A Goal Monitoring Conversation:
PPS 3rd Grade English Language Arts

Dr. Wayne N. Walters & Leadership Team
November 12, 2024

Pittsburgh Public Schools | Students first *Always, in all ways.*

Goal – 3ʳᵈ Grade English Language Arts Proficiency

What?

By the end of the 24-25 school year, 49.4% of students in grade 3 will be proficient on the state's PSSA and PASA English Language Arts assessment. At the end of the 20-21 school year, 40.20% of third-grade students were proficient, establishing the baseline for our 5-year goal of achieving 54% by 2027.

Why?

3rd grade marks the critical transition from "learning to read" to "reading to learn." It is also the first year of statewide assessment in English Language Arts. We have implemented a new curriculum infused with the Science of Reading to elevate student outcomes and foster liberated, literate learners. However, we acknowledge the racial and disability disparities in English Language Arts outcomes and recognize that overall proficiency needs improvement across the District.

How?

PA Classroom Diagnostic Tool (CDT), DIBELS Acadience

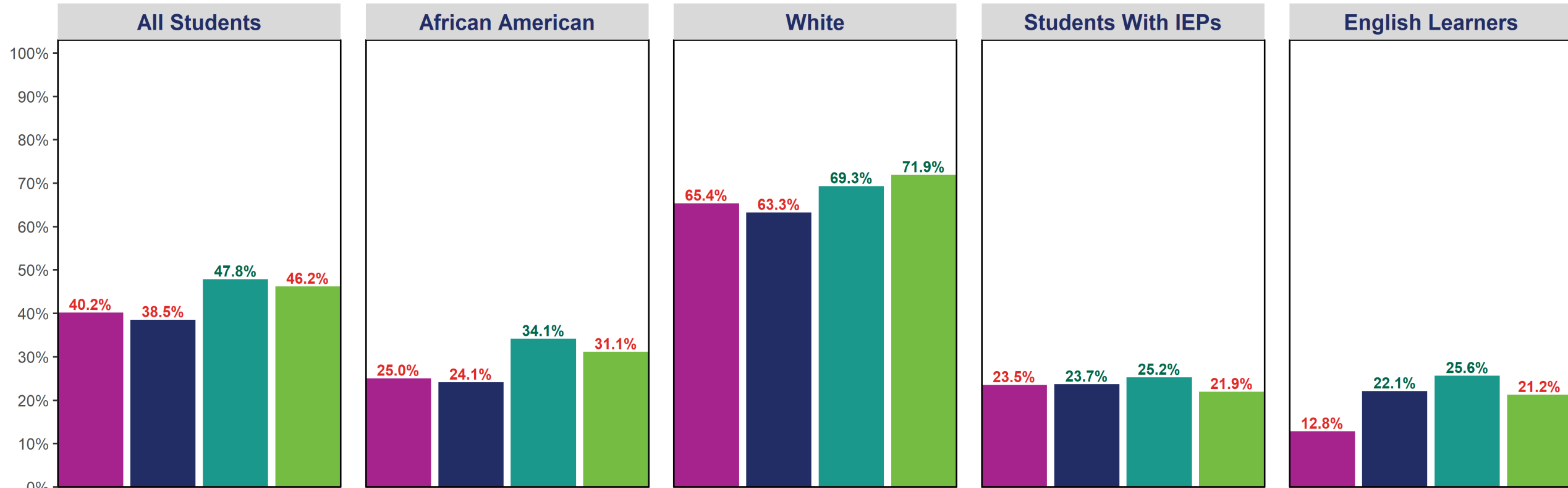# Goal 1 – 3rd Grade ELA Proficiency (By Year)
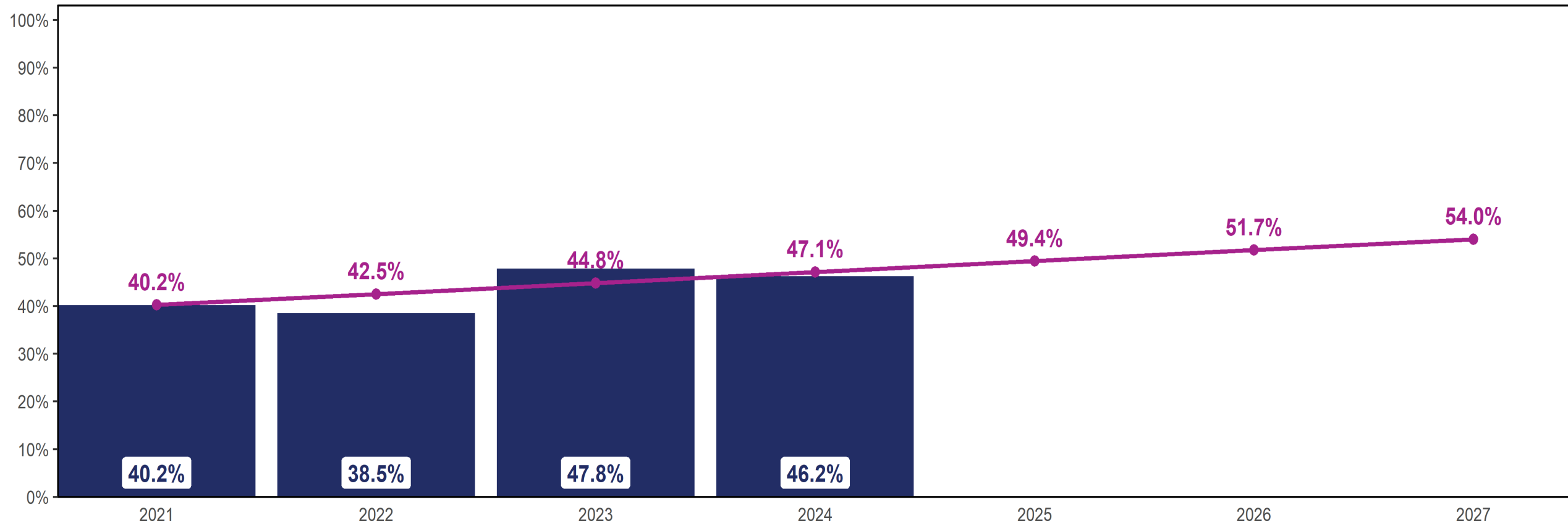
Full Academic Year students, Includes PSSA and PASA
Data source: PDE Accountability Files

Goal 1 – 3rd Grade ELA Proficiency (By Subgroups)

3rd Grade Reading: By Subgroups

All Students, African American, White, IEP, and ELL Students

Legend: ■ 2021 ■ 2022 ■ 2023 ■ 2024

	All Students	African American	White	Students With IEPs	English Learners
2021	40.2%	25.0%	65.4%	23.5%	12.8%
2022	38.5%	24.1%	63.3%	23.7%	22.1%
2023	47.8%	34.1%	69.3%	25.2%	25.6%
2024	46.2%	31.1%	71.9%	21.9%	21.2%

Full Academic Year students, Includes PSSA and PASA
Data source: PDE Accountability Files

Pittsburgh Public Schools

Students first
Always, in all ways.

CDT Results by Grade

Assessment	Assessment Window	Assessment Completion			Red Range	Green (Below Midpoint)	Green (Above Midpoint)	Blue Range	Likely Proficient or Advanced
		Completed	Required	Rate					
Grade 3 Literature	Fall	1305	1360	96.0%	79.0%	11.0%	6.8%	3.2%	10.0%

CDT Results by Subgroup

Assessment	Sub Group	Assessment Window	Assessment Completion			Red Range	Green (Below Midpoint)	Green (Above Midpoint)	Blue Range	Likely Proficient or Advanced
			Completed	Required	Rate					
Grade 3 Literature	Black	Fall	639	670	95.4%	91.2%	5.0%	2.7%	1.1%	3.8%
	White	Fall	392	396	99.0%	59.4%	17.9%	15.1%	7.7%	22.7%
	IEP	Fall	313	333	94.0%	93.3%	3.8%	2.2%	0.6%	2.9%
	ELL	Fall	137	151	90.7%	94.2%	3.6%	2.2%	0.0%	2.2%

Goal 1 – 3ʳᵈ Grade DIBELS Acadience Results

44%

56%

1,188 completed
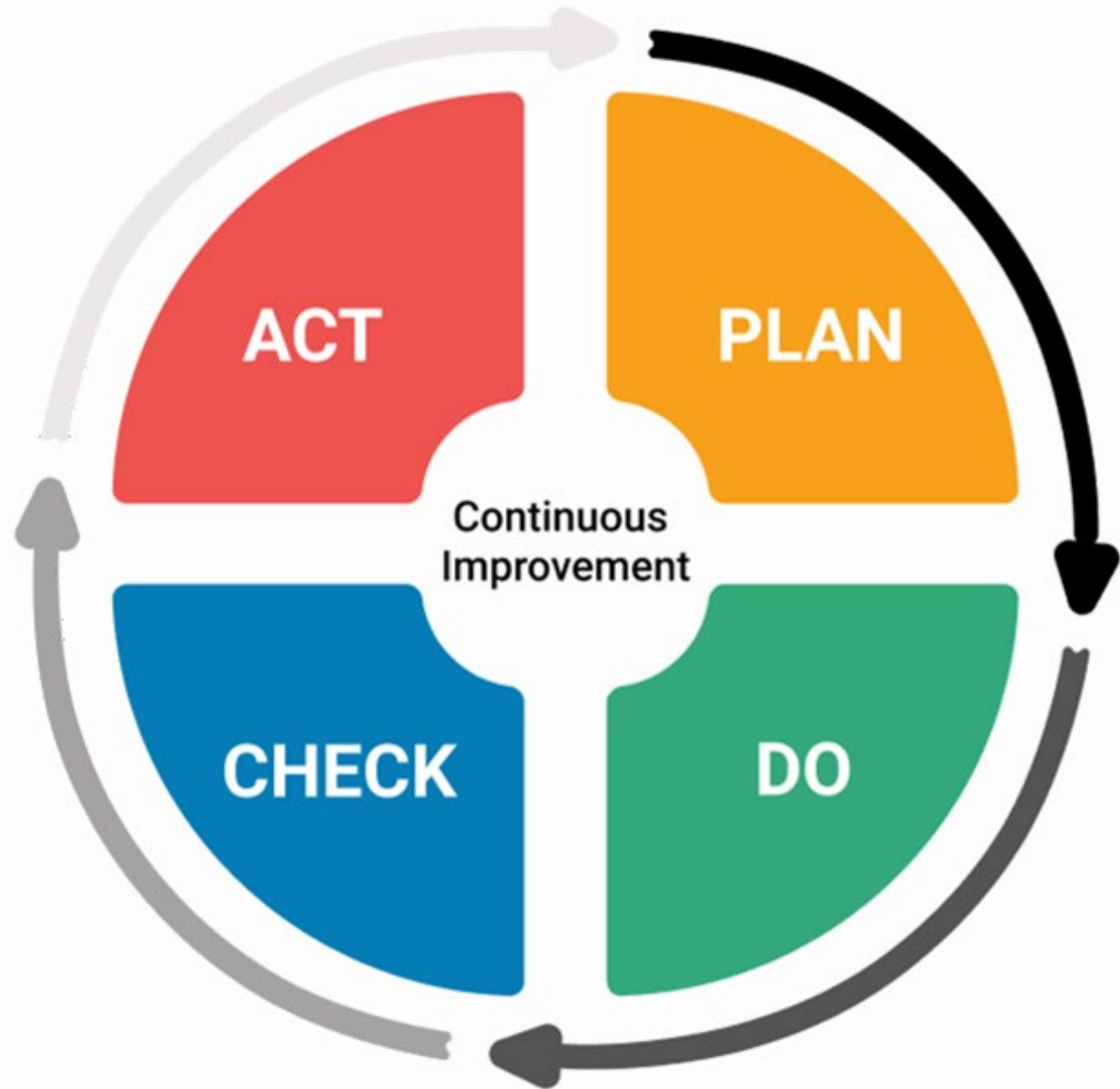
	Above Benchmark
	At Benchmark
	Below Benchmark
	Well Below Benchmark
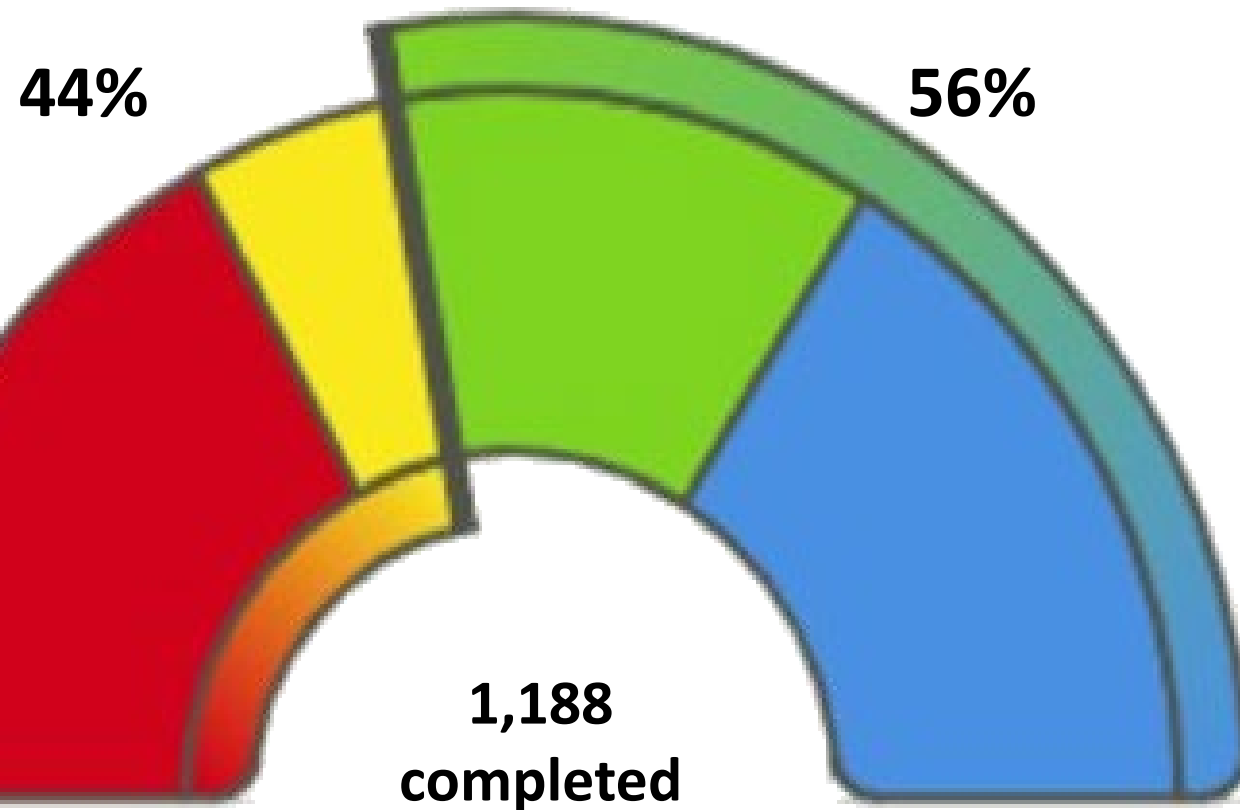
Completion Rate: 84%
- **Oral Reading Fluency: Words Correct**
- **Oral Reading Fluency: Accuracy**
- **Oral Reading Fluency: Retell**
- **Maze**

Pittsburgh Public Schools | Students first — Always, in all ways.

Strategy and Plan – Focus on Lesson Design

To support the effective implementation of our new curriculum aligned with the Science of Reading, we will invest in a comprehensive district-wide strategy focused on lesson design that visualizes expectations for all classrooms. This approach aims to empower teachers to effectively execute instructional block periods, encompassing the **foundational skills** (**green band**), **reading and responding** (**red band**), and **language arts** (**blue band**) sections utilizing a continuous improvement approach.

Key Components of the Strategy:

Design and Share Visual Models: Create clear, accessible visual models outlining expectations for lesson design. These models will be posted in every classroom, serving as a guide for teachers and a reference to ensure consistency and adherence to the instructional blocks.

Professional Learning and Support: Deploy literacy academic coaches to provide ongoing professional learning opportunities and individualized support. Coaches will collaborate with teachers to deepen understanding and refine lesson planning that adheres to Science of Reading principles.

Focused Observations: Conduct classroom observations to support teacher practice. These observations will identify areas of strength and opportunities for growth in lesson design and execution. The feedback loop will help reinforce effective teaching practices and ensure alignment with the curriculum's structure.

Rationale: Initial anecdotal evidence suggests varied levels of implementation fidelity. This structured approach to visualizing and supporting lesson design will create clarity, strengthen teachers' instructional practices, and align with the district's objective of consistent, high-quality education. This strategic investment in professional learning, visual guides, and targeted observations will help drive effective instruction across all classrooms, fostering improved student outcomes in reading and language arts.

Strategy and Plan – Differentiated Instruction

To enhance classroom instruction, we will invest in data-informed differentiated instruction, rooted in Carol Ann Tomlinson's framework of differentiating through content, process, product, and environment, while integrating Culturally Responsive Pedagogy utilizing a continuous improvement approach.

Key Components of the Strategy:

Comprehensive Data Analysis: Create and offer a structured data analysis protocol that analyzes DIBELS and CDT data to inform instructional decisions tailored to diverse student needs.

Professional Learning and Principal Support: Engage principals in providing ongoing professional development on differentiated instruction, including training on Culturally Responsive Pedagogy to support diverse learners.

Technology-Based Tools: Orient teachers and paraprofessionals to digital resources that facilitate individualized student differentiation and include culturally responsive content.

Focused Teacher Observations: Conduct classroom observations to support teacher growth in differentiated instruction, ensuring that practices are culturally inclusive and responsive.

Rationale: This approach aims to address outcome disparities, support student growth in foundational skills, reading, and responding, and foster an inclusive environment that values cultural diversity.

Strategy and Plan – Identify Best Practices

We will study our highest-performing schools to identify best practices based on CDT data. Research indicates that studying these schools can provide valuable insights into successful instructional strategies, leadership, and student engagement methods that can be applied district-wide. This continuous improvement approach would create a data-driven roadmap for school improvement that is both effective and relevant to the district's context.

Key Components of the Strategy:

Data Collection and Analysis: Gather and analyze CDT data from high-performing schools to identify patterns and successful instructional approaches.

Observations: Conduct on-site observations of schools that show strong outcomes to understand practices in real-time.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs): Utilize PLCs for educators to share findings, discuss strategies, and collaborate on best practices informed by the study of effective schools.

Principal Engagement: Involve principals in cross-school partnerships to learn and adopt proven strategies in their own contexts via principal networks.

Professional Learning: Develop training sessions that highlight effective methods from high-performing schools, focusing on how these can be adapted district-wide.

Monitoring and Support: Implement a feedback loop with targeted teacher observations and follow-up support to ensure new practices are effectively integrated.

Rationale: By investing in this strategy, the district can foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement, supporting schools in leveraging data-driven insights and proven methodologies to boost student achievement.