

# 2022 NEASC SELF-STUDY REPORT



## INTERDISTRICT SCHOOL FOR ARTS & COMMUNICATION



Written for NEASC Accreditation

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>STANDARD 1: Learning Culture</b>	<b>2</b>
Narrative	3
<b>STANDARD 2: Student Learning</b>	<b>36</b>
Narrative	37
<b>STANDARD 3: Professional Practices</b>	<b>59</b>
Narrative	60
<b>STANDARD 4: Learning Support</b>	<b>84</b>
Narrative	85
<b>STANDARD 5: Learning Resources</b>	<b>96</b>
Narrative	97

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### Ratings:

**Standard 1: Learning Culture- Transforming**

**Standard 2: Student Learning- Implementing**

**Standard 3: Professional Practices- Implementing**

**Standard 4: Learning Support- Implementing**

**Standard 5: Learning Resources- Implementing**

Not yet Evident	Initiating "Thinking About It"	Developing "Working on It"	Implementing "Living It"	Transforming "Shifting the Paradigm"
Elements of the Principle are not yet evident in the school.	The ideas or concepts in the Principle are being considered by the school community, but not yet in action.	Some elements of the Principle are in place and the school has developed plans and timelines for full implementation.	All elements of the Principle are firmly in place in the school. Organizations or systems have been formed to support and sustain these practices.	The Principle is driving innovative and transformative practices to achieve the school's vision of the graduate.



## 2022 SELF-STUDY REPORT

### STANDARD 1: LEARNING CULTURE

Learning Culture promotes shared values and responsibility for achieving the school's vision. The school provides a safe learning culture that ensures equity and fosters shared values among learners, educators, families, and members of the school community. These shared values drive student learning as well as policy, practice, and decision-making while promoting a spirit of collaboration, shared ownership, pride, leadership, social responsibility, and civic engagement. The school community sets high standards for student learning, fosters a growth mindset, and facilitates continuous school improvement to realize the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate.

Standard 1 –Descriptors of Effective Practice	Rating
1.1 The school community provides a safe, positive, respectful, and inclusive culture that ensures equity and honors diversity in identity and thought. 1.1a Foundational Element - The school community provides a safe environment.	Transforming
1.2 The school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate drive student learning, professional practices, learning support, and the provision and allocation of learning resources. 1.2a Foundational Element - The school has a written document describing its core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate.	Transforming
1.3 The school community takes collective responsibility for the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional well-being of every student and can demonstrate how each student is known, valued, and connected to the school community.	Transforming
1.4 The school community's professional culture demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement through the use of research, collaborative learning, innovation, and reflection.	Transforming
1.5 The school's culture promotes intellectual risk taking and personal and professional growth.	Transforming
1.6 The school has an inclusive definition of leadership and provides school leaders with the authority and responsibility to improve student learning.	Transforming
1.7 The school culture fosters civic engagement and social and personal responsibility.	Transforming

## Standard 1: Narrative Learning Culture 1.1

The Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication (ISAAC) is currently in the *transforming phase* of providing a safe, positive, respectful, and inclusive culture that ensures equity and honors diversity in identity and thought. After the hiring of the new administrative team in July 2020, a newly created Parent-Student Handbook was developed that included revised Board Policies and several new procedures, rules, and systems for the purpose of ensuring a safe learning environment for all who work, learn, and grow at ISAAC as outlined by [ISAAC's Core Value and Beliefs About Learning and the Vision of the Graduate](#). In the summer of 2021, the [ISAAC 2021-2022 Parent-Student Handbook](#) was revised in collaboration with the ISAAC administrative team and attorneys from Shipman and Goodwin to include updated policies and procedures regarding academics and student life that would be shared with the ISAAC community. These consistent policies and procedures helped to provide a physically, socially, emotionally, and intellectually safe environment for the respectful treatment of all members of the school-wide community. General information such as academic policies, safety procedures, classroom conduct, harassment, and safety procedures were all included in the updated handbook with links to current [Board of Education policies](#).

In collaboration with the attorneys from Shipman and Goodwin, an [ISAAC Faculty and Staff Handbook](#) was also created to ensure all staff members of the school community are treated respectfully and equitably in a safe environment. This handbook includes an updated ISAAC Communication Flow Chart to help foster productive dialogue among students and parents and a newly developed communication chart for complaints that staff may have. School procedures, systems, and expectations are clearly identified throughout the document. Updated policies and procedures and required notices are also included in this handbook.

A [Bilingual Handbook 2021-2022](#) was created by the Bilingual Team consisting of the Executive Director, Principal, Associate Principal, Director of Student Supports, English as a Second Language (ESL) Coordinator, Bilingual/Teacher of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) teacher, and Scientifically Researched Based Intervention (SRBI) Coordinator. Aligned with ISAAC's Core Value and Beliefs, the document of the newly developed Bilingual Program highlighted the curricular goals of the program. The three goals that were established to support English Learners (EL) are:

1. to make grade level academic content accessible to EL students
2. to develop literacy and academic standards in a student's first language and in English,
3. to utilize the academic, linguistic, and cultural background as the support for acquiring learning across all grade level content area in the home language and in English.

Foundationally, ISAAC's Bilingual program was established to ensure that all learners are known, valued, and have equitable access to all curricular offerings.

ISAAC's Advisory Program and its Social, Emotional Learning Curriculum (SEL) is based on the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) standards. The frameworks, standards, and implementation of CASEL are aligned with ISAAC's goal of advancing the social and emotional needs of all learners at our school. Driven with this commitment, our advisory program is deliberate in its intention to foster academic grit and develop a growth mindset for our students. Students receive instruction from our SEL curriculum twice a week, learning collaboratively in small groups with an advisory teacher. Collaborative learning of ISAAC's SEL curriculum prepares our students to become empathetic community leaders through authentic tasks and experiences that develop, nurture, and support all learners

within the ISAAC community. A sample of the [ISAAC 2021-22 Quarter 1 Advisory Calendar](#) includes CASEL based lessons by grade level on a variety of topics including anti-bullying, Hispanic heritage, Black Lives Matter, conflict resolution, academic and social advocacy, and goal setting. The Advisory groups also cover topics mandated by the state legislature such as teen dating and substance abuse. The Advisory document is available in its entirety on our website. The Advisory teacher also makes quarterly phone calls to the families of their students updating them on their academic progress and stays with the students all three years. .

[ISAAC's Scientific Researched-Based Intervention \(SRBI\) Guidebook](#) helps to ensure that all learners have equitable access to their education. The members of the SRBI team include the Executive Director, the Principal, Associate Principal, Director of Student Supports, Director of Instruction, Programming and Athletics, two School Social Workers, an SRBI Coordinator/ELA Interventionist, and a Math Interventionist who all meet together every other day to collectively analyze instructional and behavioral data to identify students in need of additional supports. The team helps to identify and collect data on students in need of additional supports by providing teachers with a [Student Update Form](#). This document is used to help collect daily classroom behavioral and academic data. Other forms of data used to identify and monitor students in need of SRBI interventions include benchmark testing and cognitive assessments. The SRBI team will create, implement, and monitor general education strategies and interventions and various layers, or “tiers”, of student support to help students achieve standards. If a student is identified as being in need of additional supports, the ISAAC SRBI Team will design a targeted intervention plan called a Student Intervention Plan that is monitored using our SRBI Roadmap, which can all be found in the SRBI Guidebook. The anchor of ISAAC's SRBI Programming is

its Core Value and Beliefs About Learning and the Vision of the Graduate so all learners can succeed.

In order to ensure that all learners have a positive opportunity for extended learning and growth, ISAAC created a Student Government. The purpose of the Student Government is to provide an equitable yet manageable opportunity for student voice. A representative from each advisory is selected by their peers within the advisory to be their representative. Thus, ensuring each advisory has a voice in planning activities for the school. A President, Vice-President, and Secretary were selected from the Student Government representatives and hold bi-weekly meetings based on the [Student Government meeting dates](#). One example of student voice is when a petition was made to get rid of uniforms. The petition was presented to the Executive Director in February 2020 and a meeting occurred with the student leaders. In response, the Executive Director discussed the idea with the faculty and Board of Directors before making the final decision to get rid of school uniforms. This is an example of students using their voice for change.

In 2021, prior to the students' first day of school, the ISAAC administration presented professional development to the entire faculty with the purpose of strengthening our understanding of, and commitment to, diversity, equity, and inclusion. The Anti-Defamation League presented a "No Place for Hate" workshop that empowers the school community to continue to improve the school climate through anti-bias and bullying prevention techniques. Other presentations provided by the ISAAC faculty included the following:

- [Culturally Responsive Teaching \(CRT\)](#) based on research from the book "Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain" by Zaretta Hammond. The CRT method is an approach to teaching that connects students' cultures, languages, and life experiences

with what they learn in school. These connections help students access rigorous curriculum and develop higher-level academic skills.

- [English Learner Strategies and Interventions](#) was presented to help staff gain a better understanding of second language acquisition theories and strategies, and to collectively share ideas and strategies to support our multilingual students.
- [Trauma Informed Teaching](#) was presented by our social worker to help staff identify different types of stress and trauma among students with strategies for teaching. The strategies for teaching include how to employ thoughtful interactions, relationship-building, promoting predictability and consistency, and giving supportive feedback to reduce negative thinking.
- [Teaching the SEL Way](#) presentation targeted awareness of social emotional learning and the role of core competencies (e.g. self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, social awareness, and responsible decision-making) and the impact in creating a safe, engaging, culturally responsive, and personalized learning experience for students and staff.
- [Academically Productive Talk- Continuous Improvement at ISAAC](#) was presented to reinforce the high-level instructional practices used to ensure students exert effort to explain their thinking with evidence, to listen and respond constructively to others' ideas, and to make progress in solving a challenging problem, interpreting a text, or conducting an investigation.
- [Special Education 101 & SRBI Process](#) presentation was to educate staff about accommodations and modifications that enable students who receive special education



services access to the general curriculum to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE).

- [Setting Up Common Classroom Expectations](#) presentation was to develop consistent school-wide classroom norms based on our Core Values and Beliefs about Learning to ensure an equitable and safe environment for all students.

[The ISAAC Educator Development and Evaluation Plan](#) was developed and adopted by the ISAAC Board of Directors in September 2020 (revised in August 2021) as a process of support and evaluation for ISAAC teachers and administrators. The plan was developed with representatives of the teachers' bargaining unit, the ISAAC Education Association, instructional and non-instructional faculty, and members of the ISAAC administrative team. This plan was based on Connecticut's System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED) rubric. The purpose of the evaluation is to ensure that each student can experience high quality learning by assuring that highly competent professionals are employed and by stimulating the continued professional growth of all faculty members involved in the educational process.

Based on our current [Spring 2022 New England Association of Schools and Colleges \(NEASC\) faculty survey results](#), 95.1% of faculty feel safe all of the time or almost all of the time. On that same survey, 97.5% of faculty reported that teachers and administrators treat each other respectfully.

3. I feel safe.

Value		Percent	Responses
All of the Time		75.6%	31
Almost All of the Time		19.5%	8
Some of the Time		4.9%	2
Once In a While		0.0%	0
Never		0.0%	0
Totals: 41			

4. teachers and administrators treat each other respectfully.

Value		Percent	Responses
All of the Time		78.0%	32
Almost All of the Time		19.5%	8
Some of the Time		2.4%	1
Once In a While		0.0%	0
Never		0.0%	0
Totals: 41			

The [2022 Spring New England Association of Schools and Colleges \(NEASC\) student results](#)

indicate that 84.3% of students report that it is “true” or “mostly true” that the school sets high standards for academic performance.






25. This school sets high standards for academic performance.

Value		Percent	Responses
Totally True		52.4%	133
Mostly True		31.9%	81
Neither True nor Untrue		13.0%	33
Mostly Untrue		2.0%	5
Totally Untrue		0.8%	2
Totals: 254			

Lastly, on the [Spring 2022 New England Association of Schools and Colleges \(NEASC\) family](#)

[results](#), 100% of families reported that the school feels safe all of the time or almost all of the time and 100% of families reported that the staff treat them with respect, even if they don’t know them.

4. Staff treat me with respect, even if they don't know me.

Value		Percent	Responses
All of the Time		100.0%	13
Almost All of the Time		0.0%	0
Some of the Time		0.0%	0
Once In a While		0.0%	0
Never		0.0%	0
Totals: 13			

Overall, we believe that ISAAC is currently in the *transforming phase* of providing a safe, positive, respectful, and inclusive culture that ensures equity and honors diversity in identity and thought. Based on ISAAC's Core Values and Beliefs About Learning and its Vision of the Graduate, the creation of consistent policies and procedures as indicated in the Parent-Student Handbook, Faculty Handbook, English Learner Handbook, and SRBI Guidebook. These documents outline a consistently respectful treatment of all members of the ISAAC community. In addition, the professional development training provided to staff ensures that all educators are well-trained to provide instruction for all learners with an equitable access to their education. The newly revised ISAAC Educator Development and Evaluation Plan ensures that teachers are given consistent, specific, and measurable feedback about their teaching and learning. The creation of the Wellness Committee and the Principal Advisory Committee (PAC) allow for teachers and administrators to collaborate on any improvements needed in the school on an ongoing basis as it relates to teacher and staff morale, working conditions, and overall school operations. Examples of notes from the [Wellness Committee](#) and the [PAC](#) committee indicate ways a variety of staff have collaborated for the betterment of all members of the school community. The Sunshine Committee provides gifts and positive recognition for staff every few weeks. As we recognize we are always in a process of continual improvement and have made

significant positive changes to the school community, we would like to continue to use our survey data, teacher and student input, and observations to reflect on and improve our current practices and continue to provide a positive climate and culture for the entire school community.

#### Standard 1: Learning Culture 1.2

The Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication (ISAAC) is currently in the *transforming* phase of ensuring the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate drive student learning, professional practices, learning support, and the provision and allocation of learning resources.

During the school year 2019-2020, the staff collaborated on the language that would be the basis of ISAAC's Core Value and Beliefs About Learning and the Vision of the Graduate. The newly developed Core Values and Vision of the Graduate were shared with the staff and school community during the 2020-2021 school year. "All Students Can Succeed with Hard Work & Grit" is a statement that came directly from the core values and is reiterated in the school community on the morning news daily. The Core Values and Beliefs are located on our website and prominently displayed in every classroom to provide visible reminders of these core values.

ISAAC ensures that the school's Core Values and Beliefs about Learning and Vision of the Graduate are actively reflected in the school's culture and drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom. This is done through the creation and utilization of school-wide rubrics that detail a student's progression towards high school readiness. Staff were initially presented with an overview of rubrics and participated in the development of ISAAC's school-wide rubrics during a professional development presentation on November 3, 2020 titled

### Designing and Implementing a School-Wide Analytic Rubric System into the Culture of the

School. During the presentation that was facilitated by the principal, associate principal, and a teacher, staff were given an overview about what rubrics were, the rationale behind using them, and how the rubrics would be created and analyzed. Groups of staff were established to develop the criteria and language to measure students' literacy, accountable talk, teamwork, problem-solving, and civic social responsibility. The groups created the Vision of the Graduate rubrics with a focus on including transferable skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for students' future success.

The rubrics were edited and evaluated throughout the school year and implemented the following school year 2021-2022.

Most content area instructors included at least one rubric as a measure for their Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) and each Advisory group assesses students on their civic social responsibility rubric each quarter ensuring that each student has multiple rubrics evaluating their progress towards the Vision of the Graduate. Students also have the opportunity to self-assess their own progress three times a year. The rubric scores are entered into a school-wide database each year and hard-copies of the rubrics are stored by the students' advisory teachers in file folders within their Advisory classrooms. This will ensure that each student leaves ISAAC with an understanding of where they are on the continuum of demonstrating ISAAC's Vision of the Graduate.

The Core Values and Beliefs about Learning and the Vision of the Graduate guide ISAAC's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations within ISAAC's Theory of Action: 2020-2023 Strategic Plan written in collaboration between the Executive Director and the ISAAC Board. The academic, operational, and community categories included within the

Strategic Plan focuses on specific action steps of utilizing academic talk, high leverage practices, writing to learn, and effective feedback to ensure that the vision results in improved practices. For example, Strategic Action 1.2 is that “If we use the advisory model to foster and establish shared belief among all stakeholders that “effort creates ability” and all students can succeed, then we will increase student efforts towards achievement and responsibility for their own personal, academic, and career goals” Some action steps to achieve this outcome include discussing among all stakeholders the concepts of grit (Angela Duckworth), growth mindset (Carol Dweck), the belief that “effort creates ability,” and Accountable Talk (University of Pittsburgh’s Institute of Learning), fostering a shared belief that “effort creates ability and that all students can succeed” through faculty-focused conversations related to effort-based success of ourselves and our students, and utilizing the Advisory program to work with students, setting goals by developing Goal Setting Plans and conferencing one-on-one with students.

### Standard 1.3.: The school community

The school community takes collective responsibility for the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional well-being of every student and can demonstrate how each student is known, valued, and connected to the school community. The Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication (ISAAC) is currently in the *transforming* phase of providing a collective responsible community that values the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional well-being of every student.

ISAAC maintains and supports high expectations for all students with a broad commitment to all areas of learning. [ISAAC’s Core Value and Beliefs](#) about learning is a public commitment to deliver a rigorous curriculum that encourages a growth mindset through effort and hard work. Through teaching and learning these principles, we believe that all students can succeed. In

pursuit of educational excellence and ISAAC's Vision of the Graduate, ISAAC follows the Common Core State Standards that concentrate heavily on literacy within all academic areas.

The course offerings and programming opportunities provide a balance of academic, social, and civic opportunities to meet the needs of diverse learners to achieve a positive school/life balance.

Our [curriculum](#) provides a balance of experiences in academics, arts, music, and [after school activities](#) that focus on leadership, sports, culinary arts, math, and science. These learning experiences prepare students to become empathetic and courageous leaders through authentic tasks and experiences that promote creativity, critical thinking, and excellence. Our Core Values directly align to ISAAC's [Vision of the Graduate](#) which supports the development of each student's educational journey by delivering instruction in the academic, civic, and social competencies necessary to prepare our students for their secondary education upon 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation.

ISAAC has plans and services in place to identify and support the social and emotional needs of students. ISAAC's Advisory Program and its Social, Emotional, Learning Curriculum (SEL) is based on the frameworks and standards of the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). ISAAC'S advisory program intentionally focuses on developing a growth mindset for all learners, along with teaching empathy and acceptance of diversity within the school building and in the community. [The ISAAC 2021-22 Advisory Calendar](#) highlights the instructional topics taught each quarter. Topics include relationship building, identifying emotions, kindness, team building, awareness and acceptance (LGBTQ), Black Lives Matter, anti-bullying/cyberbullying, gratitude, and goal setting.

The Advisory Program also provides each student with an advisory teacher who will follow the students throughout their educational years at ISAAC. This ensures that each student is known

by an adult mentor, the student's advisory teacher, in the school. The advisory-student relationship is established to assist each student in the development of achieving the school's vision of the graduate

Another avenue used at ISAAC to help monitor students' social-emotional well-being is the [Daily Student Survey](#). Every morning, each student receives a copy of this online form which allows them to reflect and evaluate their emotional status. Using the form, students can request a meeting with one of ISAAC's social workers. Students can also interact daily with our two safety and security specialists who monitor the school and help to provide stability for students.

The social-emotional well-being of ISAAC students is paramount to the school climate. In an effort to help families address the mental health of their students who may need intensive therapy outside of the school day, ISAAC provides information on its website for parents to access. The [Family Care Connect](#) resource lists mental health professionals and facilities that parents can contact for further assistance. There is also a school-based health center located in the building where students have the ability to access physical and mental health services during the school day.





ISAAC acknowledges the importance of and assists in building each student's readiness to learn. Therefore, several programming initiatives and interventions have been established and are ongoing to assist students across all areas of school life.

ISAAC's [Dragon Time](#) is a scheduled class period that meets three times a week for 45 minutes. A class period for all students, this class time provides students with access to content teachers, special education teachers, elective teachers, SRBI instructors, and EL tutors. Students are requested by teachers and are expected to use this time productively by either completing







assignments based on academic need. As indicated by our spring 2022 NEASC survey results, 97.2% of faculty report taking responsibility for the academic well-being of students and 97.3% report taking responsibility for the social emotional well-being of students. These results indicate a shared responsibility for students among the entire school community.

10. Take responsibility for the academic well-being of all students (not just the students they teach)?

Value		Percent	Responses
Nearly all		83.3%	30
Most		13.9%	5
About half		0.0%	0
Some		2.8%	1
None		0.0%	0
Totals: 36			

11. Take responsibility for the social and emotional well-being of all students (not just the students they teach)?

Value		Percent	Responses
Nearly all		80.6%	29
Most		16.7%	6
About half		0.0%	0
Some		2.8%	1
None		0.0%	0
Totals: 36			

ISAAC also offers [Study Hall](#) as an elective that has clear expectations and is supervised by teaching staff. Content teachers collaborate with the teaching staff to ensure there is a clear understanding of students' assignments and assessments. In this capacity, students are given the opportunity to work independently or collaboratively on assignments and projects. Supervising staff member(s) are available to check work in progress, provide feedback, re-teach skills as needed, and provide close proximity to increase student attention and task completion. For students who need more assistance, a separate setting is available with the direct support from the ELA interventionist and math interventionist. ISAAC ensures that classroom educators and

support staff share responsibility for struggling learners. The organic nature of study hall is that the SRBI instructors, teachers, and social workers can work directly with students based on their academic, social and emotional needs at any given time throughout the school year.

Another support program is ISAAC's SRBI Program. The [SRBI Handbook](#) outlines its purpose, team members, and roadmap for Tier II and III interventions. ISAAC's SRBI's purpose is to monitor and provide academic, behavioral, and social-emotional supports for all students. This team consists of ISAAC's administrative leadership, two full-time social workers, a math interventionist, and the SRBI coordinator/ELA interventionist. Following a SRBI Agenda, the team meets every-other-day to review and discuss student progress and needs regarding academics, social/emotional well-being, behavior, and attendance gathered from the teachers' weekly input on the [SRBI Student Update Form](#). The SRBI roadmap explicitly outlines the process of determining if a student requires a [Student Improvement Plan](#) (SIP) and the procedure for progress monitoring to ensure positive student outcomes. In this capacity, all ISAAC administrators, social workers, interventionists, support staff, and classroom educators share the responsibility for struggling learners.

Over the summer of 2021, ISAAC established a Bilingual Program to address the instructional needs of English Learners. The [Bilingual Program and English Learners Handbook](#) provides a detailed outline of the purpose of the program, the models of services, and exit criteria. This handbook also includes the Connecticut English Proficiency Standards (CELP) and forms, such as the Home Language Survey, for parental input. The purpose of establishing this program was to ensure that all learners are known, valued, and have equitable and inclusive access to all curricula and programs offered at ISAAC.

Additionally, when ISAAC sent out a [Family Survey](#) regarding the collective responsibility for the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional well-being of every student, a majority of those who responded felt as if this statement was true or mostly true. When parents were asked if their child feels valued at this school, 92 percent responded positively to this statement. Lastly, when asked if their child feels connected to other students at this school, an overwhelming percentage of parents responded positively. These results acknowledge the dedication and commitment ISAAC's administrators, teachers, and staff have towards supporting all students in their development of a growth mindset through grit and hard work.

By providing and delivering a rigorous curriculum that is aligned with CCSS and offers differentiated instruction so all can succeed, ISAAC demonstrates the value it has for all learners through its instruction and assessment practices. Therefore, ISAAC is in the *transforming* phase for Standard 1.3.

#### Standard 1: Learning Culture 1.4

The Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication (ISAAC) is currently in the *transforming phase* of ensuring the school community's professional culture demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement through the use of research, collaborative learning, innovation, and reflection. ISAAC embodies the spirit of continuous improvement by creating a culture that values and supports teachers as collaborative problem solvers, curriculum creators, and co-learners. During the 2020-2021 school year, time was allocated for teachers to meet daily in professional learning communities (PLCs) and interdisciplinary professional learning communities (IPLCs) for the purpose of collaborative learning. A sample [PLC & IPLC Schedule for May/June 2022](#) indicates that the weekly topics discussed include curriculum

revisions and learning walks. This same schedule was used this school year and will continue to be used in subsequent years.






During the summer of 2020, each content area teacher was given an opportunity over the summer to write their curriculum. Since that time, any subsequent changes that are made have been done through a discussion in PLCs and with an administrator through the submission of a [PLC Curriculum Cover Page](#). This would give teachers the opportunity to alter the existing curricula as they see fit based on feedback from a variety of sources, including student data. Throughout the school year, time is given to teachers to revise and re-write their curriculum in order to allow teachers to continually innovate their lessons based on data, research, and reflective practices.

Learning Walks are opportunities for teachers to observe the teaching methods of other educators with a specific focus such as listening for Accountable Talk and Academically Productive Talk. Accountable Talk maximizes the benefits of classroom talk by moving learning forward and being accountable to the learning community for accurate knowledge and rigorous thinking. It is an intentional open-ended conversation where participants listen to, add on to each other's comments, and use clarifying questions to make sure they are understanding what others are saying. The Learning Walks allow for formal and informal collaboration between educators about best practices.

ISAAC is also committed to a sense of ownership and responsibility for achieving the school's Core Values and Beliefs About Learning and Vision of the Graduate. ISAAC's [School Improvement & Performance Plan](#) (SIPP) includes a shared belief among all stakeholders that "all students can succeed with hard work and grit by increasing student efforts towards achievement and responsibility for their own personal, academic, and career goals. Teachers

also indicated on a [NEASC Faculty Survey](#) (Spring, 2022) that it is 100% totally true and mostly true that the school's core values and beliefs about learning influence the way teachers and administrators design the school's academic program. On the same survey, 95.1% of teachers indicated that the principal and other administrators lead in ways that are consistent with the school's Core Values and Beliefs About Learning and Vision of the Graduate.

6. This school's core values and beliefs about learning influence the way teachers and administrators design the school's academic program.

Value		Percent	Responses
Totally True		68.3%	28
Mostly True		31.7%	13
Neither True nor Untrue		0.0%	0
Mostly Untrue		0.0%	0
Totally Untrue		0.0%	0
Totals: 41			

ISAAC also creates the conditions and trust necessary for the full and active participation of all educators. One example of this can be seen in our teacher evaluative process of the creation of Student Learning Objectives (SLOs). A Student Learning Objective is the implementation of a long-term academic goal or set of goals created by a teacher using data about students and their learning over a defined period of time. SLOs are used at ISAAC as a component of teacher evaluation (45% of Evaluation). “The goals for the year must be informed by data and evidence collected by the teacher and evaluator.” (ISAAC Educator Development and Evaluation Plan, pg. 16). At the beginning of the school year, each teacher indicates that “100% of students will...” achieve a specific objective until the mid-year meeting when this goal is revised. This takes trust in the process to indicate that all students will achieve a goal and attach that to the evaluative process and that the goal will have the opportunity to be revised based on teacher feedback. Teachers report that this process provides time to reflect and grow professionally.

ISAAC also uses ongoing and relevant assessment data, including feedback from the school community, to improve programs and services. For the 2021-22 school year, the Bilingual department adopted collaborative strategies to monitor the academic progress of English Language (EL) learners as outlined in the [Bilingual Program & English Learners](#) document.

Teachers continually provide feedback through a Google Form sent directly to the bilingual staff about specific areas of support. In collaboration with ISAAC's administrative staff, the bilingual department also created an individualized EL Plan for each language learner. This plan includes language proficiency scores as well as strategies for intervention. Engaging in ongoing reflection to improve student learning, the bilingual department constantly monitors EL progress. For example, LAS Links Practice Test Data is collected in order to revise and improve language proficiency instruction. (NEASC 3.2)

ISAAC's SRBI process, as outlined in the [Scientifically Researched Based Intervention \(SRBI\) Guidebook](#), allows teachers to provide individualized and specialized instruction both in and out of the classroom. In response to the pandemic and as part of Tier I instruction, all 6th and 7th grade students are enrolled in SRBI math and ELA classes, as shown in a sample teacher schedule, that supplement their regular math and ELA classes. Teachers identify students who are struggling with behavior and/or class work and reach out to their parents/guardians to discuss their concerns. During the IPLC meeting, grade-level teachers share their concerns regarding student behavior and academic progress.

Teachers are additionally required to contact parents/guardians as part of the Tier I intervention process. This communication is an opportunity to collaborate with parents on different strategies to improve student performance. If students continue to struggle despite Tier I interventions, the student is referred to the SRBI team. The SRBI team meets every other day to discuss additional

strategies to implement, including a focused study hall and a pull-out SRBI seminar with the SRBI teachers. If the student needs more intensive support, then the SRBI team will develop a Student Improvement Plan (SIP), which identifies student goals, targeted interventions, and progress monitoring measures. The SIP may include the focused study hall and SRBI seminar among other strategies. The use of small-group instruction allows SRBI teachers the opportunity to focus on individual student needs. If these Tier II interventions are not effective, then students will be referred for an evaluation for specialized instruction.

Extensive special education and bilingual support for students also allow teachers to meet the individual learning needs of all students at ISAAC. Most students with an IEP are enrolled in a resource class which meets every other day with a certified special education teacher to provide students with specialized instruction based on their learning profile. Additionally, these students are supported in co-taught math and/or ELA classes where a special education teacher and a general education teacher co-teach. Special education teachers complete annual progress monitoring to ensure that student supports are targeted to meet individual student needs. (NEASC 3.5)

Identified EL students are enrolled in a Language Academy class where they receive direct instruction from the TESOL/Bilingual Teacher and Bilingual Educational assistance. In the spring of 2021, ISAAC's Bilingual team developed the [Language Lab curriculum](#) to assist these students develop English proficiency, as they receive academic support across the curriculum. The TESOL teachers and Bilingual educational assistants also provide push-in support in all classes with demonstrated need. Additionally, the Bilingual teachers administer the LAS Links assessment annually and progress monitoring assessments twice a year to ensure that student

supports are targeted to meet individual student needs. These supports are outlined in the [Bilingual Program Guide](#).

1.5 The school's culture promotes intellectual risk taking and personal and professional growth.

The Interdistrict School for Arts and Community (ISAAC) is currently in the *transforming* phase of providing a school culture that promotes intellectual risk taking and personal and professional growth. ISAAC has a dynamic and vibrant learning environment. ISAAC's administrators and educators encompass a shared sense of responsibility, and nurture the development of ownership to the students.

ISAAC promotes a culture of intellectual risk taking for personal and professional growth of its educators. Educators at ISAAC have a shared sense of responsibility to uphold the [Core Values and Beliefs about Learning](#) and the [Vision of the Graduate](#) through personal reflection, professional development, and in the belief of a growth mindset. As such, teachers are supported to reflect on their teaching practices through [ISAAC's Educators Development and Evaluation Plan](#). This guide outlines the process of support and evaluation for all teachers and administrators to reflect and refine their practices within their Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and Interdisciplinary Professional Learning Communities (IPLC). PLCs and IPLCs meet weekly to discuss curricula, lesson revisions, instruction, learning tasks, and student needs. Moreover, collaboration organically happens among administrators and educators to enhance the rigor and relevance of instruction through these professional committees.



To further promote risk taking and professional growth, ISAAC provides professional development opportunities that are developed and presented by ISAAC's administrative team, teacher leaders, and community members. The in-service training has covered a myriad of pedagogical topics that are directly linked to student learning outcomes. A sampling of topics includes [Accountable Talk](#), [Antiracism in Education](#), [English Learners and Multiple Learners Strategies](#), [Common Classroom Expectations](#), [Trauma Informed Teaching](#), and [Culturally Responsive Teaching](#).

ISAAC also promotes intellectual risk taking and personal growth among its students while fully supporting respectful discourse, including diverse perspectives, experimentation, innovation, and a disposition to listen well and learn from others. Therefore, ISAAC provides curriculum and programs specifically designed to its Core Values and Vision of the Graduate.

Being a school that is focused on arts and communication, all students participate in [performing and visual arts](#) classes. These course offerings range from concert band, jazz band, chorus, musical theater, dance, general art, and digital arts. Students are also able to participate and practice their instrumental and choral performances under supervision during Dragon Time. Participation in the arts allows students to gain a different perspective and explore new learning as they develop and refine their interest and talents.

ISAAC also offers students a chance to learn and become reflective both socially and academically through their [Advisory](#) class. ISAAC's Advisory Program provides students with Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) that is anchored to the [Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning Standards](#) (CASEL). Through the CASEL Standards, the Advisory lessons assist students' in their development of respectful discourse, perspective taking, and to collaborate with others. The lessons teach empathy and acceptance of all persons within and

outside of ISAAC. Using [Accountable Productive Talk](#), advisory teachers challenge students to think critically as they consider other viewpoints. This programming directly aligns with Core Values and Beliefs about Learning.

Advisory class also provides time for students to take ownership of their learning. During advisory, students are able to review and track their grades. Students can also monitor their progress across the disciplines of literacy, mathematics, teamwork, problem solving, and civic-social responsibility as measured on the accumulative [Learning Competency](#) rubrics collected throughout their middle school years at ISAAC. This reflection time allows students to meet with their advisory teacher to get meaningful feedback and to develop a plan to achieve high academic standards. Through these conferences, students gain a growth mindset based on practice, grit, and hardwork.

Students at ISAAC also have a class period, Dragon Time. This class emphasizes the importance of persistence and opportunities for revision of student work. Dragon Time meets three times a week for 45 minutes at each session. Students are given time to meet any of their content teachers for extra help, to make revisions or retake a class assessment to increase their learning. [ISAAC's Parent-Student Handbook](#) specifies the Retake Policy to ensure that all learners and educators comprehend that an important part of intellectual and personal growth comes from making and learning from mistakes.

To support all students, ISAAC has an active Scientific Research Based Interventions (SRBI) team that addresses struggling learners. The SRBI team consists of the Executive Director, Principal, Associated Principal, Director of Instruction, Programming, and Athletics, Director of Student Supports, SRBI Coordinator, math interventionist, and two social workers. The SRBI schedule meets every other day with [an agenda](#) to discuss attendance, academic, behavioral, and

social-emotional concerns of students. [ISAAC's SRBI Guidebook](#) explicitly defines an action plan to support struggling learners.

Additionally, parents were [surveyed](#) regarding the rigor and educational standards at ISAAC. According to the survey results, all of the parents who responded felt that their child was learning that “mistakes are part of the learning process.” These results acknowledge the ISAAC’s commitment to growing and developing all learners.

ISAAC’s school climate promotes a growth mindset for all learners based on the principles of intellectual risk-taking, practice, and determination. With a shared sense of agency, educators at ISAAC regularly collaborate, reflect, and refine their instructional practices with the ultimate goal of positively impacting student achievement. Similarly, students are nurtured and instructed to develop a growth mindset. Therefore, ISAAC is in the *transforming* phase of Standard 1.5.

#### Standard 1.6.: The school’s community

The Interdistrict School for Arts and Community (ISAAC) is currently in the *transforming* phase of promoting a definition of leadership that provides school leaders with the authority and responsibility to improve student learning.

ISAAC has a unique administrative leadership structure with an Executive Director; Principal; Associate Principal, Director of Instruction, Programming, and Athletics; and a Director of Student Supports. The Principal, working closely with the Executive Director and the administrative team, provides instructional leadership that sets high standards for student achievement and fosters a growth mindset. A primary example is the development and implementation of the [School Improvement and Performance Plan \(SIPP\)](#) that was built upon

[ISAAC's Core Values and Beliefs about Learning](#) and its [Vision of the Graduate](#). In order to promote the high quality standards for all students, the Core Values and Vision of the Graduate is strategically posted throughout the school to foster ownership and responsibility of learning for students, families, educators, and all stakeholders.

Additionally, ISAAC's principal ensures and facilitates that all stakeholders, such as the administrators, educators, families, and board of directors, are given access to the SIPP, which is available for viewing, along with the Core Values and Vision of the Graduate, on [ISAAC's website](#). The SIPP establishes the school's working action plan that harnesses ISAAC's foundational belief that *"all students can succeed with hard work and grit"*. The SIPP was developed in collaboration with the Executive Director and the ISAAC Board of Directors.

The SIPP includes the following initiatives:

- [Professional Learning Communities \(PLCs\)](#) - The establishment of PLCs is to create regular, structured, collaborative opportunities for [teachers to meet weekly](#) in content-specific teams with a focus on curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The teams will use assessment data to improve their instructional strategies and student achievement will improve.
- [Advisory model](#) - This model is being implemented to foster and establish shared belief among all stakeholders that, "all students can succeed with hard work and grit". With this as ISAAC's tenet, we believe that the [social-emotional lessons](#), based on the [Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning Standards](#) will increase student efforts towards achievement and responsibility for their own personal, academic, and career goals.

- [Accountable Talk](#) - Academic rigor is the cornerstone of our educational endeavors. The use of Accountable Talk increases the school culture by motivating students to actively listen, think critically, and respectfully respond to their teacher and peers while using evidence to defend their stance. With the use of Accountable Talk, students will intentionally think at a higher level and improve academic achievement. To encourage educators to exercise this initiative and promote leadership skills within the classroom, the Associate Principal and Director of Instruction, Programming, and Athletics presented at the start of the 2021-2022 school year a professional development on [Academically Productive Talk that incorporates Accountable Talk](#). Through this initiative, educators are given leadership opportunities to model Academically Productive Talk and Accountable Talk through the implementation of the [Learning Walk model](#). This model has been established as a norm to observe and promote professional and respectful discourse that improves instructional strategies.
- [Scientifically Research Based Interventions](#) (SRBI) and [ISAAC's SRBI Guidebook](#) explicitly defines an action plan to support struggling learners. The SRBI team, which consists of the Executive Director, Principal, Associated Principal, Director of Instruction, Programming, and Athletics, Director of Student Supports, SRBI Coordinator, Mathematics Interventionist, and two social workers meet every-other-day throughout the school year to discuss student concerns related to attendance, academic, behavioral, and social-emotional concerns of students.

Additionally, the Principal also places the importance of involving educators, students, and families in meaningful ways with defined roles that promote all stakeholders in decision-making processes that instill responsibility and ownership. In an effort to maintain and foster

responsibility, all educators, students, and families are encouraged to complete the [NEASC Survey](#) . In this recent poll, parental input was favorable. For instance, a majority of the parents who responded to the survey felt they were given important leadership opportunities. Moreover, when asked about the student experience and learning at ISAAC, a majority of parents responded positively. Ninety-two percent commented that their child feels valued by the teaching staff and connected to other students. Additionally, the parent survey indicated that parents were asked how they could improve the school.

Collaboration is an ongoing initiative of the Principal to encourage educators and parents to exercise initiatives and leadership essential to the improvement of the school that positively impacts student engagement in learning. This is highlighted in the establishment and the open, ongoing invitation by the Principal for educators and families to join school committees that offer meaningful conversations to improve the overall school climate.

Examples of school committees are:

- [Principal Advisory Committee](#) was established under the guidance and leadership of ISAAC's Principal. Committee members are the Principal, Associate Principal, the Director of Student Supports, and several educators who volunteer to provide feedback on the school's climate. The purpose is to give educators an opportunity to provide input and to promote a school culture of support for all educators.
- [Wellness Committee](#) was established to recognize and acknowledge the well-being of all educators and staff at ISAAC. This committee consists of the Principal, administrative members, and several educators who volunteer to meet monthly to develop and organize activities that promote physical, mental, emotional, and relational well-being at ISAAC.

- [Parent-Teacher Organization \(PTO\)](#) meets virtually every month under parental leadership with the principal as an advisor. This committee lays the foundation for parents and teachers to work collaboratively to supplement and bolster the educational experience for all students. To be inclusive, ISAAC's PTO secretary is both a parent and educator, ISAAC's TESOL/Spanish Specialist, who is willing to facilitate communication between all PTO members.

Additionally, ISAAC's Principal nurtures all stakeholders' participation by communicating regularly with [Marty's Hot Newsletter](#), which is published weekly in both English and Spanish. Marty's HOT Newsletter highlights student achievement and upcoming events. Under the Principal's leadership, the position of a Spanish Communicative Specialist was established. The purpose of this position was to ensure that Spanish-speaking families whose students are enrolled in ISAAC's [Bilingual Program](#) receive up-to-date information about the school and the Bilingual Program in their home-language. Therefore, the [monthly Academia Linguistica newsletters](#) are emailed to families and other stakeholders.

Since communication is key to a vital and dynamic educational system, ISAAC families and stakeholders also receive school-wide notifications to time-sensitive information in both English and Spanish through various modes of communication (e.g. phone calls, emails, and text messages). Timely information may include, but is not limited to, bus delays, changes in the CDC policies related to COVID, and other pertinent information of school security and interest. [Notifications](#) can also be found on the school's website.

Moreover, the Principal fosters and ensures the Board of Directors, Executive Director, and the administrative team are collaborative, reflective and constructive. This initiative is achieved by convening regularly with the [Board of Directors](#). These meetings are posted on the ISAAC website, along with the minutes, for families, educators, and stakeholders in the community to review.

When reviewing all the evidence that ISAAC has an inclusive definition of leadership and provides school leaders with the authority and responsibility to improve student learning, we believe ISAAC is currently in the *transforming* phase.

#### Standard 1: Learning Culture 1.7

The Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication (ISAAC) is currently in the *transforming phase* of ensuring the school culture fosters civic engagement and social and personal responsibility. ISAAC accomplishes this task by encouraging social awareness, upstanding behavior, and fair and respectful treatment of all during Advisory lessons, which are based on Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) standards. The [Advisory lessons](#) that are presented to students twice a week include topics such as relationship building, grit and growth mindset, conflict resolution, and goal setting. ISAAC's social workers are also Advisory Project Leaders that develop and share social/emotional lessons with the school community.

In addition to our Advisory program, ISAAC staff have also been given professional development on topics such as Culturally Responsive Teaching, Antiracism, EL Strategies and Interventions, and Common Classroom Expectations to ensure that all students are treated fairly



and respectfully. At the beginning of each school year, an [ISAAC Parent-Student Handbook](#) is shared with students and their families to ensure the understanding of expectations and appropriate student behavior.

ISAAC encourages learning experiences that connect and make an impact on the community beyond the school campus. Some examples of this include partnerships that have been formed with a variety of community members to support authentic learning experiences, including Project Oceanology (Project O), Mystic Aquarium, and the Dennison Pequotsepos Nature Center.

Project O has provided students with a variety of experiential lessons involving marine sciences. During the 2021-22 school year, educators with Project O led 7th-grade students through a squid dissection to supplement an organ systems unit; providing them hands-on experience with different flora and fauna to supplement an evolutionary biology unit; and taken students out on their boats to explore marine species and graph the salinity, pH, and temperature of Long Island Sound to supplement an ecosystems unit. Project O also teaches students about the environment and ways to preserve it in ISAAC's after school Environmental Club.

The Mystic Aquarium has given 6th-grade students a similarly enriching experience. Students attended a field trip to the Mystic Aquarium after completing a unit on the water cycle. They learned about and had an opportunity to interact with a variety of different marine organisms. They also send educators to ISAAC to provide in-class experiences. During the 2021-22 school year, aquarium educators brought in snakes and frogs for students to observe. Students learned about their characteristics, their impacts on the environment, and the impacts of global warming on their habitats.

Students enrolled in ISAAC's theater classes benefit from two valuable community partnerships. Theater students participated in a playwriting workshop in collaboration with the [Eugene O'Neill Theater Center](#). Under the mentorship of the Education Director at the Eugene O'Neill, students wrote a one-act play. During the 2021-22 school year, seven students submitted their plays to the Young Playwrights Festival, a national playwriting contest. This year, one ISAAC student was given the honorable mention award of Guest Playwright and three students received honorable mentions. Additionally, ISAAC's musical theater students participated in the Arts Education Collaboration with the Goodspeed Opera House. Students were able to watch a professional performance at the Goodspeed and participate in musical theater workshops with the actors who performed.

The Director of Student Supports at ISAAC also partnered with the Friendship School, a pre-kindergarten and kindergarten magnet school based in Waterford, Connecticut, and the New London Public Library (NLPL) to pilot Marty's HOT Readers. Selected ISAAC students were appointed as "project leaders" who chose books from NLPL every month and recorded themselves reading the books out loud. This opportunity allowed leaders to improve their reading rate, accuracy, and prosody. The recordings are shared with kindergarten students at the Friendship School. The purpose of this literacy program is two-fold: to prompt community and civic leadership in selected ISAAC students, and to support young children in the early development of their literacy skills.

This school year, ISAAC also began a relationship with two non-profit organizations: Public Art for Racial Justice Education (PARJE) and the Anti-Defamation League's No Place for Hate initiative. PARJE is an Eastern Connecticut-based organization that works to create public art in order to raise public awareness of social justice issues. Students at ISAAC participated in their

Sister Mural Project where they collaborated on the creation of a mural that was displayed publicly in New London. The [No Place for Hate](#) initiative partners with schools to provide students with the tools they need to fight bullying and bias in their school.

During the 2021-22 school year, ISAAC was the recipient of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant (21 CCLC). The money from the grant provides monetary support for afterschool programs, such as: Environmental Club, Gaming Club, Leadership Club, Culinary Club, and MathCounts Club. The grant also supports ISAAC's athletic programs such as girls volleyball, co-ed fencing, girls and boys basketball, co-ed cross country, and co-ed intramural basketball. The grant money is also used to provide after school students with a family-sized, take-home meal once every two weeks. Families were involved in the process of creating the after school program through a parent/guardian survey. Their feedback was incorporated into the development of the program.

Mitchell College in New London, Connecticut is also partnering with ISAAC to enrich student learning in two different ways. During the 2021-22 school year, freshmen majoring in education at Mitchell College participated in a learning walk with their professor, who is also an ISAAC Board of Directors member, and conducted a program review of ISAAC alongside ISAAC's administrative team. The learning walk focused on academically productive talk and accountable talk, classroom environment, and the implementation of the workshop model. Their observations, reflections, and follow-up questions were shared with ISAAC staff with the intent of helping teachers reflect on and improve their own practices in the classroom. ISAAC's athletic department has developed a partnership with Mitchell College to use their gym facilities for basketball games.

During the 2021-22 school year, ISAAC's after school programs partnered with two additional businesses. ISAAC's Leadership Club worked with New London's Homeless Hospitality Center to run a hygiene drive within the community. Students competed in their Advisory to collect hundreds of hygiene products that were ultimately donated to the Hospitality Center. The after-school MathCounts club partners with the national MATHCOUNTS organization to tackle challenging math problems and participate in national math competitions. This year they reached Gold Level status for submitting a video demonstrating problem solving. All of these experiences show that ISAAC encourages learning experiences that connect to or make an impact on the community beyond the school campus for our students to utilize their Core Values and Beliefs About Learning and Vision of the Graduate to make a larger impact on the community around them.



## 2022 SELF-STUDY REPORT

### STANDARD 2: STUDENT LEARNING

Student Learning practices maximize the impact of learning for each student. The school has a vision of the graduate that includes the attainment of transferable skills, disciplinary/interdisciplinary knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary to prepare learners for their future. Students are assured consistent learning outcomes through a defined curricular experience and have the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge in a variety of creative ways. Students actively participate in authentic learning experiences while practicing the skills and habits of mind to regularly reflect upon, and take ownership of, their learning.

Standard 2 –Descriptors of Effective Practice	Rating
2.1 The school has a vision of the graduate that includes the attainment of transferable skills, knowledge, understandings and dispositions necessary for future success and provides feedback to learners and their families on each learner's progress in achieving this vision.	Implementing
2.2 There is a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments that includes units of study with guiding/essential questions, concepts, content, and skills and integrates the school's vision of the graduate. 2.2a Foundational Element - There is a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments.	Implementing
2.3 Curriculum ensures that learners demonstrate a depth of understanding over a breadth of knowledge.	Implementing
2.4 Instructional practices are designed to meet the learning needs of each student	Implementing
2.5 Students are active learners who have opportunities to lead their own learning	Implementing
2.6 Learners regularly engage in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skills.	Implementing
2.7 Learners demonstrate their learning through a variety of assessment strategies that inform classroom instruction and curriculum.	Implementing
2.8 Learners have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning, receive corrective feedback, and use this feedback in meaningful ways to support their learning.	Implementing
2.9 Learners use technology across all curricular areas to support, enhance, and demonstrate their learning.	Implementing

## Standard 2: Student Learning Narrative 2.1

Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication (ISAAC) is in the *implementing phase* of Principle 2.1. ISAAC has developed and adopted a Vision of the Graduate that includes the attainment of transferable skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for future success. All ISAAC graduates will be proficient in the following competencies: Write effectively for various purposes; Speak to diverse audiences in an accountable manner; Develop the behaviors needed to interact and contribute with others on a team; Analyze and solve problems independently and collaboratively; and Be responsible, creative, and empathetic members of the community. These competencies are measured through rubrics. During the 2019-20 school year, teachers and administrators collaborated in the development and editing of the rubrics and are currently piloting the Vision of the Graduate proficiencies through the use of the rubrics. Teachers have incorporated the rubrics into their Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's) so there is a true measurement of student progress over the years. Teachers are currently introducing the rubrics into their instruction to familiarize students with the academic expectations moving forward. The rubrics are not only a means of assessment for teachers but also for students to self-assess and make changes in their learning as needed. The competencies of the Vision of the Graduate are also interwoven into the curriculum depending on the unit and class. In ELA class, students are assessed on writing effectively for various purposes which is evident in Performance Tasks that close out the unit. In the Mathematics Performance Task, students are required to analyze and solve real-life problems independently and collaboratively. The Advisory curriculum incorporates the community rubric as a means of assessing student growth over the course of the three years at ISAAC. Teachers use a Google Form to upload the rubric data to a school wide database. Paper copies of the rubrics are also filed and stored by

each student's advisory teacher. Seeing the students keep the same advisory teacher all three years, that teacher is responsible for organizing and tending to the rubrics as well as helping the students put their final portfolio together over the course of the time they are in attendance at ISAAC. By the end of the students' 8th-grade year, they will have acquired and narrowed down the rubrics that best demonstrate growth and development. Every 8th grader will lead a parent conference where they will present their portfolio to their parents and describe what they have learned and how they have grown through the use of the rubrics. Embedded within the School Improvement Performance Plan (SIPP), is a Competency Data Report that shows the progress for each competency in a table along with an average of where each student stands in meeting proficiency. Administration reviews the data and inputs it into the Competency Data Report. This report will be updated throughout the school year and data analyzed to assess patterns of growth and areas of need. In addition to the data obtained from the rubrics, teachers also set a parent goal at 90% in 9 areas from the NEASC Spring 2022 Parent Survey. The survey indicates the following:

The school places a high priority on engaging me as a partner in helping my child learn- 58.4%

I know what my child is learning at school - 66.6%

This school sets high standards for my child's academic performance - 75%

The school feels safe - 100%

I know who to go to in this school if my child needs academic help - 75%

I know who to go to in this school if my child needs social or emotional help - 91.6%

This school has a clear vision of the skills and knowledge my child needs to develop to be successful in life - 85.2%

My child feels valued at this school - 91.6%

Teachers provide my child with useful and timely feedback on his/her assignments. - 75%

Over the course of the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years, teachers have been trained through professional development in the use of Academically Productive Talk to ensure that students are using Accountable Talk in their classroom discussions. By engaging students in the use of Accountable Talk, their critical thinking and debating skills are sharpened and are transferable to prepare learners for high school, college and workplace readiness. Teachers are responsible for also performing learning walks with their disciplines, where they observe colleagues and make notes of how students are incorporating Accountable Talk into their daily discussions within daily lessons. Once learning walks are concluded, the teams go back to their PLCs and discuss what they found useful and/or interesting and how they can improve and incorporate their findings into their own practice.

2.2 There is a written curriculum in a consistent format for all courses in all departments that includes units of study with guiding/essential questions, concepts, content, and skills and integrates the school's vision of the graduate.

ISAAC is in the implementing phase of Principle 2.2. The ISAAC curriculum is written and designed to ensure that all students have the same opportunities and rigor in preparation for high school. Every discipline incorporates the competencies of the Vision of the Graduate into their curriculum assessments. For example, the ELA and Social Studies curriculum incorporates Write effectively for various purposes, and Speak to diverse audiences in an accountable manner, so



students receive the same expectations and message during their time at ISAAC. The mathematics and science curriculum incorporates, Analyze and solve problems independently and collaboratively, and Develop the behaviors needed to interact and contribute with others on a team into their units. Teachers are always finding ways to push the rigor while creating organic learning opportunities. An example of this is when the 7th grade mathematics teacher challenges students to partake in a Grit Challenge. Students are required to dig deep and push through a variety of difficult math problems and overcome obstacles that arise. In one social studies performance task, students are required to work in a group and create their own fictional nation where they have to make choices about import, export, economic structure, etc., and then justify their decisions. The Unified Arts curriculum incorporates the competencies into their units depending on the unit and scope. Some of the special education resource classes are assessing students using the rubric that addresses being responsible, creative, and empathetic members of the community. The components of the rubric tie in with social skills that are identified in students' Individualized Education Plan (IEP). There is a written curriculum for every course that ISAAC offers to students and is accessible to all teachers, parents, and stakeholders. The curriculum is located on the school website and is easily accessible to the public. This allows districts and parents to review and understand what their child is learning throughout the school year. It also is used as a promotional tool for prospective parents to see what ISAAC students are learning and units of study.

All curriculum is written using a standard, uniform format that is aligned to state and national standards. The curriculum focuses on the depth of understanding through higher order thinking, and authentic problem solving skills that addresses the needs of students both in and out of school. ISAAC's curriculum follows a template based on Understanding by Design (Wiggins

and McTighe 2005). Each unit starts with an Essential Question. The Essential Question sets the tone of getting the students to think deeply and divulge in discussion without having to come up with a right or wrong answer. The next section is Enduring Understandings with Unit Goals. In this section, a statement of the big idea with how students will learn and what they will have learned by the end of the sections. Standards (Common Core and content specific standards) were determined by the teachers after reviewing their specific content standards. The Unit Content Overview provides an outline with key terms, vocabulary and any skills students will obtain. The next section is the Daily Learning Objectives with Do Now Activities. This is the day-to-day instruction and objectives of what students will be able to do by the end of the 75 minute block. The objectives focus on higher order thinking to ensure that students are performing at a higher level by the end of the class. The next section of the curriculum is Instructional Strategies including differentiated instruction. This section is to ensure that all students are considered during the writing and planning phase. This section takes into account, tiered instruction that will take place within the classroom to engage and motivate all students. Revisions were made in the 2021-22 school year to include English Learner (EL) strategies. Being that 62% of our population at ISAAC is Spanish speaking, this revision was necessary and warranted to reach all students. The last section ties it all together through assessments (both formative and summative), and Unit Tasks. Within the Assessment section, every formative assessment used along with the Vision of the Graduate Learning Competency Rubrics that is applicable to the unit is listed; the summative assessments that incorporate all Enduring Understandings (EU) and The Unit Task. The Units always conclude with the resources used in order for teachers to carry out the unit.

Curricula are revised and updated as part of a monthly Professional Learning Community (PLC) process. Teachers discuss students' performance and progress on the curriculum and changes are considered based on these discussions. Teachers meet with their team and the Director of Instruction and Programming about these proposed revisions using the PLC Curriculum Revision Cover Page to guide the discussion. The discussion takes into account the vertical alignment from each grade to ensure that the students have the skillset in preparation for the next grade. Once that step has been completed, individual teachers meet with the principal to discuss the changes, and a revised curriculum is sent to the principal for a final review and then posted on the ISAAC website.

2.3 Curriculum ensures that learners demonstrate a depth of understanding over a breadth of knowledge.

ISAAC is in the implementing phase for Principle 2.3. The curriculum ensures that learners demonstrate a depth of understanding over a breadth of knowledge by making connections to prior knowledge across disciplines, placing emphasis on learner application of knowledge and skills, and emphasizing a deep understanding using interdisciplinary learning and authentic learning experiences. All disciplines are structured to build upon prior knowledge as well as connect and tie in with other disciplines to enhance the delivery of instruction. During Professional Learning Community (PLC) and Interdisciplinary Professional Learning Community (IPLC) time, teachers have discussions about ways they can interweave their instruction with that of others to enhance the knowledge of students, make cross-connections and demonstrate proficiency within the same grade level. Once a month, teachers meet with each other as well as with the Director of Instruction, Programming & Athletics, as part of the PLC/IPLC schedule to engage in unit shares and vertical curriculum alignment. Teachers also

share a common area during their prep time and authentic discussions about curriculum happen automatically.

ELA and Social Studies teachers plan lessons that complement each other and focus on the competency of writing effectively. Teachers also align their units in preparation for upcoming Interim Assessment Blocks (IAB) such as reading informational texts and writing narratives, as well as identify high frequency academic vocabulary words seen on IAB and FIAB's. The more students are exposed to these components across the disciplines, the more comfortable they become with the content. These words are incorporated into all curriculum and shared with the Bilingual and Special Education programs as part of their specialized instruction. In addition, all curriculum units are embedded with key content vocabulary to provide advanced access to the Bilingual and Special Education Programs in preparation for upcoming lessons and instruction.

#### PLC/IPLC schedule

ISAAC is focused on creating authentic learning experiences for all students both inside and outside of the school building. The 7th grade science teacher combines efforts and aligns the curriculum with Project Oceanology. Students participate in active learning and hands-on experiences at Project Oceanology at Avery Point, where they partake in dissections in the laboratory. They also embark upon an on the water learning experience in the Long Island Sound where they learn about the water, pollutants, species, and problem solve how to improve the environment around the sound. The 6th grade science curriculum is designed to incorporate partnerships with both Mystic Aquarium and the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center. The Mystic Aquarium hosts field trips for our 6th grade classes for students' in-class learning to come to life for an authentic experience. The Nature Center's instructors come into the classroom and share information about the environmental issues that impact our community and

students learn how to improve the environment. As an extension of these opportunities, ISAAC was chosen to receive the 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) after school grant. From this grant, ISAAC is able to fund an environmental club where interested students can continue their learning after school. In the club, Project Oceanology exposes students to a variety of environmental issues of the Long Island Sound, brainstorm possible solutions and then test their hypotheses. Students have taken field trips to the sound, where they learned how to test the water and determine the various properties of water, study the watershed runoff, and embark on a boat ride to learn while on the water. The dance/theater teacher has combined efforts with the Virtual Arts in Education Collaboration (AEC) program with The Goodspeed Opera House. This provides students with a high-quality and innovative experience both in-school and on-campus. More recently ISAAC students have had their experience via Zoom due to Covid restrictions.

2.4 Instructional practices are designed to meet the learning needs of each student.

ISAAC is in the implementing phase of Principle 2.4. Teachers are always striving to ensure that instructional practices are designed to meet the learning needs of each student. As part of the curriculum writing, teachers are required to list a variety of differentiated strategies to individualize and personalize learning based on student needs. An addendum to the Differentiated Strategies section was made to incorporate English Learners (EL) strategies that work well with our Language Learners. In addition to the planning and implementation of a variety of strategies, ISAAC has also added Algebra Prep for 7th graders requiring a higher level of Mathematics and offers both Algebra Prep and Algebra 1 for 8th graders. In a special circumstance this year, we allowed two 6th graders to take the Algebra Prep course offered to 7th graders based on their 5th-grade performance. Incorporated into our ELA and Mathematics

schedule, is the co-taught model of instruction where a special education teacher teaches along with the general education teacher. The administration team is working closely with our special education team in helping them to learn and understand the importance of ensuring that assignments and assessments are accommodated based on the individual needs of the students and what is outlined in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). We are in the process of putting procedures into place that allow for special education teachers to have access to the assignments in advance in order to make the necessary adjustments to the assignments to maximize student engagement and buy-in. Currently, there isn't time built into the schedule for the co-teaching teams to have common planning time; however, that is something that will be considered in the scheduling for the 2022-2023 school year.

ISAAC's Scientific Research-Based Instruction (SRBI) process includes intervention for all 6th and 7th graders to address any gaps that students may have due to the pandemic and interruption in the learning process. These interventions focus on ELA and Mathematics. There is one teacher assigned to deliver the ELA instruction and one teacher to deliver the mathematics instruction. All 6th and 7th grade students are given benchmark assessments from AimsWeb to chart and monitor growth and need. From there, struggling students are identified by teachers, and the cases are reviewed using the SRBI roadmap and planned for during the SRBI bi-weekly meetings. Students are identified as needing support for academics, attendance, and/or behavioral needs. There are additional tiered supports that are offered to the students in addition to the classes. When a student is identified, the team chooses the best avenue to reach the student. During study hall, there is an identified table that students have to report to and a teacher is there to work with them on understanding the assignments and completing the work needed to be successful in the next class. There are students that require tier III intervention which would

include putting them on a Student Improvement Plan (SIP). The SIP identifies student goals, targeted interventions, and progress monitoring measures. There is also time built into the SRBI teachers' schedules for them to take small groups of students and provide more explicit instruction on pre-teaching and re-teaching concepts to afford students a more in-depth understanding of the content. If a reading disability is suspected from the data, those identified students are taken through a reading assessment flowchart and the next steps are determined.

Teachers are expected to provide a lesson objective (SWBAT-students will be able to...) for each class that is posted on the whiteboard and on a slide to ensure all students understand and can identify what they are expected to learn. These objectives are also aligned with the written curriculum. Some teachers have the students read the objective aloud at the beginning of the class as well as at the end of class. Teachers use a variety of formative assessments to gauge student understanding before moving on to the next section of their lesson. Teachers are well versed in using the Edulastic format for their quizzes and tests which is designed to mirror that of the Smarter Balanced Consortium. Some teachers have students indicate a thumbs up, down, or sideways to assess where students are at that point in the lesson. Others have students use whiteboards to work out a problem and then show their answers as a means of assessing. Exit tickets are used to ensure students meet the established lesson objective and teachers use that information to determine if concepts need to be retaught before moving on. Students are given a plethora of opportunities to demonstrate knowledge throughout the year in all classes. In the 7th-grade social studies classes, the students took part in a mock trade in West Africa from the trans-Saharan trade to colonialism and imperialism. Students' main focus was understanding the role of trade in globalization. Students had to work collaboratively in groups and agree on decisions of ways they would trade and get a true understanding of how "Fair Trade" really works. In a 7th

grade ELA class, students participated in a Socratic Seminar about the novel they were reading. Everyone in the class had to be a participant on some level including students who had some learning difficulties but were successful based on the design of the class. In addition to our co-taught classes for ELA and Math, our EL tutors and special education teachers push into classes to ensure that all students have the support needed and to address any areas of difficulty at that moment. Much of the instruction carries over from the classroom to the Language Academy and to the Resource Room to reteach concepts already learned in the class. The special education department meets on a weekly basis to engage in discussions and share out strategies that have proven to be effective.

2.5 Students are active learners who have opportunities to lead their own learning.

ISAAC is in the Implementing phase of Principle 2.5. ISAAC students have multiple opportunities to pursue, enhance, and shape their learning. Student feedback along with student data help facilitate and provide authentic learning opportunities which align with daily content lessons. Students utilize Accountable Talk moves in peer-to-peer interactions and with staff. Moves are guided by teachers using Academically Productive Talk moves to help guide students to look deeper at their learning. Accountable Talk stems are located in each room and common areas of ISAAC and provide reminders to help students clarify, support, and build upon their conversations with their peers and staff. Accountable talk is used to help facilitate deeper meaning, develop follow-up questions, and produce more impactful student discourse, providing students with opportunities to further seek and investigate their learning. Students are also guided in one of the five-building rubrics on Accountable Talk. This information provides students a clear understanding of how they have progressed with Accountable talk starting in 6th grade and culminating in 8th grade as part of their overall portfolio and presentation.



Students are encouraged to explore choice in their learning. In each class, students are provided teacher guided choices within topics and specific assignments. Students choice in activities provide authentic learning opportunities which is centered upon student interest and engagement. Social Studies students partake in a moc congress. Each student /student pair must propose legislation and present their proposed Bill. Performance Tasks provide students opportunities to look at real-world problems and apply their background knowledge, experiences, and content skills over the course of the unit while working through a multistep process. In addition, Unit tasks are embedded in each unit of study. Each unit task is a culminating activity that includes each of the units Enduring Understandings (E.U.). Students must complete it using all knowledge and skills to thoroughly complete the task, which is presented with their peers. The Unit tasks are scored using one of the five rubrics. Per ISAAC's Parent/Student handbook, ISAAC follows a growth mindset by allowing students to continually try to improve on assignments and/or tests, before the completion of a unit. This includes all EU quizzes, summative test, and unit tasks. Teachers provide a set of criteria that supports students in retaking assessments to better understand the content and to improve their overall academic grades. In mathematics, sttudents are encouraged to explain their answers on retakes and why the change was made using a math retake sheet.

Student input at ISAAC is an essential part of programming, activities, and academics. Students have student choice in the selection of their electives. Electives include 3-D Art, Chorus, Jazz Band, Intro to Theater, Musical Theater, Dance, Concert Band, and Music Technology. At the end of each school year, 6th and 7th grade students have the option to select which elective they will have. Students also have the option to partake in after-school programming. Through the creation of ISAAC's after-school programming, as part of the 21st Century Community Learning

Centers Grant (CCLC), students are surveyed twice per year. Each student survey is administered on students' computers using Google Forms. Students are provided choices in programming which they select from a list of possible offerings or write in other options. The Director of Instruction, Programming, and Athletics uses the data to create programming that is centered around student feedback and needs. In addition, a parent survey goes home twice per academic year, through email and text messages. The survey provides options to select after-school programming and suggestions for parents to make on programming options for their children. This information is used in conjunction with the student surveys to guide and refine programming. Program options include Culinary Club, Leadership Club, Environmental Club, MathCounts Club, Gaming Club Writing Club, Basketball, Girls Volleyball, Fencing, and Cross Country.

Students participate in Advisory lessons twice per week. In Advisory, students take part in quarterly Goal Setting Lessons. Goal setting lessons allow students to evaluate their academic and behavioral progress while setting new goals for the upcoming quarter. Students are encouraged to reflect on their academic progress throughout each quarter and utilize scoring guides and content-created rubrics to self-assess and provide feedback. ISAAC plans on having student lead parent conferences to review yearly progress and reflect on growth and development.

2.6 Learners regularly engage in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking skills.

ISAAC is in the implementing phase of Principle 2.6. The ISAAC curriculum is written and designed to ensure that all students have the same opportunities that are challenging, engaging, and rigorous. The curriculum provides constant opportunities to facilitate discussion and guide students in finding deeper meaning through critical thinking. Students utilize one of five rubrics

(Literacy, Accountable Talk, Teamwork, Problem Solving, Responsibility) to facilitate discussion and inquire about outcomes and next steps. Students review rubric criteria in each of the five ratings; exemplary, approaching exemplary, proficient, approaching proficient, and beginning. Rubrics are utilized across all disciplines; including both core and elective classes. Teachers create engaging high-leverage practice-based lessons for students. which include consistent opportunities to facilitate Accountable Talk. Teachers use Academically Productive Talk moves that challenge students to use high-order thinking while moving them to a deeper understanding of the content and daily lesson objective.

Students complete a problem-based cumulative unit task at the end of each unit of study. Each task provides a series of high-level depth of knowledge structured questions to challenge students. Each unit task incorporates all Enduring Understandings (E.U.) which challenge students to think independently and activate prior knowledge. Students are required to demonstrate their ability to solve multistep problems culminating their newly acquired knowledge. In addition, during the 2021-2022 school year, the mathematics curriculum was amended to include the Interim Assessment Block (IAB) Performance Task from the Connecticut State Department of Education.

Each content curriculum builds on prior knowledge and skills. Students are given a plethora of opportunities to demonstrate knowledge throughout the year in all classes. In the 7th-grade Social Studies classes, the students took part in a mock trade in West Africa from the trans-Saharan trade to colonialism and imperialism. Students' main focus was understanding the role of trade in globalization. Students had to work collaboratively in groups and agree on decisions of ways they would trade and get a true understanding of how “Fair Trade” really works. In a 7th grade ELA class, students participated in a Socratic Seminar about the novel they were reading.

Everyone in the class had to be a participant on some level including students who had some learning difficulties but were successful based on the design of the class. In 8th grade, students use mathematics skills and concepts in science to create and design bridges made out of spaghetti as part of engineering and design practices. Students use the Team Work Rubric while building the bridge and working within their groups. Students self-score their work according to design, function, and bearing capacity while sharing with their peer's findings and adjustments made after multiple iterations.

2.7 Learners demonstrate their learning through a variety of assessment strategies that inform classroom instruction and curriculum

ISAAC is in the implementing phase for Principle 2.7. ISAAC uses multiple formative and summative assessments to guide student instruction and units of study. ISAAC implements a PLC/IPLC meeting agenda every two months over the course of an eight-week cycle. The Director of Instruction, Programming & Athletics meets with grades 6,7, and 8 content teams to review best practices, student outcomes, and make any instructional adjustments. Each cycle consists of the following: Unit Shares and Vertical Curriculum Alignment, Learning Walks, Assessment Data Reflections, Curriculum Revisions, and Stanford Calibrations. Within the PLC, teachers analyze current summative assessment data as a content group. Assessment data is reviewed to identify areas of concern and growth to appropriately adjust instructional practices as needed. Each assessment includes a similar SBAC structure.

To create authentic assessments that are aligned with the SBAC, ISAAC has implemented the use of Edulastic, a tool that allows the creation of original summative and formative assessments with the same structure and tools as the SBAC test. Teachers administer two formative assessments (E.U. Quizzes) and one summative assessment using the Edulastic platform for each

unit of study. E.U. quizzes are given twice per unit. Each E.U. quiz provides feedback to both teachers and students towards mastery of content knowledge and skill in their current unit of study. Each unit of study has an embedded Unit Task that incorporates all of the Enduring Understanding concepts and skills. The Unit Task is an originally created multi-step task that challenges students' application of knowledge and skill in a fun and challenging way. Teachers review assessment data to identify trends and/or gaps in content and to adjust and guide instruction. Accommodations and/or modifications are created for each assessment by the classroom teacher with the guidance of the special education teacher and/ or the TESOL teacher, in accordance with the student's ELL/504/IEP. General education teachers meet with ELL/special education teachers to discuss assessments and assignments to ensure that the specialized instruction outlined in the student's plans are being carried out with fidelity and to plan for further instruction.

Competency rubrics are reviewed using the Stanford Calibration method. Content area teachers calibrate assessments using rubrics related to their SLO's scheduled within their PLC's and PD's. Teachers meet with the Director of Instruction, Programming, & Athletics within weekly PLC's to review authentic student work, scores, and discuss trends. The process of calibrating scoring guides helps provide a consistent scoring and analysis of all students while providing content-appropriate feedback to help inform and guide instruction. For the 2022-2023 school year, 8th grade students will be responsible for presenting their entire authentic competency portfolio during the last parent/teacher conference of the school year. Students have accumulated their portfolios over their three years at ISAAC and will explain growth and development over their tenure.

Formative assessments are used throughout the class to provide teachers immediate feedback on each lesson. Exit slips are given to students in hard copy form or digital copy using Google Forms. Forms are collected and submitted at the end of each class. Exit slips provide teachers with immediate feedback related to the daily lesson objective. The collected feedback helps to inform teacher instruction, guide the follow-up lesson, and allow for students to continue to move to the next learning objective. Based on the collected feedback, teachers are able to plan appropriately for students that demonstrate understanding of the lesson objective and meet the needs of each student. Summative and formative assessment data review is used by teachers to make curriculum changes using the Curriculum Revision Cover Page following the PLC/IPLC process. Through content discussion and alignment with state standards and vertical alignments within the content, teachers submit changes along with evidence that supports a change in the curriculum unit document.

Interim Assessment Blocks (IAB's) are administered in mathematics four times per year and ELA three times per year. The IAB is aligned with each unit of study. This is part of ISAAC's State Action Plan. The IAB data provides ISAAC with another qualitative data point. The data is shared with the Assessment Coordinators and written in narrative form along with data tables. The report includes an assessment of the data, areas of concern, and areas of improvement providing action steps that will guide instructional practices to improve student outcomes. In conjunction with formative assessments, the IAB data is used by teachers in Mathematics and ELA to further plan, guide, and assess students, providing a more holistic picture of students' learning. Students that are in ISAAC's bilingual program complete the LAS Links testing annually or until the criteria for exiting the bilingual program are met. Data from the LAS Links is used to help guide instruction and planning for students. As part of monthly planning, teachers

complete a monthly calendar outlining their lesson objectives, and E.U and Summative assessments dates. The Monthly Calendar marks the objective and task for each class meeting day for the given month. Calendars are shared with the administration prior to the upcoming month of instruction.

In addition to IAB/s, AimsWeb Fall, Winter, and Spring benchmark assessments are used to monitor student growth and adjust instruction. These benchmark assessments and mathematics are administered in ELA and Math SRBI class for all 6th and 7th graders. The data is then shared with the SRBI Team and PLC/IPLC to make data informed instructional decisions. The data is also used to refer and monitor students for support and interventions.

2.8 Learners have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning, receive corrective feedback, and use this feedback in meaningful ways to support their learning.

ISAAC is in the implementing phase for Principle 2.8. ISAAC provides opportunities and time necessary to revise and improve their work, as evidence by ISAAC's retake policy for students can be found in the ISAAC Student/Parent Handbook. ISAAC's policy follows a Growth Mindset by allowing students to continually try to improve on assignments and/or tests before the completion of a unit. Before the retake teachers will provide productive feedback to the student and schedule a time for the retake. The retake policy is outlined in each teachers syllabus. Every ISAAC student receives a syllabus from each teacher outlining the testing, homework, and retake policy for each class.

ISAAC has provided students with multiple and varied opportunities over time to demonstrate their learning. One example of this is in Vision of the Graduate rubrics, last year with staff. Five teams met, discussed language, and focused on clear and concise horizontal movement between

rubric criteria. Students utilize one of five rubrics (Literacy, Accountable Talk, Teamwork, Problem Solving, Responsibility) to facilitate discussion and inquiry about outcomes and next steps. Students review rubric criteria in each of the five ratings; exemplary, approaching exemplary, proficient, approaching proficient, and beginning. Students use rubrics and scoring guides to self-assess their own work and to provide feedback to other students in peer groups.

In addition to rubrics, students receive immediate feedback from teachers on timely formal/informal assessments, conferring, daily work, and student-to-student feedback meetings. As an example of a formative assessment exit slips are collect and provide feedback to and from students. Based on student feedback, students needing more time on a specific skill or further understanding may be referred to the SRBI team for further discussion. While students who have mastered the current skill move to the next skill/objective. ISAAC teachers assess students using both formative and summative assessments within each unit of study. Units for each curriculum can be found on the ISAAC website. Two formative assessments are given (E.U. Quizzes) and one summative assessment at the conclusion of the unit of study.

An example of separate grading/reporting and feedback for work habits and academic skills is ISAAC's use of the Edulastic platform. The platform provides an authentic assessment closely aligned to the SBAC in formatting, design, and vocabulary. Teachers provide feedback to students upon completion of each assessment providing the opportunity to review, correct, and resubmit their assessments. This process helps to assure students learn, grow, and improve their skill and content knowledge while maintaining good academic standing.

Advisory lesson at the end of each quarter, have each student complete a responsibility rubric (Rubric 5). The rubric provides students the opportunity to reflect upon their last quarter and assess how they felt they did. The reflective practice provides students with real-time



connections to their individual learning and areas that they feel need improvement and focus on moving forward. In addition, each teacher has one of the five Vision of the Graduate rubrics as part of their SLO's. Teachers use rubrics to throughout the school year and record student data as part of their portfolios.

As ISAAC continues to move towards the transforming phase, the implementation of student-led conferences for 6th,7th, and 8th graders are part of our future plan. In addition, students in 8th grade will be presenting their cumulative portfolio around the five core rubrics from across

2.9 Learners use technology across all curricular areas to support, enhance, and demonstrate their learning.

ISAAC is in the implementing phase for Principle 2.9. ISAAC has incorporated a multi-faceted approach to technology for students through both our innovative use of a variety of systems and our school webiste. ISAAC's new website provides students with access to their school and teachers. ISAAC's website includes information that provides visitors with a complete picture of ISAAC's Mission and Vision while providing important information regarding academics,arts, athletics, and afterschool/summer programming options. Students can use the website to locate class schedules, view school lunch offerings, and access PowerSchool. Students use PowerSchool to check on daily assignments, and upcoming assignment due dates, and to monitor their learning. In addition, each curriculum can be found under the "Academics" heading on the ISAAC website. Moreover, the building principal publishes Marty's Hot News on the ISAAC website each week. Marty's Hot News informs parents/students about affirmations at ISAAC as well as highlights upcoming events and student/teacher spotlights. Marty's Hot New provides all of ISAAC with a continuous connection to the curriculum and new offerings at ISAAC. Over the years, ISAAC has been able to provide a Chromebook to each student and now has a 1:1 student-

to Chromebook ratio. The technology policy for Chromebook usage is found in the Student/Parent Handbook located on the ISAAC website.

ISAAC students access technology in each class using programs that enhance learning and provide access across content. The Digital Arts Curriculum focuses on the enhanced use of technology and applications across platforms centered around the arts. Students record themselves in ISAAC's Music Technology Curriculum which is designed to utilize technology to enhance and build musical compositions. Students create "mashups" using programs designed to mix musical samples which then students create original musical pieces. ELA students take a look at their technology usage in a unit called, "Screen Time". Within the unit, students must prepare to argue the positive and negative effects of cell phones, gaming, social media, and television on the developing teenage brain. While students participating in concert band, use video recording programs to self-evaluate, discuss, and critique their individual performances while analyzing the performance with their teacher. Furthermore, ISAAC's advisory program incorporates lessons for students to support digital citizenship. The lesson focuses on peer-to-peer interactions on social media platforms, digital footprints, and utilizing technology in meaningful and mindful ways to enhance college and career readiness.

Students access the Google Classroom platform as part of their instruction. Each teacher uses Google Classroom to disseminate content, collect assignments, and provide a place students can comment on work and also receive timely feedback. Written work is turned in using Google Docs ensuring work is easy to store, share, and complete in a central location. Students use the Google platform to collaboratively work on assignments in small groups, across content, and in Dragon Time. Each student has access to an application on their desktop called Airtame. Airtame provides students the ability to cast their work throughout the building onto one of the large

screen TVs found in each classroom. Providing students the opportunity to present projects, share and discuss assignments, and explain findings with the click of a button.

ISAAC students participate in virtual field trips and online learning opportunities through collaboration with ISAAC's community partners and subsequent grants. Each virtual field trip connects with our content units of study while providing additional authentic learning opportunities for students. In 6th and 7th grade, students participate in virtual and in-person field trips with the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center, Project Oceanology, Mystic Aquarium, Project Outreach, and the Goodspeed virtual classroom. Each Virtual class trip is enhanced by live instruction using Zoom, Google Classroom, and Microsoft Teams providing interaction and student-led discourse with instructors. The enhancement of daily lessons through virtual field trips helped build upon key academic concepts while supporting student-driven outcomes within each content.

ISAAC has creatively added new programming, diagnostics, and online instruction due to the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic. ISAAC has implemented AimsWeb assessment tool as part of our SRBI diagnostic. Students that are in tier II and tier III SRBI process are tested in Mathematics and Language Arts to support student outcomes using multipoint data-driven decision making. In addition, ISAAC has continued to support students at home impacted by the everchanging Covid protocols and procedures. ISAAC continues to provide remote liaisons via scheduled ZOOM times. Students meet with their liaison daily and receive support around each of their core and extended core classes.



## 2022 SELF-STUDY REPORT

### STANDARD 3: PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES

Professional practices ensure that practices and structures are in place to support and improve student learning. The school maintains and implements a school improvement/growth plan, organizational practices, and productive community relationships to meet and support student learning needs. Educators engage in ongoing reflection, collaboration, and professional development to improve their practice and examine evidence of student learning and well-being to improve curriculum, instruction, assessment practices, programs, and services.

Standard 3 –Descriptors of Effective Practice	Rating
3.1 The school engages all stakeholders in the development and implementation of a school improvement/growth plan, which reflects the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate. 3.1a Foundational Element - The school has a current school improvement/growth plan.	Implementing
3.2 Educators engage in ongoing reflection, formal and informal collaboration, and professional development to improve student learning and well-being.	Transforming
3.3 Educators examine evidence of student learning and well-being to improve curriculum, instruction, assessment practices, and programs and services.	Implementing
3.4 Collaborative structures and processes support coordination and implementation of curriculum.	Transforming
3.5 School-wide organizational practices are designed to meet the learning needs of each student.	Implementing
3.6 Educators develop productive student, family, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support learning.	Implementing

### Standard 3: Professional Practices Narrative 3.1

The Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication (ISAAC) is currently in the implementing phase of engaging all stakeholders in the development and implementation of a school improvement/growth plan, which reflects the school's Core Values and Beliefs about Learning and Vision of the Graduate.

The current School Improvement and Performance Plan (SIPP) strategically aligns district, school, and teacher goals to the Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) to promote the vision that "all students can succeed" as stated in ISAAC's Core Values and the Vision of the Graduate. The SIPP is written to specify and adopt various "Strategic Action Steps" in order to meet its vision for student success. Highlights of the SIPP include:

ISAAC's SIPP was written in collaboration between the Executive Director and the ISAAC Board of Directors. The SIPP promotes a strategic mindset that incorporates backward design by setting goals before choosing instructional methods and assessments. The SLO goals are designed to be specific and measurable in order to properly assess student achievement. To ensure student academic, social, and civic success, ISAAC has taken strategic steps to support teachers' development of SLOs. Teacher SLOs are aligned to SBAC-style summative assessments that were created as part of the curriculum development. Unified Arts teachers align their SLOs to the National Core Arts Standards.

As part of the SIPP plan, ISAAC developed a Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) process that will provide teachers with research-based interventions to improve student learning and behaviors. SRBI meets every other day to review attendance data, academic progress, and

teacher updates on students. Teachers use the SRBI data, along with data from their assessments, to have conversations in their Professional Learning Community meetings (PLCs) about student progress and any need for revision to assessments or curriculum based on the data. Teachers use specific SBAC data that is linked to SLOs to help inform instruction to increase student achievement.

Currently, ISAAC is in the piloting phase of implementing a self-monitoring, school-wide rubric system in which students demonstrate proficiency in the Vision of the Graduate throughout their journey at ISAAC. Additionally, teachers are piloting each of the five school-wide rubrics that align with each unit task found in every unit within the curriculum. Teachers are administering these school-wide rubrics as formative assessments which are tracked in each student's cumulative rubric portal. The goal is that eighth grade students will present a collection of proficiency or higher work samples in each of the five competencies found within the Vision of the Graduate. These portfolios will be presented in the spring of each student's eighth grade year for the purpose of meeting the competencies needed for high school through the lens of the Vision of the Graduate.

In accordance with the SIPP, ISAAC has increased efforts to communicate school successes, celebrations, initiatives, and general information to the community. Each week, the principal sends out a school newsletter via email called, "Marty's HOT News". This notification is sent to families in both English and Spanish. ISAAC also uses social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to inform families and students about school and athletic-related activities and events. Additionally, ISAAC celebrates student successes by honoring Students of the Month, quarterly honor roll celebration, and eighth-grade awards. Moreover, the Spanish Communication Specialist creates a monthly newsletter informing Spanish-speaking

families about the program, curriculum, and important events utilizing ISAAC's media accounts to keep all stakeholders informed.

Communication is a high priority as the school continues to increase its efforts to elicit input from stakeholders in all of its planning processes. ISAAC seeks feedback from parents, students, and teachers to adjust school environment practices, procedures, and policies, as needed. For example, the Parent/Teacher Organization meets monthly to discuss school successes, school needs, and to get feedback from parents regarding the school and its needs. Teachers regularly contact parents/guardians about student performance and upcoming classroom lessons. This communication provides parents/guardians with a means of also reporting back to teachers about any concerns that they may have regarding their child. This collaboration is a critical aspect of ensuring all stakeholders are informed and feel a part of the decision-making process.

During the 2019 - 20 school year, ISAAC began the candidacy process for New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) accreditation. The commitment to NEASC accreditation aligns with the mindset for continuous school improvement. ISAAC has engaged in a process of meeting the standards intended to promote an effective learning community with the capacity to meet the needs of all students through continuous reflection and growth. A steering committee made up of representatives from administration and faculty elicits input from all stakeholders in order to present a self-study that encompasses all opinions. Presently, ISAAC proudly demonstrates evidence that supports all of the foundational elements within each of the standards for accreditation. As evidence of this dedication to accreditation, ISAAC successfully developed a written document describing our Core Values and Beliefs about Learning, and the Vision of the Graduate. The school also engaged in professional development opportunities that allowed for the development of a written curriculum in a consistent format that is vertically

aligned within each department for all courses. This curriculum is available on the ISAAC website. Furthermore, the SRBI team and Advisory Program have been created and put in place to support all learners with the instructional strategies and interventions needed to ensure that all students can succeed at ISAAC.

Principle 3.2 Educators engage in ongoing reflection, formal and informal collaboration, and professional development to improve student learning and well-being.

The Interdistrict School for Art and Communication (ISAAC) is in the transforming phase of engaging teachers in continuous reflection, team collaboration and providing opportunities for professional development.

For the 2021-22 school year, ISAAC created regular, structured, collaborative opportunities for teachers to meet weekly in a content-specific Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and Interdisciplinary Professional Learning Communities (IPLCs). With a focus on curriculum, instruction, and assessment, teachers utilize this time to discuss overall student achievement based on assessment data. These discussions are held in collaboration with the Director of Instruction, Programming, and Athletics and lead to changes in the curriculum, development of varied assessments, and to improve instructional strategies to maximize student achievement.

This year, ISAAC has had a major focus on common formative assessments to help guide discussion on student achievement. One of the initiatives that ISAAC has developed and is currently implementing is the use of school-wide rubrics in the areas identified through ISAAC's Vision of the Graduate. During PLC time, teachers meet with other constituents from the school (Director of Instruction, Programming, and Athletics and SRBI interventionists) to assess SBAC



data, Interim Assessment Block (IAB) data, Performance Tasks and other data to review assessment practices and plan for appropriate curriculum revisions.

Each month, teachers receive a PLC/ IPLC agenda with important weekly discussion topics and deadline information. Prior to selected PLC meetings, teachers are asked to bring authentic student work from daily instruction. Each PLC's collaborative discussion helps teachers adjust instruction as necessary and make appropriate curriculum revisions as needed by completing the PLC Curriculum Cover Sheet and submitting it to administration. In addition to instruction revision and data assessment, PLC meetings also hold important discussions about how to guide teacher-led Accountable Talk, to help push students for deeper understanding and build higher level thinking skills. Once per PLC cycle, teachers go on Learning Walks, as a content group visiting two classrooms to observe, take notes, and discuss Accountable Talk stems used by students to further academic discourse. During the March 11th professional development, teachers participated in an Academically Productive Talk activity. The activity challenged teachers to complete a skit using Academically Productive Talk while utilizing Accountable Talk stems amongst their peers. We are confident that through these practices we will continue to implement rigorous, authentic unit tasks that allow students to utilize the skills and knowledge gained in the classroom and beyond.

IPLC planning times are utilized to review and assess SRBI data as well as social-emotional student concerns. Each week, the SRBI Team asks each core grade level team to provide updates regarding specific students on the SRBI list. Teachers complete and submit the SRBI Student Update Form for each student listed collectively as a team. The SRBI team uses this input to determine whether or not intervention strategies are successful or if a higher level of intervention is needed based on student performance once interventions have begun.

For the 2021-22 school year, the Bilingual department adopted collaborative strategies to monitor the academic progress of English Language (EL). Teachers can provide EL student feedback and notify certified EL and bilingual staff of specific areas of support by filling out the EL Feedback form. In collaboration with ISAAC's administrative staff, the bilingual department also created an individualized EL Plan for each language learner. This plan includes language proficiency scores as well as strategies for intervention. Engaging in ongoing reflection to improve student learning, the bilingual department constantly monitors EL progress. For example, LAS Links Practice Test Data is collected in order to revise and improve language proficiency instruction.

ISAAC is committed to extensive professional development opportunities in the areas of PLCs, curriculum and assessment development, SRBI, special education, EL differentiation strategies, social emotional learning, and cultural biases. The following is a snapshot of two professional development days that were held at ISAAC during the 2021-2022 school year:

August 20th: ISAAC's certified social workers provided all staff with an insightful presentation on the foundations of social-emotional learning entitled Teaching the SEL Way. The information provided during this professional development is vital to meeting ISAAC's core values and beliefs in creating safe, engaging, culturally responsive, and personalized learning experiences for students and adults.

March 11th: Director of Instruction, Programming, & Athletics presented ISAAC By the Numbers to all staff. Teachers took time to review, analyze and discuss SBAC data in efforts to collectively develop action steps. The discussion outcome was then shared with the SRBI team

for further consideration. Furthermore, teachers also got an opportunity to work collaboratively to practice and reflect on Accountable Talk moves. Additionally, during the March 11th staff meeting, the Director of Student Services presented Awareness of the Struggling Readers, a scientific research based approach on decoding, language comprehension and executive functioning disabilities to all ISAAC staff. The Principal and the Associate Principal also provided all staff members with professional development opportunities centered on Culturally Responsive Teaching and Unconscious Bias-Increased Awareness. An extension of this topic was added to the agenda for March 11th's professional development, with the inclusion of two guest speakers from the Anti-Defamation League.

Teachers at ISAAC have also been presented with ample opportunities for professional development in the areas of special populations. For the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school year, the Bilingual Department presented workshops to teachers in language acquisition theories, strategies and interventions. EL/ML Strategies and Interventions, was presented to all staff during the August 2021-2022 professional development.

Principle 3.3 Educators examine evidence of student learning and well-being to improve curriculum, instruction, assessment practices, and programs and services.

ISAAC is currently in the implementing phase of providing teachers with opportunities to examine student work, monitor student learning and social-emotional well-being.

Teachers examine evidence of student learning during weekly PLC and IPLC meetings. Prior to each PLC meeting, teachers are asked to bring authentic student work from daily instruction to discuss necessary curriculum alignment or revision. Changes in curriculum are documented by

filling out the PLC Curriculum Cover Sheet. PLC meetings are also the focus of examining students' progress towards the Vision of the Graduate. Teachers have the opportunity to analyze unit task performance by scoring students with ISAAC's School-wide Rubrics. For example, every month, and as scheduled on the April PLC Schedule by the Director of Instruction & Programming, teachers implement Stanford Calibration practices to ensure authentic scoring practices.

Social emotional well-being is monitored at ISAAC daily as students fill out the ISAAC Daily Survey upon arrival. Any student who reports signs of sickness or social emotional distress is immediately referred to the appropriate certified staff. Students have access to the ISAAC Daily Survey throughout the day in case they need to report any emotional changes and or to speak to any of the two certified social workers.

Educators examine evidence of student learning and student data to make revisions to assessments and improve curriculum. Teachers use specific SBAC data linked to their SLOs to help drive instruction and increase student achievement. During the March 11 professional development, ISAAC by the Numbers was presented to all staff in order to examine student learning, areas of improvement and to create actionable steps to increase achievement. The SRBI team also reviews student data weekly using PowerSchool's Quick Look Up feature to monitor student attendance and academics. In addition, prior to the beginning of the school year, the SRBI team meets to review student data from sending schools. For example, the SRBI Incoming 6th Grade File Review is used to examine new student data.

Schoolwide progress on assessments is analyzed as teachers administer unit summative assessments and also the state's Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs). For example, teachers use IAB data to identify student's strengths and weaknesses. Data is also analyzed based on students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and EL status to monitor growth and adjust programming to meet students needs.

ISAAC's bilingual department also examines evidence of student learning by collecting data in order to improve teaching practices and prepare for the state mandated language proficiency assessment (LAS Links). For example, in the school year 2021-22, EL students completed two language proficiency language tests in preparation for the main assessment.

Moreover, two staff positions were added to ISAAC to improve student services. Identifying the need for literacy support, ISAAC hired a Director of Student Supports to oversee the implementation of an intensive reading program, the Wilson Reading System. A full time School Nursing Assistant was also hired to support health services. In order to move from the implementing phase to the transforming phase, ISAAC should focus on explicit examination and analysis of student work samples from students at all levels to inform the next steps in instruction and guide curriculum revisions.

Standard 3.4. Collaborative structures and processes support coordination and implementation of curriculum.

ISAAC is in the transforming phase of providing collaborative structures and processes that support the coordination and implementation of curricula within and across disciplines. ISAAC supports collaboration between educators by providing the following opportunities:

Collaboration during common Professional Learning Community (PLC) time and Interdisciplinary Learning Community (IPLC) time, utilization of common rubrics to measure growth of students against ISAAC's Vision of the Graduate and use Stanford Calibration Method, and Collaboration with Connecticut State Department of Education.

Teachers at ISAAC use regularly scheduled PLC and IPLC meetings to ensure effective curricular alignment within and among each academic area as well as vertical articulation within the school. Every week, each teacher participates in one 75-minute subject-area PLC and one 75-minute grade-level IPLC. A PLC/IPLC schedule is created in advance and distributed to teachers by the Director of Instruction, Programming, and Athletics. During these 75 minutes, teachers work together with the Director of Instruction, Programming, and Athletics to analyze curriculum, instruction, and assessment data.

During subject-area PLC meetings, teachers complete and discuss two learning walks, as seen in the PLC/IPLC schedule, to observe their peers as well as share assessment data and reflect on the vertical alignment of the curriculum to support improved outcomes. Teachers complete a learning walk form to record observations. Teachers are also expected to participate in Stanford Calibration Method exercises within their PLCs. Stanford Calibration Method is designed to ensure teachers across grade levels have similar expectations when evaluating skills all students are expected to learn in a particular subject area. All teachers participate in a Stanford Calibration professional development activity during the fall.

During weekly IPLCs, teachers in each grade level share the outcomes of their PLC learning walk discussions, share the topic of their current unit, and discuss strategies to improve grade-level outcomes on the state standardized assessment. As a team, teachers also discuss struggles, strategies, and successes with Tier II and III SRBI students and EL students. This is also an

opportunity for teachers to align their instruction of skills across subject areas. For example, ELA and social studies teachers share close-reading strategies, argumentative writing strategies, and classroom discussion strategies. As a result, students encounter the same methods, expectations, and structures when reading, writing, and participating in academic discussions in both classes.

The Director of Instruction, Programming, and Athletics uses IPLC time to support teacher development of a specific skill deemed necessary based on informal classroom observations. The Director of Instruction, Programming, and Athletics sends out a reading for teachers to complete prior to the IPLC. During the IPLC, teachers will participate in a discussion reflecting on the reading and share ideas on how to incorporate these new or different strategies into the classroom and the curriculum.

The PLC and IPLC meetings also give teachers common time for the creation and revision of the curriculum, as seen in the PLC/IPLC schedule for March & April 2022. This common time allows teachers to have organic conversations that focus on effective curricular within, and among, each academic area to align their taught and learned curriculum with the written curriculum. Beyond PLC and IPLC time, teachers also have common planning time for 75 minutes every-other-day to meet within their content-area departments or to hold grade-level meetings. Teachers use this time to collaborate when planning day-to-day instruction.

Teachers are also responsible for creating a monthly calendar that aligns with the written curriculum. These calendars are discussed and revised, as needed, during PLC and IPLC

meetings. On the first of every month, teachers submit a monthly calendar to the Principal and Associate Principal. The monthly calendar, by day, includes the following:

The creation of unit plans allows teachers to plan in advance for interdisciplinary learning opportunities as well as appropriately pace vertical alignment of subject-specific skills. The administrative team uses these unit plans to ensure clear alignment between the written, taught, and learned curriculum, as well as to identify exemplary instruction that might provide opportunities for peer observation.

During the 2021-22 school year, teachers at ISAAC piloted the use of school-wide rubrics. Teachers use the same five rubrics to measure student growth against ISAAC's Vision of the Graduate. This ensures curricular coordination within and among each academic area, department, and program in the school. The five rubrics are:

Responsibility: measures a student's ability to be a responsive, creative, and empathetic member of the community;

Accountable Talk: measures a student's ability to speak to diverse audiences in a respectful and cogent manner using evidence;

Literacy: a student's ability to write effectively for different purposes;

Problem Solving: measures a student's ability to analyze and solve problems both on their own and collaboratively;

Teamwork: measures a student's ability to interact with others and make contributions while working as a team.



Every teacher is responsible for ensuring student growth as measured by at least one of the five rubrics, as seen in this sample of a Student Learning Outcome (SLO) form. Moreover, teachers in each subject area are responsible for ensuring student growth in the same rubric(s). As a result, all subject area teachers build a curriculum that scaffolds instruction of the same skill.

Teachers are also given instruction in, and periodically participate in, Stanford Calibration Method to ensure that teachers within and among each academic area, department, and program are evaluating students with the rubrics in the same way. At the beginning of each school year, all teachers receive training with the Stanford Calibration Method, which is led by ISAAC's Executive Director. During this professional development, teachers practice evaluating student work samples against one of the five common rubrics and then share and discuss their results. This training provides all teachers with the knowledge and practice to evaluate student work objectively regardless of subject or grade level.

Finally, teachers collaborate with the Connecticut State Department of Education (SDE) in order to support the coordination and implementation of curricula within English Language Arts and Mathematics. ISAAC is an interdistrict charter school with twelve different sending schools, making aligning our curriculum with the sending districts challenging. Therefore, ISAAC administrators and SRBI team meet three times a year with SDE Educational Consultants regarding English Language Arts and mathematics curriculum and instruction. During these meetings, the Executive Director; Principal; Associate Principal; Director of Instruction, Programming, and Athletics; Director of Student Supports; and the SRBI Coordinator, along with the SDE educational consultants, review student data collected from the Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) and discuss strategic and targeted instructional practices that increase student outcomes.

As a result of these ongoing meetings, the Director of Instruction, Programming, and Athletics, along with the SRBI Coordinator meet with the ELA and math PLCs to share the recommendations from the SDE consultants. As a result, ISAAC's ELA and math curricula are not only aligned between grade levels, but also with the state's ELA and math standards.

Standard 3.5 School-wide organizational practices are designed to meet the learning needs of each student.

ISAAC is in the implementing phase of establishing school-wide organizational practices designed to meet the learning needs of each student. ISAAC meets the learning needs of every student with several organizational practices: implementing a thorough SRBI process, providing special education and bilingual supports, scheduling small heterogeneous classes, offering advanced classes, providing "Dragon Time" at the end of the school day, and allowing students to choose their own challenging arts electives in ISAAC's Unified Arts program.

ISAAC's SRBI process, as outlined in the SRBI Guidebook and Roadmap, allows teachers to provide individualized and specialized instruction both in and out of the classroom. In response to the pandemic and as part of Tier I instruction, all 6th and 7th grade students are enrolled in SRBI math and ELA classes, as shown in a sample teacher schedule, that supplement their regular math and ELA classes. Teachers identify students who are struggling with behavior and/or class work and reach out to their parents/guardians to discuss their concerns. During the IPLC meeting, grade-level teachers share their concerns regarding student behavior and academic progress. Teachers are additionally required to contact parents/guardians as part of the Tier I intervention process. This communication is an opportunity to collaborate with parents on

different strategies to improve student performance. If students continue to struggle despite Tier I interventions, the student is referred to the SRBI team. The SRBI team meets to discuss additional strategies to implement, including a focused study hall and a pull-out SRBI seminar with the SRBI teachers. If the student needs more intensive support, then the SRBI team will develop a Student Improvement Plan (SIP), which identifies student goals, targeted interventions, and progress monitoring measures. The SIP may include the focused study hall and SRBI seminar among other strategies. The use of small-group instruction allows SRBI teachers the opportunity to focus on individual student needs. If these Tier III interventions are not effective, then students will be referred for an evaluation for specialized instruction.

Extensive special education and bilingual supports for students also allow teachers to meet the individual learning needs of all students at ISAAC. Most students with an IEP are enrolled in a resource class which meets every other day with a certified special education teacher to provide students with specialized instruction based on their learning profile. Additionally, these students are supported in co-taught math and/or ELA classes where a special education teacher and a general education teacher follow the co-taught model. Special education teachers complete annual progress monitoring to ensure that student supports are targeted to meet individual student needs.

Identified EI students are enrolled in a language academy class where they receive small-group support from the TESOL/Bilingual Teacher and Bilingual Educational assistants to complete classwork, finish testing, or revisit difficult concepts. Bilingual Educational assistants also provide push-in support in all classes with demonstrated need. These supports are outlined in the Bilingual Program Guide. Bilingual teachers complete annual progress monitoring to ensure that student supports are targeted to meet individual student needs.

Classes at ISAAC are deliberately designed to be small, heterogeneous, and supportive of students with special needs. In the 2021-22 school year, the schedule was redesigned to increase the number of classes taught from five blocks to six, as can be seen in a sample core teacher schedule. Maximum student class size has decreased 25% from 25 students per class to 19 or fewer. These classes are populated with learners that reflect the diversity of the student body and provide opportunities for students to learn with and from students who are different from them. The administrative team at ISAAC uses student demographic data in order to manually populate each class with an ideal diversity of learners. Except for advanced math classes, every class contains a diversity of students based on ability and demographic data. Smaller class sizes allow teachers more opportunities to accommodate individual student needs.

Students who demonstrate advanced understanding and ability in math are given access to challenging academic experiences in an advanced math course. Advanced seventh-grade students have the opportunity to learn pre-algebra, and advanced eighth-grade students have the opportunity to learn algebra. Beginning in the 2022-23 school year, ISAAC plans to offer advanced humanities and science classes in order to challenge students identified as gifted and talented. ISAAC will also create a program to identify and recommend students for these new advanced courses.

Dragon Time is an organizational practice that allows students access to challenging academic experiences and provides a learning environment that gives students the opportunity to learn with and from students who are different from them. Dragon Time occurs during the final 45 minutes of the school day on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, as seen on the sample student schedule. Students are assigned to a Dragon Time cohort and teacher for all three years at ISAAC. Students who need it can receive extra support from their classroom teachers during this

time, ensuring an inclusive learning environment. Additionally, students have the opportunity to work together and mentor each other in class work they find challenging. On Tuesdays and Fridays, students have Advisory instead of Dragon Time. Students receive explicit instruction in social-emotional issues as well as study and organizational skills. These advisory lessons give students the skills they need to tackle more challenging academic experiences in their core and elective classes.

Finally, students have the chance to choose one or two arts electives in the Unified Arts program that includes a diverse, heterogeneous mix of students who can find new challenges based on their individual interests in the arts. Sixth grade students are automatically placed into general art and general music. Seventh grade students are automatically placed into digital media arts, and may additionally choose from dance, theater, concert band, music technology, jazz band, and chorus. Eighth grade students have the same options as seventh grade students, with the addition of being able to choose advanced art. Eighth grade students may also opt-in to dance in lieu of physical education.

Additionally, students are further challenged to publicly demonstrate their artistic talents. Teachers and staff are often invited to view in-class performances. Students in concert band, jazz band, and chorus have two performances a year: a spring concert and a winter concert. Likewise, students in theater and dance participate in a Winter and Theater Dance performance that includes student-designed choreography and comedy/drama scenes. In the 2021-22 school year, theater students put on a spring musical performance for ISAAC staff, families, and community members. In subsequent years, musical productions will occur in an after-school venue. Students are responsible for the performances as well as set design and backstage operations. In the final performance of the year, music, dance, and theater classes all participate in All Arts Night.

During this evening, students will share the different musical, theater, and dance pieces they worked on in class during the year. Finally, in the summer of 2022, ISAAC will have its first ever musical theater enrichment program for interested rising 7th and 8th grade students.

Once ISAAC has finished developing its gifted and talented curriculum and identification process, the school will be able to change its status from implementing to transforming. ISAAC already has robust programs to provide individualized Tier II and Tier III support to special education and multilingual learners. The thorough SRBI process allows teachers to monitor and adjust various tiered supports that best fit individual student needs. Study Hall and Dragon Time allow teachers time to provide targeted Tier II instruction for all students. The Unified Arts program offers challenging arts programs for students to explore their individual interests. The addition of a gifted and talented program will finally allow teachers at ISAAC to go above and beyond in support of all enrolled students.

Standard 3.6 Educators develop productive student, family, community, business, and higher education partnerships that support learning.

ISAAC is in the implementing phase of developing productive student, family, community, businesses, and higher education partnerships that support learning. Educators have established practices and built relationships that deliberately invite students, parents, the community, and businesses to enrich student learning at ISAAC.

During ISAAC's Advisory block every Tuesday and Friday afternoon, advisory teachers work with students to develop partnerships that support learning. At the start of the school year,

students learn about setting SMART goals and set a goal for themselves. At the middle of the year, students will check-in on their goals to self-assess what they've accomplished so far and what their next steps need to be. Additionally, in Advisory, teachers work with students to help them self-assess their ability to be a responsible, creative, and empathetic member of the school community using the responsibility rubric. At the end of every quarter, students participate in a responsibility advisory lesson where teachers walk them through a self-reflection and self-assessment activity. Students are encouraged to reflect on past assessments and challenged to improve.

Educators at ISAAC collaborate with parent/guardians to create productive relationships that support learning through regular contact and newsletters. Teachers are encouraged to reach out to parents/guardians for both student successes and struggles, as well as updates on their grades and changes in behavior. Advisory/Dragon Time teachers are also responsible for making phone calls to families at least once a quarter and record their calls in a phone log to update student families about their student's progress. Advisory/Dragon Time teachers remain with the same cohort for all three years. This method allows for teachers to develop meaningful relationships with their students and their families. Additionally, during the 2021-22 school year, ISAAC staff, students, and families were invited to attend a Community Day to support the spring musical production. During this Community Day, families and their students worked alongside staff to make props and costumes to be used in the show.

Families also receive two newsletters that connect them to the ISAAC community. The Principal is responsible for creating and distributing a weekly school-wide newsletter titled Marty's Hot News. The newsletter is available in both English and Spanish. Families can find information

about the accomplishments of ISAAC's students, upcoming school and community events, and more information to help families better understand their student's education and the ISAAC community. Families with students in the Bilingual Program also receive a Bilingual Newsletter. The ISAAC website also provides updates on school life, opportunities for extracurricular activities, daily schedules, school cafeteria menus, and a calendar of upcoming sporting events and art performances under the Dragon Life tab. Moreover, phone calls are made and emails are sent to families to alert them of school closings, delays, and COVID updates. All communications are made in both English and Spanish in order to reach every parent/guardian in the ISAAC community.

Educators partner with a variety of community members to support authentic learning opportunities. For example, students benefit from engaging, authentic experiences in science thanks to several community partnerships, including:

Project Oceanology (Project O),

The Mystic Aquarium, and

The Dennison Pequotsepos Nature Center.

Project O has provided students with a variety of authentic experiences around marine science. During the 2021-22 school year, educators with Project O have led 7th-grade students through a squid dissection to supplement an organ systems unit; given them hands-on experience with different flora and fauna to supplement an evolutionary biology unit; and taken students out on their boats to explore marine species and graph the salinity, pH, and temperature of Long Island Sound to supplement an ecosystems unit. Project O also partners with ISAAC to teach students about the environment and ways to preserve it in ISAAC's after school Environmental Club.



The Mystic Aquarium has given 6th-grade students a similarly enriching experience. Students attended a field trip to the Mystic Aquarium after finishing a unit on the water cycle. They had the opportunity to learn about, and interact with, a variety of different marine organisms. The Mystic Aquarium also sends educators to ISAAC to provide in-class experiences. During the 2021-22 school year, aquarium educators brought in snakes and frogs for students to observe. Students learned about their characteristics, their impacts on the environment, and the impacts of global warming on their habitats.

ISAAC's theater and musical theater students benefit from two valuable community partnerships. Theater students participate in a playwriting workshop in collaboration with the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center. With mentorship from the Education Director at the Eugene O'Neill, students wrote a one-act play. During the 2021-22 school year, seven students submitted their play to the Young Playwrights Festival, a national playwriting contest. The previous year, one ISAAC student was given the honorable mention award of Guest Playwright. Additionally, ISAAC musical theater students participate in the Arts Education Collaboration with the Goodspeed Opera House. Students have the opportunity to watch a professional show performed at the Goodspeed and participate in musical theater workshops with the actors who were in the show.

The Director of Student Supports at ISAAC is also partnering with the Friendship School, a pre-kindergarten and kindergarten magnet school based in Waterford, Connecticut, and the New London Public Library (NLPL), to pilot Marty's HOT Readers. Selected ISAAC students will be appointed as "project leaders" who will choose one book from NLPL every month and record themselves reading it out loud. Project leaders will be responsible for choosing interesting books

and reading with expression. The recordings will be shared with kindergarten students at the Friendship School. The purpose of this literacy program is two-fold: first, prompt community and civic leadership in selected ISAAC students, and second, support young children in the early development of their literacy skills.

Starting in the 2022-23 school year, ISAAC is also beginning a relationship with two non-profit organizations: Public Art for Racial Justice Education (PARJE) and the Anti-Defamation League's No Place for Hate initiative. PARJE is an Eastern Connecticut-based organization that works to create public art in order to raise public awareness of social justice issues. Students at ISAAC will participate in their Sister Mural Project where they will collaborate on the creation of a mural to be displayed publicly in downtown New London. The No Place for Hate initiative partners with schools to provide students with the tools they need to fight bullying and bias in their school.

During the 2021-22 school year, ISAAC was the recipient of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant (21 CCLC). The money from the grant is being used to offer meaningful afterschool programs, such as: Environmental Club, Gaming Club, Leadership Club, Culinary Club, and MathCounts Club. The grant is also supporting ISAAC's athletic programs. Currently, ISAAC is offering the following sports: girls volleyball, co-ed fencing, girls and boys basketball, and co-ed cross country. The money is also being used to provide certain after school students with a family-sized, take-home meal once every two weeks. Student families were involved in the creation of the after school program through a parent/guardian survey. Parents/guardians were asked about the types of programming they would like to see made available at ISAAC as well as whether they would benefit from receiving take-home family-sized meals every other Friday.

Mitchell College in New London, Connecticut is also partnering with ISAAC to enrich student learning in two different ways. During the 2021-22 school year, freshmen majoring in education at Mitchell College in New London participated in a learning walk with their professor – who is also an ISAAC Board of Directors member – and conducted a program review of ISAAC alongside ISAAC’s administrative team. The learning walk focused on academically productive talk and accountable talk, classroom environments, and the workshop model. Their observations, reflections, and follow-up questions were shared with ISAAC staff with the intent of helping teachers reflect on and improve their own practices in the classroom. ISAAC’s athletic department has developed a partnership with Mitchell College to use their gym facilities for basketball games.

Finally, during the 2021-22 school year, ISAAC’s after school programs are partnering with two additional businesses. ISAAC’s Leadership Club worked with New London’s Homeless Hospitality Center to run a hygiene drive. Students competed to collect hundreds of hygiene products that were ultimately donated to the Hospitality Center. The after school MathCounts club is partnered with the national MATHCOUNTS organization. In MATHCOUNTS club, students work with the 6th and 7th grade math teachers to tackle challenging math problems and participate in national math competitions.

One important area that keeps us from grading ourselves as transforming for this standard is the systemization of additional student partnerships with teachers in a formal process that tracks academic progress over all three years. One of ISAAC’s goals is to develop a process for students to create a portfolio of their work that demonstrates their progress, using the standardized school-wide rubrics to measure their growth. In lieu of a traditional parent-teacher

conference in the spring of eighth grade, students will share their progress with their families using the graded rubrics in their portfolio as evidence of growth. The portfolio process will encourage students to take ownership of their learning and make them partners with their families and teachers in their education.



## **2022 SELF-STUDY REPORT STANDARD 4: LEARNING SUPPORT**

Learning Support ensures that the school has appropriate systems to support student learning and well-being. The school has timely, directed, and coordinated interventions for all students. The school provides targeted supports to meet each student's individual needs, including counseling services, health services, library/information services, and other appropriate support services to assist each student in meeting the school's vision of the graduate.

Standard 4 –Descriptors of Effective Practice	Rating
<b>4.1 All students receive appropriate intervention strategies to support their academic, social, and emotional success.</b> <b>4.1a Foundational Element - The school has intervention strategies designed to support students</b>	<b>Transforming</b>
<b>4.2 All students receive counseling services that meet their personal, social, emotional, academic, career, and college counseling needs from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.</b>	<b>Implementing</b>
<b>4.3 All students receive health services that ensure their physical and emotional well-being from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.</b>	<b>Implementing</b>
<b>4.4 All students receive library/information services that support their learning from adequate, certified/licensed personnel.</b>	<b>No Vote</b>
<b>4.5 Identified English Language Learners and students with special needs and 504 plans receive appropriate programs and services that support their learning from adequate, certified/licensed personnel</b>	<b>Implementing</b>

provides targeted support to meet each students' individual needs, including counseling services, health services, library/information services, and other appropriate support services to assist each student in meeting the school's vision of the graduate.

The Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication (ISAAC) is in the transforming phase of Standard 4.1. ISAAC has developed new procedures and supports that are timely, directed and coordinated interventions for all students. Upon the new Executive Director's arrival in January 2020, a Scientific Research Based Intervention (SRBI) process and procedures were established at ISAAC. This process is outlined in the ISAAC SRBI Guidebook and shared on our school website. The SRBI team consists of the Executive Director; Principal; Associate Principal; Director of Instruction, Programming, and Athletics; the Director of Student Supports; two full-time Social Workers; a Math Interventionist; and the SRBI Coordinator/Literacy Interventionist. The purpose of this team is to monitor the academic and social needs of all students including English Learners, special education and 504 students. Prior to the start of each school year, the SRBI process is presented and reviewed by the entire staff during Professional Development days. The ISAAC SRBI Guidebook includes the SRBI Roadmap to guide teachers and support staff to ensure the process and timely implementation of tiered interventions. Throughout the school year, grade level team teachers meet in collaboration with the school Social Workers and/or SRBI Coordinator to monitor student progress and discuss instructional strategies and effective, targeted interventions for their students based on academics, behavior, and attendance. In order to collect appropriate academic and behavior data, teachers submit a weekly SRBI Student Update Form for review by the SRBI team at their weekly meetings.

The SRBI Team meets every other day for an hour to identify students who need more support beyond Tier I core instruction. The purpose of the ISAAC SRBI Team is to monitor attendance, academics, behavior, and the social emotional well-being of the students. When a student has been identified for additional support, a staffing is held with all the student's

teachers to collect effective instructional strategies and formative and summative data. If Tier I instructional strategies have been exhausted, the SRBI Team, in collaboration with the teachers, creates a Student Improvement Plan (SIP). The SIP identifies student goals, targeted interventions and progress monitoring measures. As part of our SRBI process, the Associate Principal reports out on attendance at the beginning of each SRBI meeting. Students who are accumulating excessive absences will receive phone calls and the First Attendance Letter followed by additional letters if necessary. In cases of severe attendance concerns, a team consisting of an administrator and social worker will conduct a home visit. Academic supports and interventions available for students include assigned study hall table, schedule change, Dragon Time with a specific teacher scheduled through the PowerSchool Adaptive Scheduler, and/or specific Tier III support as needed. The PowerSchool Adaptive Scheduler is a feature in PowerSchool which allows teachers to request specific students for extra support or instruction. Dragon Time meets three times a week in addition to a scheduled study hall for students. Included here is a sample student schedule with the embedded supports of Dragon Time and study hall. The SRBI Mathematics and Literacy Interventionists can also schedule students for Tier II and Tier III interventions at these times. These interventions are documented in the SIP and it is shared with the student's teachers and parents. The SIPs for students are reviewed every six to eight weeks and progress monitoring data is reviewed to determine the need for continued or increased support. In addition, this year all sixth and seventh graders have an SRBI English Language Arts and Mathematics class. Included is the Mathematics and ELA Interventionist schedule. The SRBI Team coordinates appropriate intervention strategies to support the academic and social and emotional success of all students to meet the school's Vision of the Graduate.

For the 2020-2021 school year, ISAAC created a Bilingual Department to support the academic, social and emotional needs of our English Learner population. At the beginning of the school year, parents completed a Home Language Survey to assess their language needs prior to the start of the school year. In the 2021-2022 school year, ISAAC added a full-time TESOL/Bilingual Teacher and a Spanish Communications Specialist. The purpose of these positions is to strengthen the home to school relationship through communication. Each month the Spanish Communication Specialist sends the Bilingual Learner Newsletter to all EL student families. The school provides many opportunities to communicate with families, especially those most in need. For example, the Bilingual department hosted a Bilingual Parent Night for EL student families in November to share program goals, LAS Links scores and help parents access PowerSchool. In November 2021, Attorney Steven Hernandez presented on the Special Education Laws and Rights to the ISAAC parents and community in Spanish and English. Both of these resources are available on the ISAAC website. In addition, all communications home to families from the Executive Director and Principal are communicated in both English and Spanish.

#### Standard 4.2

All students receive counseling services that meet their personal, social, emotional, academic, career, and college counseling needs from adequate, certified/licensed personnel. ISAAC is in the implementing phase for ensuring that all students receive counseling services that meet their personal, social, emotional, academic, career, and high school counseling needs from certified/licensed personnel. ISAAC meets the social and emotional



needs of students through the implementation of Advisory and social emotional learning (SEL). Starting in 2021, ISAAC added the positions of Advisory Project Leaders to take the lead in developing advisory lessons and professional development. Both Social Workers serve as the Advisory Project Leaders and use the CASEL SEL Framework to drive the creation of the advisory lessons. In addition to the Advisory model, two full-time certified School Social Workers deliver effective services to our student population through individual counseling, small groups, and overseeing the advisory lessons. In the summer of 2020, the two school Social Workers wrote and implemented the current SEL curriculum to support the return to in person learning. In the Spring of 2021, the Social Workers surveyed teachers and students for feedback on the advisory lessons and revised the curriculum based on their feedback for the 2021-2022 school year. This is a continuous process of feedback and revision that will happen each spring to address the ongoing needs of students.

ISAAC meets the needs of all students through small group collaborative advisory. Students stay with the same advisory teacher for all three years at ISAAC, allowing for a close relationship to form between students and teacher. Advisory groups meet every afternoon to support the academic and social emotional needs of students. Three days a week are designated as Dragon Time and two days of Advisory to focus on SEL lessons. All teachers follow the ISAAC 2021-2022 Advisory Lesson Calendar which includes a variety of SEL topics such as growth mindset, grit, self-care, and social media awareness. Advisory lessons also include mandated topics of teen dating violence, substance abuse and suicide prevention. Prior to the start of the 2021-2022 school year, teachers participated in an Advisory Professional Development overview and training presented by the two Social Workers. In addition, 8th grade students received high school guidance and advisory lessons to prepare

them to make educated high school choices. Eighth grade students participated in advisory lessons to explore different high school options and guided them through the application process. Parents and students attended a High School Fair Night on November 18, 2021 that included all the area choice high schools. Every quarter, students set an academic and social smart goal. The advisory teacher provides guidance and assists students in creating action steps for achieving these goals. At the end of the quarter, students reflect on their progress utilizing the Schoolwide Responsibility Rubric.

In addition to the advisory lessons, the Social Workers collaborate with all stakeholders to ensure the emotional well being of ISAAC students. Since the return of students following the pandemic, ISAAC monitors the physical and emotional well-being of students by having them complete the Daily Student Survey upon their arrival to school. This wellness survey allows the student to request a meeting with a school Social Worker and/or report health symptoms to the school nurse. It is another way for the nurse and Social Workers to monitor and support students. The two full-time certified Social Workers provide counseling services to individual students and small group counseling sessions all outlined in the Social Worker Job Description. They provide in-class support and small group meetings with students documented in their counseling spreadsheet. They inform parents of various social emotional supports available at ISAAC and within the community. For example, parents may also choose to enroll their child in the School Based Health Center (SBHC) at ISAAC. The School Based Health Center, located within the school, provides both physical and behavioral health through Community Health Center, Inc. They currently provide counseling services to a full caseload of ten students. These licensed providers work in collaboration with the nurses and Social Workers.

ISAAC also has an Emergency Crisis Team that promptly responds when a crisis arises to ensure the safety of all students. The Emergency Crisis Team consists of the Executive Director; Principal; Associate Principal; Director of Instruction, Programming, and Athletics; the Director of Student Supports; two School Social Workers; Director of Safety; and the School Safety Officer. School administration and social workers collaborate with area community and mental health agencies such as the New London Police Department, Department of Children and Families (DCF), outside private practitioners, 211, Lawrence Memorial Hospital, Joshua Center, and Yale New Haven Hospital. The Principal is also the school's Homeless Liaison and implements support through the McKinney-Vento Act to ensure that homeless children have the right to attend school and receive necessary supplies and transportation.

#### Standard 4.3

All students receive health services that ensure physical and emotional well-being from adequate certified/licensed personnel.

ISAAC is currently in the implementing phase of Standard 4.3. All students receive health services that ensure the physical and emotional well-being from certified/licensed personnel. The nurse's office is staffed each school day from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. with a full-time certified nurse and a nursing assistant. The nurse provides health services for ill students, preventative screenings such as scoliosis screening, and maintains health and immunization records for all students. The school nurse serves on the Safe Reopening Committee providing valuable guidance to ensure the proper implementation of mitigation strategies, contact tracing, and health protocols for the safety of our students. At the beginning of each school year, the school nurse provides health trainings to all staff during professional development. The nurse

creates, maintains, and shares health plans and allergy lists with necessary personnel at the beginning of the school year and throughout the year as needed. ISAAC staff also have the opportunity to complete a certified CPR and First Aid course at the beginning of each school year.

In addition, ISAAC parents may enroll their child in the School Based Health Center (SBHC) provided through Community Health Center, Inc. Parents may enroll their child in SBHC during the school application process. The School Based Health Center works closely with our school nurse and/or the school Social Workers who are the initial point of contact.

Throughout the year, students may be referred by the SRBI Team or Social Workers. SBHC is located in the building and is present for three days a week. The SBHC provides on-site health services such as physicals, illness or injury visits, and behavioral health by providing counseling services. Currently, ISAAC also continues to hold monthly vaccination clinics open to all ISAAC students, families, and the greater community.

#### Standard 4.4

All students receive library/information services that support their learning from adequate, certified/licensed personnel. Based on the student enrollment at ISAAC, NEASC does not require small schools to have a designated library and/or certified library media specialists. At this time, information and research is integrated into the curriculum. ISAAC students have access to their local library.

#### Standard 4.5

Identified English Language Learners and students with special needs and 504 plans receive appropriate programs and services that support their learning from adequate certified/licensed personnel.

ISAAC is in the implementing phase for Standard 4.5. English Language Learners and students with special needs and 504 plans receive appropriate programs and services. Prior to the 2021-2022 school year, English learner (EL) students were serviced by one certified TESOL teacher managing a caseload of approximately 50 students. In the 2020-2021 school year, ISAAC created a Bilingual Program outlined in the Bilingual Handbook to meet the learning needs of EL students. The new ISAAC Bilingual Program is designed so that each English learner can achieve a high level of English language proficiency.

The purpose of the Bilingual Program is to:

develop English proficiency as outlined by the CT English Language Proficiency Standards (CELP); make grade level academic content accessible to all English learners (ELs);

utilize the academic, linguistic, and cultural background as the bridge for acquiring learning across all grade level content areas in the home language and in English; and

align the Bilingual Program to the foundational Core Values and Beliefs of all students at ISAAC.

Each tier of support is based on the review of Language Assessment Scale (LAS) Links data and formative assessments of a student's English language proficiency, as well as the student's academic progress. Language assessments will be available in Spanish and English to identify students' strengths and areas of improvement in English language development. In the 2021-2022 school year, ISAAC has added a certified Bilingual teacher and two Bilingual support instructors; all who are native Spanish speakers. Students receive EL supports in the Language Academy classes and through a push-in, co-teaching model for support in English Language Arts and mathematics. The Bilingual Program Handbook includes strategies, best

practices for ELs, notification letters for parents, and the home language survey completed as part of the ISAAC application process.

A key component to the Bilingual program is collaboration among all stakeholders at ISAAC. Parent partnership is a valuable link to student-centered learning. The home language survey and home-school communication, such as the February Bilingual Newsletter, are employed to elevate student support. Additionally, collaborative meetings consisting of the TESOL teacher, Bilingual teacher, general education teachers, support staff, and administration, are held to discuss strengths and weaknesses based on formative and summative assessment data, along with instructional strategies. The multi-disciplinary group of school professionals meets every other day to address student progress. Core teachers complete an EL Support Form to communicate student progress and areas of support. In 2021, the Bilingual teachers created a curriculum for Language Academy incorporating essential skills from the LAS Links Scope and Sequence. All teachers participated in EL Strategies Professional Development presented by the TESOL and Bilingual teacher, focusing on effective EL instructional strategies. In addition, each EL student has an EL Student Plan created by the Bilingual department that documents the current level of English language proficiency, Lexile Level, appropriate instructional strategies, and differentiation. The Bilingual and TESOL teachers utilize relevant academic language to build background knowledge to support reading growth and readiness for state testing. The Bilingual department also works collaboratively with teachers to ensure they include these strategies into curriculum and lessons. They create, present and review student EL plans at the beginning of the year and ensure grade level academic content is accessible to all English learners.

ISAAC's Special Education Department provides quality educational services to students who have a disability and who require specialized instruction. As mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), special education services are provided in the "least restrictive environment". A hallmark of our school is that all students, regardless of ability, have access to the general education curricula. Our success is in ISAAC's co-taught teaching model. A sample co-taught teacher schedule is included. This inclusive model is available in our English Language Arts and mathematics classes and is utilized to provide equity. For example, during the co-taught class, there are opportunities for the special education teacher to provide intensive instruction in small groups. Additionally, ISAAC offers small group instruction with a special education teacher in the Resource class to reinforce learning, while addressing individual needs. Starting in 2021, ISAAC implemented a Structured Literacy Program to address the literacy needs of our students. Students who require intensive reading intervention will receive specialized instruction from a trained instructor in the Wilson Reading System.

At ISAAC, the Special Education Department has highly qualified educators and professionals dedicated to educational excellence. Specialized services include certified special education teachers, social workers, and a speech-language pathologist. Currently we employ five certified full-time special education teachers. Our special education department works in collaboration with sending local education agencies and parents to address each student's individual needs. The special education team meets weekly with the Director of Student Supports to discuss students' needs, prepare for PPTs, monitor student progress, and participate in PLCs. Included is a copy of the Special Education Agenda and meeting notes. The Principal also provides Special Education Professional Development to all teachers at

the start of the school year. All IEPs are presented to and reviewed by the necessary regular education teachers during August Professional Development. The Social Workers serve as 504 case managers and oversee the implementation of 504 plans. They meet with teachers and parents as needed throughout the year to update any accommodations. ISAAC is committed to providing rigorous educational instruction with individualized supports, so that every student will have the opportunity to achieve. We believe ISAAC is in the implementing phase. Below is a list of special education documents and professional development presentations to support the implementing rating.



## 2022 SELF-STUDY REPORT

### STANDARD 5: LEARNING RESOURCES

Learning Resources ensure that the school has the resources necessary to meet the learning needs of all students. The school has adequate and appropriate time, funding, and facilities to support the realization of its core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate. The school and school community provide time, funding, and facilities for student learning and support; teacher collaboration and professional growth; and full implementation of curricular and co-curricular programs in the school. The school has appropriate plans, protocols, and infrastructure in place to ensure consistent delivery of its curriculum, programs, and services.

Standard 5 –Descriptors of Effective Practice	Rating
5.1 The community and district provide school buildings and facilities that support the delivery of high-quality curriculum, programs, and services	Developing
5.1a Foundational Element - The community and district provide school buildings and facilities that support the delivery of curriculum, programs, and services.	
5.2 The school/district provides time and financial resources to enable research-based instruction, professional growth, and the development, implementation, and improvement of school programs and services.	Transforming
5.3 The community and the district's governing body provide adequate and dependable funding to fully implement the curriculum, including co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities.	Implementing
5.4 The school/district has short-term and long-term plans to address the capital and maintenance needs of its building and facilities.	Implementing
5.5 The school has infrastructure and protocols in place to ensure effective responses in crisis situations.	Implementing

## Standard 5: Learning Resources Narrative 5.1

5.1: The community and district provide school buildings and facilities that support the delivery of a high-quality curriculum, programs, and services.

The Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication (ISAAC) is currently in the *developing phase* of providing a building and facility that support the delivery of a high-quality curriculum, programs, and services across all curriculum areas. While the current ISAAC building has much in place in terms of providing a safe, secure, and well-maintained environment for teaching and learning, a major renovation to the facility has yet to be completed. Two areas in such need include state-of-the-art science labs and a proper space that will safely allow for band and chorus programs to meet and satisfy all guidelines surrounding COVID-19. Once completed, this facility will help support the science and performing arts programs, thus allowing teachers in the programs to provide students full access to the curriculum without the spatial limitations of the current facility. Architectural designs for the new expansion were presented to the Board of Directors at its monthly meeting in June 2021. A full news article in The Day newspaper about the renovation project was also published on January 25, 2022.

With the exception of the renovation project, ISAAC is currently implementing many strategies and plans in order to support the delivery of high-quality curriculum, programs, and services due to its proactive approach to keeping the facility safe, secure, and well-maintained. The following is a list of proactive measures that the school is currently implementing to ensure the school environment is conducive to teaching and learning: Bathrooms, classrooms, entryways are all ADA compliant. School signs all contain braille. Automatic exterior doors are in place with areas of refuge throughout the building according to code.

All families are provided with a Parent-Student Handbook that outlines many of the policies and procedures about school safety and student academic achievement and social-emotional well-being.

Once the renovation project is completed, the school will be able to re-evaluate its status on this principle. With the completion of this project and the factors that are already in place, ISAAC will be able to change its current status of developing to implementing all aspects of this principle due to its continued focus on offering a facility that supports the delivery of high-quality curriculum, programs, and services.

5.2: The school/district provides time and financial resources to enable research-based instruction, professional growth and the development, implementation, and improvement of school programs and services.

ISAAC is currently in the transforming phase of providing time and financial resources to enable researched-based instruction, professional growth, and the development, implementation, and improvement of school programs and services. This principle is transforming the school's Vision of the Graduate as the time and resources dedicated to ISAAC's Vision of the Graduate surpasses what is currently being done at many middle schools in our area. The Vision of the Graduate is a part of the everyday culture within the building, including administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Much effort has been given to developing time throughout the school year and during each school day to allow school personnel to collaborate on curriculum and discuss student achievement. ISAAC has adopted the Professional Learning Communities (PLC) model as prescribed by Solution Tree; a Richard Dufour inspired design brought to the district for the

2020-2021 school year. During each week, teachers are given time to meet with colleagues in the same content area to discuss curriculum in their PLC meetings. This is a time that teachers use to ensure alignment of curriculum at all three grade levels, discuss assessments, and any changes necessary to ensure students receive the highest level of exposure to the curriculum. This is also a time for teachers to meet with the Director of Instruction, Programming, and Athletics to discuss assessment results on both standardized and curriculum-based assessments. During each week, teachers are also given time to meet with their grade-level counterparts in Interdisciplinary Professional Learning Communities (IPLC) to discuss student progress across the disciplines and make recommendations for intervention and interdisciplinary unit planning. This time allows for support staff at ISAAC to meet with teachers as part of the overall Scientific Research Based Interventions (SRBI) process of monitoring and planning student intervention. Schedules and notes from various PLC and IPLC meetings can be accessed below:

The school calendar includes numerous opportunities for teachers to participate in professional development activities on a variety of topics. These days are done in collaboration with the ISAAC administration and focus on topics pertaining to teaching and learning. Teachers are also encouraged to participate in their own professional development by attending professional development workshops and meetings outside of ISAAC. This current school year, these opportunities included participation in 2 separate NEASC visits; workshops on student attendance and engagement, special populations, parent involvement, the Writing Revolution, and bilingual education; state of CT standardized testing, McKinney Vento law, Wilson Reading System, and mathematics. Below is a list of professional development schedules and topics that have been done during the 2021-2022 school year:

ISAAC utilizes a School Improvement and Performance Plan as an overall guide to ensuring that the school continues to evaluate and improve upon its mission towards the Vision of the Graduate. The School Improvement and Performance Plan is made available for public review on the ISAAC website. The School Improvement and Performance Plan is divided into seven main goals for the school along with several indicators associated with each goal. The seven goals in the 2021-2022 plan include:

- To prepare all students with the competencies needed to demonstrate success in mathematics, reading and writing.
- To ensure that all graduates are high school ready upon graduation.
- To provide a safe, respectful, and nurturing learning environment that supports the personal, academic, and middle school goals of every student.
- To ensure that the school and its parents have a collective understanding of a student's success through a system of periodic and reactive communication.
- To establish clear school-wide expectations, classroom to classroom, that are known, understood, and respected by students, teachers, and families
- To collaborate within ISAAC and outside of ISAAC with available resources that enhance the rigor and relevance of our instruction through professional learning communities.
- To support and grow our certified staffing in all domains as prescribed through the evaluation process through effective feedback, accountability, and supervision.

5.3: The community and district's governing body provide adequate and dependable funding to fully implement the curriculum, including co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities.

The district's governing body provides adequate and dependable funding to fully implement the curriculum, including co-curricular programs. Due to the dependability of such funding, the ISAAC school is currently in the implementing phase of this principle as financial resources allow for the continued support of the current curriculum and programs and allows for future development and offerings.

Being a charter school, ISAAC relies on steady enrollment of students from surrounding towns.

Towns who have students enrolled at ISAAC do not pay any tuition for the students to attend.

The current per pupil expenditure is \$11,250. Due to state charter school statutes, the current cap for student enrollment is 276 and the school is currently at capacity. The annual operating budget development is a collaborative process which includes the Board of Directors, the Executive Director, school administration, and teachers. Annually, a request for supplies is sent out to the teaching faculty to ensure that materials necessary for teaching and learning can be included to the extent possible in the budget proposal. Below you will find the following documents as they pertain to the budget:

Due to the financial planning and resources made available by the annual budget, ISAAC is able to provide students with a wide variety of course offerings. Each grade level is supported by four core academic teachers: English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies. In addition, each grade level is supported by faculty in special education, bilingual education, social-emotional support, and SRBI. In 6th grade, students get a foundational experience in the arts and music. In the following grade levels, students have an opportunity for

student choice in a variety of elective courses in the areas of dance, theater arts, visual arts, and music. In addition to the offerings that happen during the school day, students at ISAAC also benefit from a variety of afterschool programs and activities, including athletics and clubs.

Through the operating budget, students and faculty at ISAAC also benefit from a well-supported technology plan. Students all have a personal Chromebook used both in school and at home.

Student Chromebooks are managed by the Director of Information Technology. Teachers also have a personal Microsoft SurfacePro that they use for instructional purposes and grading.

Classrooms are all equipped with large flat screen televisions that teachers can use in any format of instruction they deem appropriate for their teaching style and needs of students. The Securely computer monitoring system was added as a feature for teachers to monitor student activity on their Chromebooks during class activities. The Airtame system allows teachers to broadcast from their computer any instructional-related materials needed for a particular lesson. New and improved photocopiers, including color copiers, have been purchased to allow for ease of making copies, scanning, and emailing documents.

One key area keeping us from grading ourselves as transforming for this principle is the development of an overall capital improvement plan that includes a technology upgrade schedule. The Executive Director, Director of Maintenance and Facilities, and the Director of Information Technology are currently establishing a process by which an overall capital improvement plan can be implemented so that long-term planning can be made in the best interest of ISAAC and its constituents.

5.4: The school/district has short-term and long-term plans to address the capital and maintenance needs of its building and facilities.

ISAAC is currently at the implementing phase of establishing short-term and long-term goals to address the capital and maintenance needs of its building and facilities. As noted in section 5.1, the school will be undergoing a major renovation to increase the size of its overall footprint so that proper facilities to support our music and science programs can be achieved. In addition to this upgrade, the school has already undergone several building improvements to enhance the facility, and as a result, the overall program. These improvements include:

Cafeteria upgrade - expanded eating space for students and a kitchen upgrade is scheduled for April 2022

Added classroom space on main stage to allow for space for dance and theater programs

Several office areas were created/expanded upon, including the conference room, technology information office, and various administrative offices

Permanent walls to define classroom spaces, creation of science labs in main space, and a conference area in the social worker suite

New water refill stations

Upgraded student bathrooms

Upgraded WiFi infrastructure and internet bandwidth

Main office upgrades scheduled for summer 2022 with the addition of a completed administrative office



In addition to the overall improvements to the physical structure of the ISAAC school, there have also been newly created positions to accommodate the needs of the school, its student population, and the expansion of program offerings, including:

School safety and security staff

Bilingual certified and support staff

Additional building substitute teachers

Custodial staff - ADVANTAGE (outsourced)

New cafeteria staff (no longer outsourced)

Certified staff including World Language; SRBI Coordinator; Theater/Dance; Multimedia Arts; Director of Instruction, Programming, and Athletics; Math Interventionist; Director of Student Supports

As planning for new programs and initiatives are the driving force that keeps the ISAAC school progressing forward, we feel that the implementing phase will continue at the school as we constantly strive to change and adapt to the needs and interests of our community and students.

We feel that this is a strength of our school due to the fact that we do not allow ourselves to become complacent with our current offerings and staffing. As a result, the continuous improvements to our facility and programs is what will allow ISAAC to be a school that transforms itself based on necessity in order to achieve the school's Vision of the Graduate.

5.5: The school has infrastructure and protocols in place to ensure effective response in crisis situations.

ISAAC is at the implementing stage of ensuring it has infrastructure and protocols in place to ensure effective responses in crisis situations. The following initiatives have been completed in order to keep the school building, personnel, and students safe:

Fire alarm upgrades were completed in March 2021. The system was upgraded from an analog dial up system to a digital cellular system.

Upgrades to the security camera system were completed by our vendor, Integrated Security Systems (ISS).

The Digital Watchdog System was purchased and installed allowing 48 cameras to be recording 24 hours a day. Cameras are constantly reviewed and outdated hardware/ software is replaced to further enhance the system.

In the event of an emergency situation, handheld radios operated by ISAAC safety personnel and administrators have direct contact with the New London Police Department thus allowing for an immediate response to the school.

A formal Visitor Check-In process that is detailed in the Parent/Student Handbook.

As part of the school's continual evaluation of safety and security, the Board of Directors in conjunction with the Executive Director and the Director of Safety and Security have developed a Crisis Response Plan that will help determine a proper course of action in the event of an emergency that impacts the school building and/or its personnel and students. The plan is an all inclusive plan that addresses the following potential hazards:

Fire

Lockdown (sample Lockdown Letter sent to families)

Active Shooter

Relocation/Reunification

Evacuation/Reverse Evacuation

Shelter In Place

Millstone Power Readiness Plan

Suicide Prevention

Bullying

FEMA Incident Command Structure

The School Crisis Team membership includes the Executive Director, School Principal, Associate Principal, members of the faculty, social workers, Director of Student Supports, and the Director of Safety and Security. This team will assemble as needed to determine proper steps in handling a situation, including the need to call for outside assistance from local agencies.

The ISAAC Board of Directors and Executive Director in collaboration with the State Department of Education, LedgeLight Health District, District Medical Advisor, and State Department of Public Health established guidelines for the safe return of students to the school building as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Continuous updates from the Executive Director to the faculty and families of ISAAC go out on an as-needed basis.

Currently, the school has an emergency action plan for an active shooter within the building. However, the creation of a comprehensive first responder and recovery plan for this type of crisis situation is in the development stage. The Executive Director and the Director of Safety and Security have discussed the development of a plan similar to one that the Executive Director

was involved in creating at his prior school. Should this initiative move forward, officials at ISAAC would work in collaboration with the New London Police Department, State Police, and other local law enforcement authorities who would respond for mutual aid in such an emergency. This plan would include processes and procedures for handling the recovery stages following a traumatic event.

The school is also currently considering an automated system to be installed within the facility that would immediately notify administration and safety/security personnel if 911 is ever dialed from within the facility. The system would give the room number from where the call was made for immediate attention by ISAAC administration and safety personnel. In addition to this system, another consideration is being given to an automatic “lockdown” capability. A few vendors with this service are currently being considered. The system which would be of most value to the school would include:

Allowing any staff member to have an access code from their location that would automatically put the school in lockdown should a situation arise.

Automatic notification to the ISAAC administration and first responders with the exact location from where the situation originated.

ISAAC believes that once these initiatives are in place that we will be comfortable changing our rating for this principle from implementing to transforming as no district in our area would have as advanced planning and proactive measures in place in regards to safety and security of the school building and its most precious assets, the students.