

Dunkirk City School District
Literacy Strategic Plan
2024 - 2029

2025 - 2026 Summary of Commitments

1.	By the end of the 2025-2026 school year, the district will successfully integrate the district's literacy vision across all grade bands, ensuring all stakeholders understand and actively work toward shared literacy goals, with measurable progress indicators in place.
2.	By the end of the 2025-2026 school year, achieve consistent implementation of adopted curricula across all grade bands with systematic monitoring, coaching support, and measurable improvements in implementation fidelity.
3.	By the end of the 2025-2026 school year, establish a fully functional, consistent data system across all grade bands with regular assessment cycles, analysis, and instructional adjustment that result in measurable student growth.
4.	By the end of the 2025-2026 school year, strengthen and expand the role of specialized literacy teams across all grade bands, establishing clear protocols for team functions, increasing impact on instructional practices, and extending collaboration with community partners.
5.	By the end of the 2025-2026 school year, establish and implement systematic structures that maximize instructional time and professional learning opportunities, resulting in measurable improvements in instruction and intervention effectiveness.

Goal 1

By the end of the 2025-2026 school year, the Dunkirk City School District will successfully integrate the district's literacy vision across all grade bands, ensuring all stakeholders understand and actively work toward shared literacy goals, with measurable progress indicators in place.

Why are we making this commitment?
This commitment is the next step in our strategic plan, building on the foundation we established in 2024-2025. It moves us from simply defining a vision to actively implementing and integrating it throughout the district.

How this commitment fits into our vision for the school district:
We envision a district where a consistent, high-quality literacy vision is not just a document, but a living practice in every classroom. This commitment directly supports the vision by ensuring it is not only understood by all stakeholders but also supported by measurable action items and accountability.

How this commitment relates to what we heard when listening to others:
Last year, we heard that teachers' understanding or knowledge of the literacy vision was inconsistent because expectations for literacy instruction were not communicated well or consistently across buildings. This commitment addresses this feedback directly by focusing on communication and defining roles, ensuring everyone understands their part in making the vision a reality.

How this commitment connects to what we observed through analysis:
Our K-2 DI Block Data showed promising results for the first year of implementation, with 71% of our Kindergarten students reaching the end of Kindergarten goals or moving into First Grade Skills. 59% of First Grade students were at or above the last unit of first-grade skills. 76% of our second-grade students were at grade level by the end of the last data cycle. At the Intermediate School and Secondary School, there were promising results around literacy, as there were improvements in the following grade-level data: Grade 3 rose from 17% in 2024 to 30% in 2025; Grade 5 rose to 38% in 2025 from 22% in 2024; and, Grade 7 rose to 42% in 2025 from 31% in 2024. However, our proficiency rate for the district based on STAR Reading hovers at 30%, which indicates there is a lot of room for improvement.

Our analysis from last year showed that while a vision was being developed, its implementation was inconsistent. This commitment focuses on full integration and measurable progress, directly addressing the need for a unified approach to literacy instruction. It ensures that the momentum from our initial efforts translates into tangible, district-wide improvements.

Strategy	Action	Accountability	Timeline
Communication of Vision Statement	Develop and launch a unified communication plan for families and the community.	Humanities Council Literacy Leaders Principals TOSAs Executive Director	October 2025
	Collaborate with Erie 2 BOCES to plan for a district literacy night in November or December 2025.	Executive Director Principals TOSAs	August 2025
	BOE Presentation	Executive Director	October 2025
	District Literacy Night	Humanities Council Literacy Leaders Principals TOSAs Executive Director	November 2025/December 2025
	Develop literacy materials for families to use at home to support literacy instruction.	Literacy Leaders Humanities Councils TOSAs	October 2025 December 2025 March 2026 June 2026
Align Vision Statements	Humanities Council (Full, Primary, Intermediate, and Secondary) will meet to revisit the district literacy vision and develop belief statements to ensure consistency and logical	Humanities Councils	November 2025

	progression across all levels. Spring Humanities Council meeting to discuss progress through the lens of data to check alignment to vision and belief statements, and to answer the question: Are we making growth?		May 2026 or June 2026
Establish Dates, Data Points, and Indicators **Define and Publicize Instructional Expectations**	Develop and publish timelines (Assessment Calendars and Data Meetings) at each grade level for monitoring progress. ● Magnetic Reading Unit Assessments - Primary ● Savvas Trimester Assessments - Intermediate ● Common Lit Benchmark Assessments - Secondary ● Quarterly Social Studies Assessments - Secondary Create Pacing Guides for each grade band ● Primary (Magnetic and CKLA) ● Intermediate	TOSAs Executive Director Principals TOSAs	September 2025 August 2025 - Ongoing

	(Savvas) ● Secondary (Common Lit)		
	Create and share expectations for grade-level meetings and the grade-level meeting calendar.	Executive Director Principals TOSAs	August 2025 - Ongoing
	Roll out the Explicit Instruction PD Plan and Feedback Tool	Executive Director Principals	August 2025 and Ongoing - Moving on when hit 85%
	Explicit Instruction Learning Walks	Executive Director Principals TOSAs Instructional Leaders	September 2025 - Ongoing
	Create and share Tier 1 instructional expectations for instruction and data collection for teachers. ● Primary (Magnetic and CKLA Knowledge/Writing Studio) ● Intermediate (Savvas) ● Secondary (Common Lit)	Executive Director TOSAs	August 2025
	Tier 1 Curriculum Learning Walks	Executive Director Principals TOSAs	September 2025 - Ongoing

	Principals unpack the building's belief statements and plan how these belief statements will be part of the culture of the building. Principals will seek the support of the literacy leaders to plan two activities during the year that involve the adults in the building, modeling literacy to the students. Example - Signs on the door that share what the staff is reading.	Principals Principals Literacy Leaders	September 2025 - Ongoing October 2025 - Ongoing
Monitor Progress	Building-level progress reports based on common assessment data to be reviewed quarterly with district leadership and shared with staff. ● Primary (Magnetic and CKLA Knowledge/Writing Studio) ● Intermediate (Savvas) ● Secondary (Common Lit and SS	Principals Executive Director	November 2025 - Ongoing

	Assessments)		

Measuring Success

By mid-year, all buildings will:

- Publish and communicate literacy non-negotiables to staff and families.
- Achieve at least 80% staff awareness of the literacy vision by conducting a survey.
- Demonstrate alignment to the district vision in at least 60% of classrooms during walkthroughs (e.g., evidence of explicit instruction, use of core curriculum)
- Produce progress reports that show specific data on the implementation of non-negotiables (e.g., % of lessons using explicit instruction strategies, % of classrooms using core curriculum materials)

By the end of the year, all buildings will:

- Maintain or increase staff awareness of instructional expectations and implementation of explicit instruction to 85% based on the walkthrough tool and teacher survey.
- Demonstrate alignment to the district vision in at least 70% of classrooms during walkthroughs.
- Complete quarterly progress reports showing consistent implementation of non-negotiables across all buildings.
- Document evidence that family engagement events were held and received positive feedback
- Establish sustainable systems for ongoing vision monitoring and communication.

Goal 2

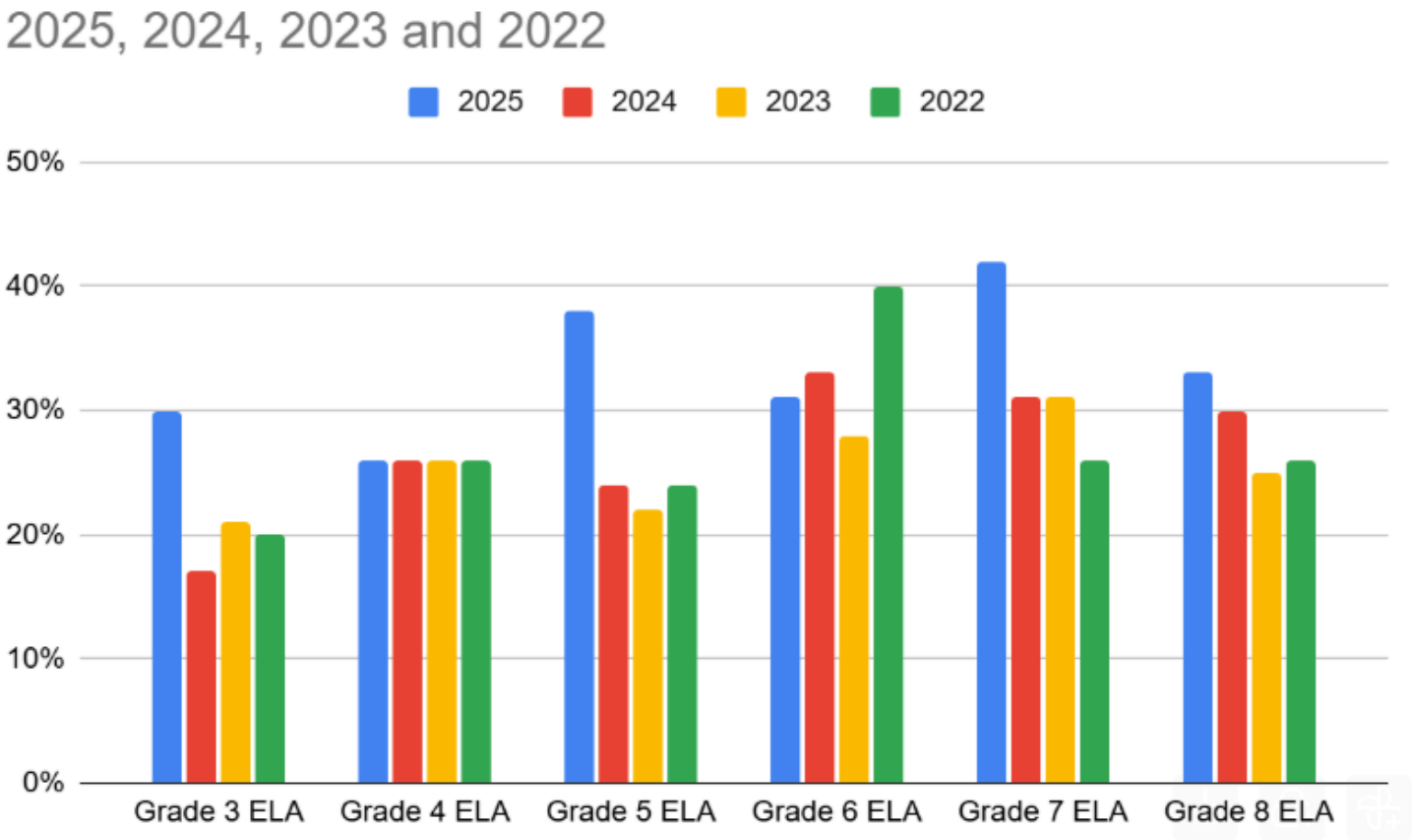
By the end of the 2025-2026 school year, the Dunkirk City School District will achieve consistent implementation of adopted curricula across all grade bands. This will involve systematic monitoring, coaching, and measurable improvements in implementation fidelity.

Why are we making this commitment?
This commitment is the natural progression of our work from 2024-2025. Last year, we focused on establishing a foundation by exploring, reviewing, and adopting new materials. This year, the focus shifts to ensuring those materials are used effectively and consistently across the district.

How this commitment fits into our vision for the school district:
We envision a district where all students receive high-quality, research-based literacy instruction, regardless of the classroom or grade level. This commitment is crucial because a strong curriculum is only effective if it's implemented with fidelity. By standardizing our approach, we ensure equitable learning experiences for all students.

How this commitment relates to what we heard when listening to others:
We've heard that teachers have been using a variety of resources, including many teacher-created materials, which has led to inconsistent instruction. This commitment addresses that by providing a standard set of standards-aligned, Tier 1 materials and ensuring all staff are trained and supported in their use.

How this commitment connects to what we observed through analysis:
Our analysis showed a fluctuation in ELA proficiency levels and a lack of alignment between our current instructional resources and state assessments. This commitment is designed to directly improve student outcomes by ensuring that our curriculum is a cohesive and effective tool for teaching literacy.


2025, 2024, 2023 and 2022
2025
2024
2023
2022
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Grade 3 ELA
Grade 4 ELA
Grade 5 ELA
Grade 6 ELA
Grade 7 ELA
Grade 8 ELA

Strategy	Action	Accountability	Timeline
Curriculum Implementation Year 1 Implementation of The Creative Curriculum - Pre K Year 1 Implementation of Heggerty - Pre K Year 1 Implementation of Magnetic Reading - Primary Schools Year 1 Implementation of Common Lit - Secondary School Year 3 Reimplementation of Savvas - Intermediate School	Establish expectations for teachers for program implementation. TOSAs meet with building principals to discuss and plan building coaching needs. Tier 1 coaching for all teachers.	Executive Director Site Directors Principals TOSAs Teachers Principals TOSAs TOSAs Teachers	August 2025 - Ongoing September 2025 - Ongoing September 2025 - Ongoing
Finalize and/or Create Common Assessments	Develop, refine, and/or identify common assessments across grade bands.	Executive Director TOSAs Principals Teachers	August 2025 - Ongoing
Common Planning Time	Revise schedules as needed to provide structured common planning time for general education, special education, and ENL teachers, supporting collaboration on curriculum, instruction, and assessment.	Principals Teachers	August 2025 - Ongoing
Vertical Alignment	Plan and facilitate cross-grade level meetings each semester to align essential skills for instruction and assessments. ● Weekly grade-level meetings for elementary grades.	Executive Director Principals TOSAs	September 2025 - Ongoing

	• Trimester planning meetings for elementary. • Weekly department planning meetings for secondary core areas. • Half-day PD days for vertical meetings district-wide.		

Measuring Success

By mid-year, all schools will have:

- Adopted and begun implementing common assessments, with documentation (e.g., meeting minutes) showing at least two collaborative sessions focused on curriculum and data analysis
- Walkthroughs and coaching logs will indicate that at least 60% of observed lessons align with the adopted standard curriculum, with a target of growth over time based on curriculum expectations set forth for teachers.

By the end of the year, all schools/departments will have:

- Completed at least four documented collaborative sessions focused on curriculum alignment and data analysis (building from the initial two).
- Achieved 85% alignment with the adopted standard curriculum as evidenced through walkthroughs and coaching logs.
- Documented evidence of common planning time utilization, including participation from general education, special education, and ENL co-teachers.
- Completed the required cross-grade vertical alignment meetings with documented outcomes and next steps.
- Initial data trends showing student progress on common assessments, with baseline-to-spring comparison data collected and analyzed.

Goals 3

By the end of the 2025-2026 school year, the Dunkirk City School District will establish a fully functional, consistent data system across all grade bands. This system will include regular assessment cycles and analysis protocols that directly inform instructional adjustments and result in measurable student growth.

Why are we making this commitment?
This commitment builds directly on our 2024-2025 efforts to begin implementing a data system. Our focus for this year is to move beyond the initial implementation and ensure the data system is fully cohesive, consistent, and effectively used by all staff.

How this commitment fits into our vision for the school district:
We envision a data-driven culture where instructional decisions are not based on intuition but on clear evidence of student need. This commitment is the mechanism for achieving that, ensuring that our data is a powerful tool for identifying student strengths and weaknesses and for tailoring instruction to meet individual needs.

How this commitment relates to what we heard when listening to others:
Last year, we heard that our existing assessment systems were not being used consistently. We heard that different schools and grade levels used a variety of tools, and that test integrity and scoring were inconsistent. This commitment addresses this directly by standardizing our data system and providing the necessary training to ensure consistent execution.

How this commitment connects to what we observed through analysis:
Our analysis showed that while some elements of a data system were in place, they were not executed consistently. For example, our assessments became consistent across the buildings in 2024-2025, and the assessments were conducted under standard testing protocols. However, each building had its unique teams and systems for looking at data. In addition, not all buildings were monitoring the fidelity of the Tier 1 programs, as there was a focus on Tier 2 and Tier 3 data. This commitment is designed to remedy these inconsistencies and create a unified, reliable data system that provides actionable insights for all educators.

Strategy	Action	Accountability	Timeline
Establish Data Review Protocols	Finalize and communicate clear data collection tools, timelines, and review protocols for all grade levels. These protocols should be embedded into a structured PLC/team meeting schedule as indicated by district expectations and assessment calendars.	Executive Director Principals	August 2025 and Ongoing
Provide Training on Data Analysis	Provide targeted training and coaching to ensure that teams can not only review data but also connect it directly to instructional planning and resource selection.	Principals TOSAs	September 2025 - Ongoing
Facilitate Vertical Data Conversations:	Organize and schedule biannual vertical data review meetings (e.g., PK-2, 3-6, 7-12) to ensure alignment and identify skill gaps across grade levels.	Executive Director Principals TOSAs Teachers	October 2025 November 2025 February 2026 March 2026

	These meetings must include general education, special education, and ENL staff. ● Half-Day Inservice Days ● Grade Level Planning Days		
Monitor Fidelity of Data Use	Establish and implement a system for leadership to monitor the consistent use of data to inform instruction. ● Levels Meetings ● Student Support Team Meetings ● Building Leadership Meetings ● District Leadership Meetings ● MTSS Plan Outline for Data Cycles Evidence ● Team Meeting Notes ● Notes in Pacing Guides ● Team Data Meeting Notes	Executive Director Principals TOSAs Teachers	September 2025 - Ongoing

Measuring Success

By mid-year, all buildings will:

- Team meeting notes across all grade levels will show that data is consistently reviewed at least monthly and that instructional decisions are documented as directly informed by this data.
- All grade bands will have completed and documented at least one vertical data conversation, with clear action steps tied to identified student needs.

By the end of the year, all buildings will:

- Team meeting notes will consistently include a monthly data review and documented instructional adjustments in at least 80% of team meetings.
- All grade bands will have completed and documented four vertical data conversations, with evidence of implemented action steps and their impact.
- Data collection tools and review protocols will be fully implemented and consistently used across all buildings.
- Special education and ENL staff participation will be documented in at least 90% of data review meetings.
- Building meeting notes will be stored in established standard systems with clear ownership and monitoring procedures.

Goal 4

By the end of the 2025-2026 school year, the Dunkirk City School District will strengthen our literacy teams to ensure they are well-trained, collaborative, and equipped to lead and sustain effective literacy initiatives across all grade bands (PK-12).

Why are we making this commitment?
This commitment is essential to sustain our literacy improvement efforts. While last year we focused on establishing the teams, this year we must ensure they are fully empowered to drive instructional change and provide ongoing support to their colleagues.

How this commitment fits into our vision for the school district:
We envision a district where literacy leadership is distributed and supported at every level. This commitment is the mechanism for empowering our literacy teams to become the primary agents of change, ensuring our strategic plan is not just a top-down mandate but a collaborative, living document.

How this commitment relates to what we heard when listening to others:
While some reading teachers and classroom teachers are highly knowledgeable in data use or in instructional strategies that support literacy instruction, this expertise is not consistent across all teachers. Additionally, professional development has been sporadic and not always differentiated to meet the needs of all content area teachers versus interventionists. This commitment addresses these concerns by focusing on consistent, targeted training and a "turnkey" model where trained staff can share knowledge with their peers.

How this commitment connects to what we observed through analysis:
Our analysis from last year showed that the district-level Humanities Council was the "unofficial" literacy team in some buildings, highlighting a need for a more formal and structured approach. We also observed a lack of consistent, high-quality professional development. This commitment is designed to formalize our literacy teams, provide them with the necessary training (including LETRS), and ensure they are prepared to lead the ongoing work of our strategic plan.

Strategy	Action	Accountability	Timeline
Finalize Literacy Teams and Establish Cross-District Literacy Team Meetings	Solidify the composition of the district and building-level literacy teams, including roles for administrators, instructional leaders, and classroom teachers. Identify the cross-building teams that will focus on vertical alignment.	Executive Director	September 2025
Establish Communication and Meeting Structures	Define and implement a regular meeting schedule for the cross-district/building literacy teams. This includes setting specific quarterly meeting dates and creating a flowchart or protocol for how information will be shared and decisions made between team members and the rest of the faculty.	Executive Director	October 2025
Provide Targeted Professional Learning	Implement a professional learning calendar that aligns with the literacy goals. Ensure all team members, including SPED/ENL, receive training in key areas such as the science of reading, explicit	Executive Director Principals TOSAs Instructional Leaders Literacy Leaders	October 2025

	instruction, and data analysis.		
Develop a "Turnkey Training Model"	Establish a system where trained staff share knowledge. Finalize specific turnkey assignments and rollout timeline with deadlines to ensure consistent implementation of new practices across the district.	Executive Director Principals TOSAs Instructional Leaders Literacy Leaders	October 2025

Measure Success

By mid-year, all buildings will:

- Documentation (e.g., coaching logs, walkthrough data, team action plans) will show that at least 50% of classrooms are implementing literacy team strategies.
- STAR Reading, ORF, and IRLA/DI data will show that at least 50% (Green or Blue and Green)of students are on track to meet district literacy benchmarks in priority skills (e.g., vocabulary, fluency) based on winter progress monitoring results.

By the end of the year, all buildings will:

- Documentation will show that at least 65% of classrooms are implementing literacy team strategies (growth from 50%).
- All four quarterly cross-building literacy team meetings will have been completed with documented outcomes and application plans.
- Literacy teams will have established sustainable meeting protocols and documentation systems for continued use.
- STAR and IRLA data will show maintained or improved performance, with at least 65% of students meeting district literacy benchmarks in priority skills.
- Evidence of cross-building collaboration through shared strategies, resources, or joint initiatives is documented in team meeting notes.

Goal 5

During the 2025-2026 school year, the Dunkirk City School District will establish and protect common time for grade levels, coaches, and administrators to engage in collaborative planning, data analysis, and professional learning activities.

Why are we making this commitment?
This commitment is crucial to sustaining the foundational work of the past year. While we've begun to establish teams and data systems, this commitment ensures that staff have the dedicated, protected time to use those systems effectively and continuously improve their practice.

How this commitment fits into our vision for the school district:
We envision a district where collaboration and professional learning are not viewed as add-ons but as essential, embedded parts of the workday. By protecting this common time, we are investing in the capacity of our educators to implement our strategic plan with fidelity and to become a community of continuous learners.

How this commitment relates to what we heard when listening to others:
We've heard that learning walks have not been consistent, and the findings from them are not always discussed. We also know that professional learning has not always met the needs of all staff. This commitment addresses these issues by creating a formal structure for collaboration, professional learning, and the discussion of data from learning walks.

How this commitment connects to what we observed through analysis:
Our analysis showed that while some elements of a data system and professional learning were in place, they were not executed consistently. This commitment provides the necessary structure and time to ensure that our teams can consistently engage in data-driven conversations, leading to improved instructional practices across the district.

Strategy	Action	Accountability	Timeline
Revise Master Schedules	Revise master schedules at each school to include protected, structured time for collaborative planning for general education, SPED, and ENL.	Principals	September 2025
Implement Learning Walk Protocols	Develop and implement learning walk protocols that focus on the quality of literacy instruction. These walks will be conducted regularly to monitor the implementation of the new curriculum and new instructional strategies, and to provide timely, constructive feedback.	Executive Director Principals TOSAs	September 2025
Create Peer Observation Opportunities	Develop structured peer observation opportunities for teachers with feedback. The focus will be on teacher-to-teacher observation to build trust. These are separate from administrative learning walks or evaluations.	Executive Director Principals TOSAs Instructional Leaders Literacy Leaders Teachers	November 2025 - Ongoing
Measure Professional Learning Impact	Establish a system to collect and analyze data on the effectiveness of	Executive Director Principals PDC	October 2025 and Ongoing

	professional learning activities. ● PDC Surveys and Teacher Surveys ● Levels Meetings ● Principal Check-ins with Executive Director ● Coaching Data ● Review of Learning Walk Data	TOSAs Literacy Leaders Instructional Leaders	

Measure Success

By Mid-Year, all buildings will:

- Master schedules for all schools will be revised and will include protected time for collaborative planning for teachers, coaches, and administrators.
- All schools will have implemented the new learning walk protocols, and a minimum of three rounds of learning walks will have been completed in each grade band.
- The district will have a formalized, written system for peer observation and feedback protocols, with at least one round of peer observations completed.
- Leadership check-ins with principals and directors will be initiated and documented to review the effectiveness of professional learning activities.

By the end of the year, all buildings will:

- Walkthrough and coaching data will demonstrate that professional development has translated into improved classroom practice, showing at least a 20% increase in the use of targeted literacy strategies from the beginning of the year based on the explicit instruction feedback tool.
- All required peer observation opportunities and feedback sessions will be completed and documented.
- An end-of-year review of the professional learning calendar and its impact will be conducted, using feedback from participants and data from walkthroughs.
- A clear plan for how to use data from learning walks, peer observations, and professional learning activities to inform the following year's strategic plan will be established.