforts to align curriculum and instruction with state and local assessments.</p>	<p>Alignment with Results The district is highly active in initiating networking across the district to improve teaching/learning, curriculum, and assessment alignment. Excellent communication occurs between district and state regarding assessment.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION: <i>THIS WHOLE SECTION FITS BETTER WITH STUDENT LEARNING</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Evidence of alignment with state.</i> · <i>Evidence of alignment activities based upon results/feedback. (</i> · <i>Evidence of systems in place to facilitate articulation/communication inside and outside the District.</i> · <i>Meeting minutes/agendas.</i> 	
<p>Communication of Results No proactive effort is made to share assessment results. Consequently, the community does not understand results, and media accounts are often inaccurate and negative. The district is then forced into a reactionary mode to negative press.</p>	<p>Communication of Results Some information is shared with the community, but understanding of assessment results is still limited. Press coverage is predominantly negative, often focusing on school comparisons. Occasionally, attention is given to improvement efforts at various schools.</p>	<p>Communication of Results Assessment results and information on improvement efforts are shared, and the community begins to gain understanding of the issues. Community and government leaders and the media direct attention to improvement initiatives in the district. Community members assist in these initiatives.</p>	<p>Communication of Results The district proactively shares assessment results and information on improvement efforts with the community. Community leaders direct public attention to all learners, and the media cover success stories on improvements in learning. Community members participate actively with district officials in shaping local and state policy on assessment and continuous improvement.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION: <i>Does the school/district communicate assessment results to its stakeholders?</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Public notices include goals and specific measures.</i> • <i>Input from community/district advisory committees regarding goals/measures/updates.</i> • <i>Improvement plans from stakeholder groups.</i> <p>IMPACT: <i>Stakeholder groups develop measurable goals based upon results data from the district.</i></p>	
<p>District Leadership District leadership lacks motivation to integrate national, state, and community expectations into instruction.</p>	<p>District Leadership District leaders and some principals are beginning to see the value of national, state, and community expectations.</p>	<p>District Leadership The district has defined the expected student learning targets and standards. These are aligned with state standards. Conversations with legislators and other community leaders occur to reach mutual understanding and common vision.</p>	<p>District Leadership State officials view the district as a leader in the state in meeting and exceeding state expectations. State officials solicit expertise from district.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION: <i>Do district leaders participate in defining, implementing and evaluating state accountability standards?</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Goals align with state initiatives.</i> • <i>Meeting minutes/agendas.</i> • <i>Compliance review results.</i> • <i>District leaders recruited by state to serve on committees, commissions.</i> <p>IMPACT: <i>District participation is evident in shaping of state policy</i></p>	

<p>Resource Distribution Because of the defensive posture toward assessment results, the district has not aligned resources with improvement strategies. State assessments are not used as improvement planning tools. Thus, the community is not engaged in designing strategic improvement efforts.</p>	<p>Resource Distribution The district distributes resources according to results-based needs on a pilot basis.</p>	<p>Resource Distribution The district has system of “safety nets” in place to support results-based student assessment. Human and monetary resources are designated to promote student learning and to provide targeted assistance to schools and students needing extra help.</p>	<p>Resource Distribution Staff and community share responsibility in helping all students engage in continuous performance improvement. Resource distribution is periodically discussed, reallocated, and publicly evaluated to maximize impact on student achievement.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION: <i>Does the district allocate resources to be used to help key stakeholders use assessment results?</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Resource distribution is public record.</i> · <i>Evidence of redistribution (zero-based budget) based on need.</i> · <i>Evidence of key indicators used for decision-making.</i> 	
<p>Professional & Community Development Because the reaction to assessment results is infrequent (i.e., only happens when the state publishes assessment results), the district provides no training in interpreting and using data for improvement.</p>	<p>Professional & Community Development The district has allocated limited resources to train school leaders and teachers in interpreting test results and to review research findings related to improved student achievement.</p>	<p>Professional & Community Development The district has established a targeted staff development initiative for training in ways to align curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The use of research results in this work is a priority.</p>	<p>Professional & Community Development The district provides extensive training of community representatives, principals, teachers, and classified staff in understanding assessment results. All new teachers participate in required training to improve their knowledge base.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION: <i>How does the school/district educate its stakeholders so that they can understand and use assessment results? (process)</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Systematic training of all new employees.</i> • <i>Employee evaluations refer to training opportunities (next steps).</i> <p>IMPACT: District provides training for community and staff to analyze, interpret and use assessment results.</p>	
<p>Data Development Ongoing student learning databases have not been created for use in improvement planning.</p>	<p>Data Development The district provides support for school sites to network and engage community members in dialogue about assessment results and improved achievement.</p>	<p>Data Development The district has created a formal student and school achievement database, accessible to staff and parents.</p>	<p>Data Development The district has a comprehensive student learning database that is rich, relevant, and up-to-date. It is routinely examined to inform instructional practice, report progress, and motivate learners.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION: <i>How does the district provide user-friendly tools on-line to facilitate community access to assessment information? (product)</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Up to date student achievement data are distributed.</i> • <i>Analysis tools for aggregation/disaggregation facilitate access.</i> • <i>Longitudinal data include individual profiles.</i> <p>IMPACT: Results of Webtrend tracking reports of on-line access and surveys.</p>	
<p>Communication Media coverage manifests lack of understanding of the nature of assessment results. Comparing schools tends to be the featured highlight.</p>	<p>Communication Community leaders and media representatives receive briefings about the nature and meaning of state assessment results, but these activities happen only after the state has published results.</p>	<p>Communication District officials hold special briefing sessions about assessment results for opinion leaders and media representatives on a regular basis.</p>	<p>Communication The district facilitates extensive community communication about assessment results and their meaning. Communication occurs via Web access and face-to-face dialogue.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION: <i>Does the district have a communications plan to educate and inform the medi and community of assessment issues?</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Public/media briefings, agendas, minutes. (product)</i> · <i>Media notices include interpretations. (product)</i> · <i>Web-distributed information. (product)</i> · <i>Community survey. (product)</i> <p>IMPACT: Community plan and products</p>	

<p>Policy Board members ask for a review of existing policy related to assessment of student learning.</p>	<p>Policy The board discusses possible policy positions on strategies to improve student achievement.</p>	<p>Policy The board has set policies and allocated resources to create systemic and school-level improvement plans. The policy clearly expects community engagement in the development and evaluation of these plans.</p>	<p>Policy District policy clearly expresses district intent, a process for engaging community in continuous progress, and an emphasis on shared accountability.</p>
<p><i>GUIDING QUESTION:</i> <i>Is the district's governing board committed to the use and communication results for improvement in student learning.</i></p>		<p><i>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Policy or procedure regarding school improvement plan content. (product)</i> • <i>Policy or procedure regarding parent, staff, community participation. (product)</i> • <i>Board has been trained in use of assessment data</i> <p><i>IMPACT: Policy and procedure regarding communication of assessment results for improvement in student learning</i></p>	

Western States Benchmarking Consortium

COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS: Providing Community-Based Learning Opportunities

Impact Question: How does learning in the community strengthen learning in school?

Emergent	Islands	Integrated	Exemplary
<p>Student Service Community leaders do not view student service as an integral part of community life or essential for student success.</p>	<p>Student Service Limited opportunities for community service projects exist and are supported by a small student base.</p>	<p>Student Service Community leaders function as public advocates for student participation in community life.</p>	<p>Student Service The community depends on student service.</p>
<p><i>GUIDING QUESTION: Does service learning enhance students' education through productive experiences outside of school?</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE: ? • <i>Community-based programs depend on student services.</i> ? <i>Formal partnerships between school and other public agencies</i> ? <i>Community-based grants include community service.</i> ? <i>Interviews with public officials</i> ? <i>Recognition events.</i> ? <i>Lists of community projects and contact persons</i> ? <i>Public resolutions.</i> IMPACT: District data collection shows increase in student performance and decrease in at-risk factors.</p>	
<p>Student Learning Community-based learning activities are generally limited to traditional vocational education work-study programs. Students' community experiences are not connected or integrated with school curriculum.</p>	<p>Student Learning Some community-based learning opportunities exist, but these tend to be treated as "extra credit activities."</p>	<p>Student Learning System-wide, all students must participate in community-based learning opportunities aligned with ongoing curriculum. Community-based learning activities become part of each student's permanent record.</p>	<p>Student Learning Students reflect on the impact of community-based learning activities. Data collection to measure impact is conducted and reported routinely to help make these activities more beneficial to both students and the community.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION: <i>Are community-based learning opportunities integrated in the curriculum and guided by state and local learning goals?</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE: • <i>Exit interviews of student participants.</i> • <i>Number/percentage of participants.</i> • <i>Alignment with the local/regional job market opportunities</i> • <i>Evidence of continuous improvement decisions based upon data and feedback.</i> • <i>Formal interagency agreements.</i> • <i>Curriculum includes standards-based service.</i> IMPACT: Formal evaluation, data collection evident.</p>	

<p>Staff Learning Few community-based learning opportunities exist for staff, and they are not connected or integrated with school curriculum and/or professional development.</p>	<p>Staff Learning Some community-based learning opportunities exist, but they are isolated and may not be sustained.</p>	<p>Staff Learning System-wide, all staff must participate in community-based learning opportunities aligned with school curriculum and/or professional development.</p>	<p>Staff Learning Staff members reflect on the impact of community-based learning opportunities. Data collection to measure impact is conducted and reported routinely to help make these activities more beneficial to both staff and the community.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION: <i>Do staff members recognize and understand the value of community-based learning opportunities?</i></p> <p><i>To what extent do staff members take advantage of these opportunities?</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE: <i>?Exit interviews of staff participants.</i> <i>?Number/percentage of participants.</i> <i>?Evidence of continuous improvement decisions based upon data and feedback.</i> <i>?Formal interagency agreements.</i></p> <p>IMPACT: <i>Formal evaluation, data collection evident.</i></p>	

<p>Resources No resources have been allocated to provide training and support for community-based learning experiences.</p>	<p>Resources The district has allocated limited resources for student internships and community-based learning projects. This support is provided on a project-by-project basis rather than system-wide.</p>	<p>Resources The district provides resources to align community-based learning with core curriculum. Formal training of staff and community mentors is ongoing. The district conducts continuing outreach to establish additional community-based experiences.</p>	<p>Resources Community-based learning efforts are sustained over time, using a combination of district and community resources, including scholarships.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION: <i>Does the school district support community-based learning with internal and external resources and partnerships?</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? <i>Interagency agreements.</i> ? <i>Grants funded jointly.</i> ? <i>Funding sources continue for several years.</i> IMPACT: Budget and staff are dedicated to creating community-based learning programs.</p>	
<p>Professional Development No district training is provided to help understand the need for community-based learning opportunities.</p>	<p>Professional Development The district provides limited training and networking to support community-based learning opportunities.</p>	<p>Professional Development The district has refined its organizational structure to provide on-going support and training to establish community-based learning opportunities.</p>	<p>Professional Development The district provides a wide variety of opportunities for staff and community learning how to enhance student achievement through community-based learning opportunities. Learning opportunities including facilitation, diversity training, conflict management, and community development.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION: <i>Do staff development programs incorporate community-based learning strategies?</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Listing of community-based opportunities.</i> · <i>Budget/staff assigned responsibility.</i> · <i>Customer survey data.</i> · <i>Audit of professional development plan and/or workshops.</i> IMPACT: Community-based learning incorporated into teachers' critical skill set.</p>	
<p>Evaluation No evaluation exists for community-based learning activities.</p>	<p>Evaluation The evaluation of community-based learning activities focuses on the process/activity rather than learning gains.</p>	<p>Evaluation Community-based learning activities are routinely evaluated, based on learning gains, and these evaluations are shared with the administration and board.</p>	<p>Evaluation The district conducts longitudinal studies of impact on learning. Based on data, district and community representatives refine the program.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION: <i>Does the school district evaluate the effectiveness of community-based learning programs?</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program improvement or discontinuance based upon evaluation.</i> IMPACT: Systems in place for routine collection and longitudinal analysis. IMPACT: Program evaluation based upon student achievement.</p>	
<p>Policy District mission and policy are silent on the concept of community-based learning.</p>	<p>Policy The administration and board frequently discuss the advisability of expanding community-based learning and internships. No policy exists at this stage.</p>	<p>Policy District policy promotes community-based learning experiences for all students, and these opportunities are viewed as an integral part of the district's mission.</p>	<p>Policy Community organizations and agencies establish their own organizational policies reflecting the district mission and policy to provide support for community-based learning activities.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION: <i>Does school district policy address and support community-based learning programs? Do community organizations and agencies demonstrate a commitment to community-based learning activities?</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? <i>District policies.</i> · <i>Evidence that community based learning pervades the community, i.e. number of agencies participating – growth.</i> IMPACT: Policies of community organizations and agencies reflect the distinct mission and policy to support community-based learning activities.</p>	

<p>Communication District practices primarily reactive communication. Responds to media questions. May produce newsletters for parents and employees. Communication is based on public information and persuasion models.</p>	<p>Communication Some schools go beyond public information and persuasion to involve staff and community in addressing issues and solving problems and reaching mutual understanding.</p>	<p>Communication The media understands and accurately communicates district issues. The district and schools employ multiple communication channels to reach all audiences. The district, schools and community raise questions, debate issues and engage in meaningful dialogue to reach mutual understanding.</p>	<p>Communication Internal communications are strategic and timely. Many different channels of communication are used to address staff communication styles. The media, district and schools mutually respect and understand each other's work and share a goal of accurate and open communication to the community. Key messages are determined. District and schools stay on message. Key communicators help get the message out. All speak with one voice. Consistent face to face open communication with the goal of reaching mutual understanding is the primary communication practice.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION: <i>Do school and district communication promote community-based learning?</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>District publications, media coverage and special events that routinely feature community-based learning programs and outstanding student work.</i> • <i>Exemplary student projects are showcased in the community.</i> • <i>Survey of community-based clients regarding effective communications.</i> • <i>Press releases stories in local press reflect one voice.</i> <p>IMPACT: <i>Communication plan and product promote community-based learning.</i></p>	

Western States Benchmarking Consortium
COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS: Building Community Partnerships

Impact Question: How do partnerships enhance student learning?

Emergent	Islands	Integrated	Exemplary
<p>Purpose of Partnerships The district and schools consider partnerships from a “what we want” rather than “what the partner has to give” perspective. Core values do not address a need for partnerships.</p>	<p>Purpose of Partnerships The goals of partnerships, as well as respective roles and responsibilities, are defined.</p>	<p>Purpose of Partnerships Partnerships begin to achieve goals and to document progress in a collaborative process. The district addresses the need for partnerships in its core values.</p>	<p>Purpose of Partnerships Reciprocal partnerships are formed at both district and school levels. They are routinely evaluated, refined, and expanded. District core values explicitly state the need for reciprocal partnerships.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTIONS: <i>How does the school district actively pursue community partnerships as an integral component of its strategic plan?</i></p>		<p>EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Collaboration to provide services to the community through grants, partnership agreements, etc.</i> · <i>Policies/procedures/mission/goals well defined</i> · <i>Growth of partnerships over time</i> · <i>Partner plans developed and evaluated regularly</i> • <i>Reciprocal partnerships demonstrate increased student learning</i> <p>IMPACT: Strategic plan and budget support community partnerships.</p>	
<p>Development of Partnerships Few recognize the benefits of community partnerships, and little communication occurs on the subject.</p>	<p>Development of Partnerships Some schools have created reciprocal partnerships, and discussion increases about the value of such alliances.</p>	<p>Development of Partnerships All schools have initiated reciprocal partnerships, and district-wide relationships are strengthened.</p>	<p>Development of Partnerships Partnerships are “vision-driven” rather than “problem-driven.” Broad strategic outreach is initiated to expand partnerships.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION: <i>How do partnerships contribute significantly to the accomplishment of the school district's vision, mission and long-range goals?</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>List of partnerships</i> · <i>Goals for partnerships are known to key stakeholders</i> · <i>List of reciprocal activities that result from each partnership</i> · <i>Regular communication, planning, and collaboration</i> · <i>Interviews with key community leaders.</i> · <i>Partnerships are strategic and reciprocal.</i> <p>IMPACT: Focus of annual report or data collection is vision-driven</p>	
<p>Function of Partnerships Many are uncomfortable about involving “outsiders” in academic learning.</p>	<p>Function of Partnerships Partnerships are often one-way relationships, though some sites are beginning to involve partners in dialogue about school improvement efforts.</p>	<p>Function of Partnerships Community organizations and schools give each other time, resources, and/or expertise to make progress toward identified goals. Some data have been collected to examine impact of these partnerships on student learning. Evaluations of effectiveness of the partnership are shared across the system and reported to the board. The district has formed an active group of community advocates. These people are tapped when high, immediate needs arise (e.g., finance elections.) Discussions about the concept of “full service” schools are underway.</p>	<p>Function of Partnerships A variety of student apprenticeships and mentoring opportunities exists. The community is routinely used as a learning site for students. Community partners are involved in reviews of vision, mission, and strategic improvement efforts at both the district and school levels. Community advocates function as ambassadors and spokespeople for the district on an ongoing basis. Community members contribute an unprecedented level of resources and time to improve learning for students. Most schools function as “community centers,” providing extended learning time and support services for students and families. Mentorships in the</p>

			community are encouraged.
GUIDING QUESTION: <i>Are formal and informal partnerships well-articulated to define roles and contributions?</i>		POSSIBLE EVIDENCE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative data reflect the value of partnerships: (interviews/summary). Student data regarding value and impact of partnerships. Testimonials and Surveys IMPACT: District data-collections show at increase in student achievement and a decrease in at-risk factors.	
Resource Distribution No resources are allocated to support management of partnerships.	Resource Distribution Because some school partnerships have yielded additional resources, other schools express concern about the lack of resource equity among schools.	Resource Distribution District officials encourage the creation of “community center” oriented schools. Some have moved in this direction. Data and information about partnerships are routinely shared with staff and community.	Resource Distribution The district provides ongoing support to community sites and mentors involved in student learning.
GUIDING QUESTION: <i>Does the district support partnerships that enhance student learning and community development?</i>		POSSIBLE EVIDENCE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget review – contributions/donations per school. School district foundation exists with a complementary mission and fundraising targets Partnership resources are aligned with school/district needs assessment Public recognition events Survey of partnership participants Evidence of partnerships in strategic plans IMPACT: District supports staff to manage partnerships and recruiting/placement/coordination of volunteers	
Staff Training No district training or support is provided to help in creating partnerships.	Staff Training The district provides limited training and networking to support schools in developing partnerships.	Staff Training The district has refined its organizational structure to provide ongoing support and outreach to establish effective two-way partnerships.	Staff Training The district provides a wide variety of training opportunities for staff and community in learning how to enhance student achievement through partnerships.
GUIDING QUESTION: <i>Do staff members establish new partnerships and take full advantage of existing ones?</i>		POSSIBLE EVIDENCE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expert exchanges with community partners Course offerings/attendance Training is frequently held at community-based locations Evidence that offerings are related to established needs (data) Surveys of key stakeholders are conducted/analyzed/reported Systematic evaluation in place IMPACT: Budget and staffing for staff development	
Continuity Existing partnerships break down easily due to lack of oversight by the school district and community leaders.	Continuity Broad support does not exist to sustain and support partnerships. Successful alliances are not recognized.	Continuity Public recognition is regularly given to effective partnerships.	Continuity Partnerships continue to grow in the face of community and district leadership changes. School to work is seamless.
GUIDING QUESTION: <i>Does a strategic partnership and fund development effort support the school district’s mission, vision, goals and initiatives?</i>		POSSIBLE EVIDENCE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth rate of partnerships Number/demographics of volunteer pool Partnerships focus on mutual goals Public recognition events School to career transitions are documented as growing in number IMPACT: Evaluation and report on partnerships	
Core Values & Policy Development Policy does not address community partnerships.	Core Values & Policy Development Discussion begins about including partnerships in the district’s core values. The district has policies in development regarding the shared use of facilities by partners.	Core Values & Policy Development District policies convey the importance of good community partnerships and their connection to the organization’s vision, mission, and strategic goals.	Core Values & Policy Development The district promotes public awareness of the value of reciprocal partnerships. Data provide evidence of the impact on student learning. Most schools now function as centers for improving learning, providing family support,

			and fostering a sense of community. As such, schools are open for extended hours throughout the year. Financial support comes from both district and community contributions targeted toward improved student learning.
<p>GUIDING QUESTION:</p> <p><i>Do school district policies support the development and sustainability of community partnerships?</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE:</p> <p><i>Facility usage reports</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Student achievement data</i> · <i>Student drop-out rate</i> · <i>Goals</i> · <i>Grants/donations</i> · <i>Mission/vision/values addressed</i> · <i>Extended hours/offerings</i> <p>IMPACT: <i>Budget/staffing show mutual support through district policies, procedures and Mou's.</i></p>	
<p>Communication</p> <p>District practices primarily reactive communication. Responds to media questions. May produce newsletters for parents and employees. Communication is based on public information and persuasion models.</p>	<p>Communication</p> <p>Some schools go beyond public information and persuasion to involve staff and community in addressing issues and solving problems and reaching mutual understanding.</p>	<p>Communication</p> <p>The media understands and accurately communicates district issues. The district and schools employ multiple communication channels to reach all audiences. The district, schools and community raise questions, debate issues and engage in meaningful dialogue to reach mutual understanding.</p>	<p>Communication</p> <p>Internal communications are strategic and timely. Many different channels of communication are used to address staff communication styles. The media, district and schools mutually respect and understand each other's work and share a goal of accurate and open communication to the community. Key messages are determined. District and schools stay on message. Key communicators help get the message out. All speak with one voice. Consistent face-to-face open communication with the goal of reaching mutual understanding is the primary communication practice.</p>
<p>GUIDING QUESTION:</p> <p><i>Are the benefits of partnerships clearly communicated to all stakeholders?</i></p>		<p>POSSIBLE EVIDENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Number of communication types</i> · <i>Use of web to link with partners</i> · <i>Frequency and timeliness of communications</i> · <i>Partners meet with staff regularly to receive updates, network</i> · <i>Survey of community-based clients regarding effective communications</i> · <i>Stories in local media reflect positively on partnerships</i> <p>IMPACT: <i>Communications plan to link all partnership stakeholders</i></p>	