Washoe County School District



Gerlach K-12 School

Classification: Not Rated

2026-2027 School Improvement Plan

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Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Student Success

Areas of Strength

Community, safety in relationships, consistent platform and expectations, opportunities for experience-based learning

Areas for Growth

Students are part of a tight-knit community. SEL supports are strong and there is a sense that students and staff look out for each other. Learning happens in a small group setting. Students consistently access technology as a part of their learning platform.

Equity Resource Supports

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
English Learners	iReady is presented in English, so language could be an issue for student access. Communication is a challenge.	EL students will use Lexia to support their language acquisition, which in turn will allow them more access to iReady content.

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
Foster/Homeless	Communication with families, attendance, HVAC systems for the home environment, technology access,	The school is committed to ensuring that students experiencing housing instability, homelessness, or other significant barriers have equitable access to educational opportunities. Due to the school's small student population and the need to mai ntain student confidentiality, many supports are intentionally delivered through schoolwide initiatives that are available to every student. Examples of these universal supports include schoolwide visits to the community clothing closet, assistance with clothing, shoes, and other basic necessities as needed, provision of technology for home use when appropriate, after-school academic support, and participation in enrichment activities such as schoolwide swimming experiences, including providing swimsuits or other required materials for students who need them. By offering these resources to all students, the school minimizes stigma, protects student privacy, and ensures that students experiencing homelessness or housing instability can access needed supports without being identified publicly. This universal approach reflects the school's commitment to equity, inclusion, and removing barriers to student success.

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
Free and Reduced Lunch	N/A	The school implements a comprehensive, schoolwide system of supports designed to reduce barriers to student participation and academic success. Because of the school's small enrollment and commitment to protecting student privacy, many supports are provided universally to all students rather than being limited to specific populations. Schoolwide supports may include access to after-school academic assistance, technology for learning beyond the school day when needed, clothing and basic necessities through coordinated schoolwide access to the community clothing closet, assistance with school-appropriate footwear and other essential items as needs arise, and participation in enrichment opportunities designed to ensure all students can fully engage in school activities regardless of economic circumstances. Providing these supports universally helps eliminate barr iers associated with economic disadvantage while protecting student confidentiality and promoting an inclusive school culture.
Migrant/Title1-C Eligible	N/A	
Racial/Ethnic Minorities	N/A	
Students with IEPs	This population struggles to access typical curriculum.	Students get individualized support and attention to their academic needs.

Problem Statements Identifying Student Success Needs

	Problem Statement	Critical Root Cause
1 ★	Curriculum coming from online platforms does not directly transfer to state/nation-wide assessments	Curriculum is canned for the most part, and because many staff are not certified teachers with depth of practice, we follow what the curriculum provides.
2 ★	Students rely on teacher assistance for problem solving	Small class sizes means adult support is always nearby
3 ★	State assessment performance data reveals a persistent achievement gap between students identified as English learners and other identified student groups at the school, district, and state levels.	The school's assessment data indicates that English learner students may benefit from increased opportunities for rigorous, language-rich instruction, stronger intervention structures, and enhanced collaboration among instructional staff to address both academic and language acquisition needs.

★ = Priority

Adult Learning Culture

Areas of Strength

Close, tight-knit staff, interest across classifications (admin, certified, educational support professionals) in learning new strategies, responding to student needs, and reflecting on learning. Based on staff climate survey, strengths include: high expectations of success and staff-student relationships

Areas for Growth

Inconsistencies with how to implement new ideas, some tension between new and old staff, and growth in allocations leads to new programming, which takes time to develop. Based on staff climate survey, the biggest growth area is work stress.

Equity Resource Supports

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
English Learners	monolingual staff with bilingual students	translation devices available for staff to check out

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
Foster/Homeless	parent communication	School staff foster a collaborative culture that emphasizes early identification of barriers, coordinated problem-solving, and equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. Teachers, administrators, counselors, support personnel, and community partners work together to ensure students experiencing housing instability or other significant challenges receive appropriate supports while mai ntaining confidentiality. Due to the school's small student population, many supports are intentionally implemented as schoolwide opportunities available to every student. Staff coordinate schoolwide visits to the community clothing closet, provide assistance with clothing, shoes, and other basic necessities as needs arise, ensure students have access to technology for learning beyond the school day when appropriate, offer after-school academic support, and organize inclusive enrichment experiences such as schoolwide swimming activities, including providing swimsuits or other required materials when needed. By utilizing universal systems of support, staff are able to me et individual student needs while protecting student privacy, reducing stigma, and fostering a culture where every student has equitable access to educational opportunities.

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
Free and Reduced Lunch	WCSD Nutrition Services does not operate in Gerlach	Staff maintain a collaborative culture focused on identifying and removing barriers that may impact student learning and participation. Teachers, support staff, administrators, and community partners regularly communicate to ident ify student needs and coordinate appropriate supports while maintaining stu dent dignity and confidentiality. Because of the school's small enrollment, staff intentionally implement many supports thro ugh schoolwide opportunities available to all students. This universal approach allows educators to provide access to resources such as after-school academic support, technology for learning beyond the school day when appropriate, clothing and basic necessities through coordinated schoolwide access to the community clothing closet, assistance with school-appropriate footwear and other essential items as needs arise, and participation in school activities regardless of a family's economic circumstances. Through ongoing collaboration, staff continually evaluate student needs and work together to ensure barriers to learning are addressed in a manner that promotes equity, inclusion, and student success while protecting student privacy.
Migrant/Title1-C Eligible	N/A	
Racial/Ethnic Minorities	staff might be unfamiliar with cultures or lived experience of students racial/ ethic backgrounds different than their own	use culturally responsive practices to invite students to share and express themselves, allowing staff to learn the best ways of responding to needs

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
Students with IEPs	staff need insights into working with students with special needs; some students have presented challenges for how various adults respond to them, which leads to inconsistencies.	sped team communicates expectations, best practices, and supports for each student with an IEP; counselor supports writing plans so expectations are consistent

Problem Statements Identifying Adult Learning Culture Needs

	Problem Statement	Critical Root Cause
1 ★	Getting staff the resources they need to do their jobs well is a challenge due to our location, size, and broad areas of specialization. Staff have limited access to learning opportunities in their areas of specialization including Special Education, ELD, and PreK.	Small staff in a remote location who are not specialty staff do not have access to typical staff development and opportunities. Also, staff cannot collaborate with site-based colleagues to get ideas or see best practices.

★ = Priority

Connectedness

Areas of Strength

Community is close-knit and sees school as a central institution. A large portion of the community comes to school events like graduation. Parents participate in conferences, meetings, and school functions.

Areas for Growth

The boundaries between school and out-of-school life and roles are sometimes blurred due to the small town setting. Absenteeism was an issue last year.

Equity Resource Supports

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
English Learners	A few families do not speak English as a primary language	Create a home visit team that includes a Spanish-speaking member

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
Foster/Homeless	Communication is a challenge with families, as is regular attendance and access to technology	The school works collaboratively with families and community partners to ensure every student has access to the resources necessary to participate fully in school. Because of the school's small enrollment and commitment to protecting student confidentiality, many supports are intentionally provided through universal schoolwide opportunities that are available to all students. Schoolwide initiatives include coordinated visits to the community clothing closet, assistance with clothing, shoes, and other essential items as needs arise, access to technology for learning beyond the school day when appropriate, after-school academic support, and inclusive enrichment activities such as schoolwide swimming experiences, including providing swimsuits or other required materials when needed. Providing these resources through universal systems allows the school to meet the needs of students experiencing housing instability or other barriers while maintaining dignity, protecting privacy, and strengthening connections among the school, families, and the broader community. This approach reinforces the school's commitment to ensuring every student has equitable access to educational opportunities and a strong sense of belonging.

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
Free and Reduced Lunch	Some families are reluctant to have us in the household	The school is committed to fostering strong partnerships with students, families, and the community by reducing barriers that may limit participation in school programs and activities. Recognizing the unique needs of a small rural community, the school utilizes a universal approach to many student sup ports, ensuring resources are available to all families while protecting individual privacy. Through partnerships with community organizations and local resources, the school provides schoolwide access to clothing and basic necessities, offers after-school academic support, assists with technology for learning beyond the school day when appropriate, and provides additional resources as needed to help students fully participate in educational opportunities. By making these supports available through inclusive schoolwide systems, the school strengthens relationships with families, promotes equitable access to learning, and fosters a welcoming environment where all students can participate wit hout stigma.
Migrant/Title1-C Eligible	N/A	
Racial/Ethnic Minorities	N/A	
Students with IEPs	Maintaining consistent standards, rigor, and expectations regardless of how the student is presenting for the day.	We have training in working with students with special needs on behavior escalation, writing and implementing good goals and objectives, and inclusion model pratices.

Problem Statements Identifying Connectedness Needs

	Problem Statement	Critical Root Cause
1 ★	Tension among school staff and families sometimes runs high	Personal relationships outside of the school setting influence trust. Additionally, some families are distrustful of the institution of education and the role school plays in their children's lives

★ = Priority

Priority Problem Statements

	Problem Statement	Critical Root Cause
1 ★	Curriculum coming from online platforms does not directly transfer to state/nation-wide assessments	Curriculum is canned for the most part, and because many staff are not certified teachers with depth of practice, we follow what the curriculum provides.
2 ★	Students rely on teacher assistance for problem solving	Small class sizes means adult support is always nearby
3 ★	Getting staff the resources they need to do their jobs well is a challenge due to our location, size, and broad areas of specialization. Staff have limited access to learning opportunities in their areas of specialization including Special Education, ELD, and PreK.	Small staff in a remote location who are not specialty staff do not have access to typical staff development and opportunities. Also, staff cannot collaborate with site-based colleagues to get ideas or see best practices.
4 ★	Tension among school staff and families sometimes runs high	Personal relationships outside of the school setting influence trust. Additionally, some families are distrustful of the institution of education and the role school plays in their children's lives
5 ★	State assessment performance data reveals a persistent achievement gap between students identified as English learners and other identified student groups at the school, district, and state levels.	The school's assessment data indicates that English learner students may benefit from increased opportunities for rigorous, language-rich instruction, stronger intervention structures, and enhanced collaboration among instructional staff to address both academic and language acquisition needs.

★ = Priority

Data Documentation for CNA

Data Documentation for CNA

The following data were used to verify the comprehensive needs assessment analysis:

Student Success

- [x] **Grades**
- [x] **Nevada Alternate Assessment (NAA)**
- [x] **Smarter Balanced (SBAC)**
- [x] **Student Climate Survey, Student Voice**
- [x] **WIDA ACCESS for ELLs**
- [x] **Other**

Adult Learning Culture

- [x] **Administrator evaluation**
- [x] **Lesson Plans**
- [x] **Master schedule**
- [x] **Professional Development Agendas**
- [x] **Staff surveys and/or other feedback**
- [x] **Teacher evaluation**
- [x] **Teacher/Student Ratio**
- [x] **Walk-through data**

Connectedness

- [x] **Attendance**
- [x] **Behavior**
- [x] **Dual credit College Prep**
- [x] **Home Visits**
- [x] **Volunteer opportunities, attendance, and participation**

Inquiry Areas

Inquiry Area 1 Student Success

SMART Goal 1

AB 335 EL Goal: By the end of the school year 2026-27, 50% of EL students at Ernst Elementary will increase their language proficiency composite score by .5 or one achievement level as measured by the state's yearly ELPA, ACCESS.

Formative Measures: iReady diagnostic, ACCESS testing

Improvement Strategy 1

iReady

Actions for Implementation

Action #	Actions for Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Complete
1	iReady diagnostic testing	Black	SY 26-27	

Position Responsible: Principal

Evidence Level

Level 3: Promising:
iReady

Problem Statements: Student Success 1, 2, 3

Status Checks

November **February** **May**

SMART Goal 1 Problem Statements Identifying Student Success

	Problem Statement	Root Cause
1	Curriculum coming from online platforms does not directly transfer to state/nation-wide assessments	Curriculum is canned for the most part, and because many staff are not certified teachers with depth of practice, we follow what the curriculum provides.

2	Students rely on teacher assistance for problem solving	Small class sizes means adult support is always nearby
3	State assessment performance data reveals a persistent achievement gap between students identified as English learners and other identified student groups at the school, district, and state levels.	The school's assessment data indicates that English learner students may benefit from increased opportunities for rigorous, language-rich instruction, stronger intervention structures, and enhanced collaboration among instructional staff to address both academic and language acquisition needs.

SMART Goal 2

By the third and final assessment window of iReady, 90% of students will show typical growth or better in math as measured by data from the iReady Diagnostic.
Admin and staff will monitor iReady minutes to meet district goals. Students will track their iReady progress with support from staff. Staff will do pullouts on areas where students show a need for direct instruction in iReady.

Formative Measures: BOY, MOY, and EOY diagnostic
Report showing time on task
Report showing lesson completion

Improvement Strategy 1

iReady

Actions for Implementation

Action #	Actions for Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Complete
1	- Assess all K-8 students at the beginning, middle, and end of year with a diagnostic test. - Build in daily time for iReady for students to work on MyPath, their iReady lessons tailored for their ability - Students will track their iReady minutes and lessons completed - Teaching staff will use data from iReady diagnostics to guide interventions	Classroom teachers and Principal	SY 2025-26	

Position Responsible: Classroom teachers and Principal

Evidence Level

Level 3: Promising:
i-Ready

Problem Statements: Student Success 1, 2, 3

Status Checks

November	February	May

SMART Goal 2 Problem Statements Identifying Student Success

	Problem Statement	Root Cause
1	Curriculum coming from online platforms does not directly transfer to state/nation-wide assessments	Curriculum is canned for the most part, and because many staff are not certified teachers with depth of practice, we follow what the curriculum provides.
2	Students rely on teacher assistance for problem solving	Small class sizes means adult support is always nearby
3	State assessment performance data reveals a persistent achievement gap between students identified as English learners and other identified student groups at the school, district, and state levels.	The school's assessment data indicates that English learner students may benefit from increased opportunities for rigorous, language-rich instruction, stronger intervention structures, and enhanced collaboration among instructional staff to address both academic and language acquisition needs.

Inquiry Area 2

Adult Learning Culture

SMART Goal 1

By spring of 2025, Gerlach K-12 teaching staff (regardless of classified vs certified status) will have received at least one training or observation opportunity in their area of focus from WCSD staff and/or professional trainers.
Opportunities will come from iReady trainers, site visits for observations, guest speakers, work with Curriculum and Instruction, and enrollment when applicable in LETRS (for admin, teachers, and ESPs).

Formative Measures: - Attendance sheets from trainings
- Notes from classroom walk-throughs
- Notes from staff meetings or PLCs discussing trainings or observations
- Principal walk-through data of classrooms to see what is being implemented and evaluate quality

Improvement Strategy 1

PLC

Actions for Implementation

Action #	Actions for Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Complete
1	- K-5 teaching staff and principal participating in LETRS training by Lexia to improve phonics instruction - PLCs designed to use training and observations to inform teaching practices - Professional Development aligns to relevant training - Working with WCSD staff to find opportunities for relevant training - Connecting Gerlach teaching staff with observation opportunities at other WCSD schools; flexing schedules to make time for observations	Principal		

Position Responsible: Principal

Evidence Level

Level 2: Moderate:
PLC

Problem Statements: Adult Learning Culture 1

Status Checks

November	February	May

SMART Goal 1 Problem Statements Identifying Adult Learning Culture

	Problem Statement	Root Cause
1	Getting staff the resources they need to do their jobs well is a challenge due to our location, size, and broad areas of specialization. Staff have limited access to learning opportunities in their areas of specialization including Special Education, ELD, and PreK.	Small staff in a remote location who are not specialty staff do not have access to typical staff development and opportunities. Also, staff cannot collaborate with site-based colleagues to get ideas or see best practices.

Inquiry Area 3

Connectedness

SMART Goal 1

Families and teaching staff will connect via Gerlach K-12's participation in the Home Visit Program for 2025-26.
40% of staff will attend home visit training and make every effort to schedule home visits with 50% of families at the school site. Staff will promote home visit plans within the school stakeholders.

Formative Measures: Home visit logs
Site home visit calendar
Staff meeting notes about home visits

Improvement Strategy 1

Parent/Teacher Home Visits

Actions for Implementation

Action #	Actions for Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Complete
1	- Present information about the PTHV program to families at Back to School Night - Train staff on PTHV expectations via WCSD training outside of work hours - Include PTHV information in monthly newsletters - Visit as many families as sign up for home visits twice per year (fall and spring), and let parents know face to face about the home visit option during parent/teacher conferences	PTHV Site Leader		

Position Responsible: PTHV Site Leader

Evidence Level

Level 1: Strong:
Parent/Teacher Home Visits

Problem Statements: Connectedness 1

Status Checks

November **February** **May**

SMART Goal 1 Problem Statements Identifying Connectedness

	Problem Statement	Root Cause
1	Tension among school staff and families sometimes runs high	Personal relationships outside of the school setting influence trust. Additionally, some families are distrustful of the institution of education and the role school plays in their children's lives

Community Outreach Activities

Activity	Date	Lesson Learned
Back to School Night	Sept. 16, 2026	
Parent Conferences	Oct. 19 - 22, 2026	
Graduation	June 3, 2027	
Pioneer Youth Concert Program	April 13, 2027	
Visiting Artist Day	January 14, 2027	