



Opportunity Through Education

Wyoming District Peer Review

Sweetwater County School District #1

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INTRODUCTION

The Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) conducted a peer review visit, on October 21-22, 2025, in Sweetwater County School District #1. The visiting team included Penny Bolinger, Niobrara County School District #1; Chanler Buck, Park County School District #1; Katrina Crossland, Platte County School District #1; Matt Davidson, Big Horn County School District #1; James Denning, Retiree (Laramie County School District #1); Steve Foley, Big Horn County School District #1; William Hiser, Big Horn County School District #2; Daryl Michael, Fremont County School District #14; Micah Becker, Wyoming Department of Education; Caitlin Hoff, Wyoming Department of Education; and Brent Young, Team Lead. The team would like to thank the district for its hospitality during the visit.

In Wyoming's Peer Review Accreditation Model, a team is selected, made up of professionals from Wyoming school districts, constituents from the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE), and a team lead that facilitates the visit. These professionals come from a variety of areas within an educational setting and serve as "equals" ([Approaches to Accreditation](#)) to those professionals directly reporting to the peer review team during their district's two-day visit. This model offers a "collegial" approach that closely examines annual accreditation criteria, artifacts of implemented processes, the district's assessment system, and input from the school district's stakeholders.

Anticipated benefits from Wyoming's Peer Review Model are that it serves as a mechanism to help a school district with prioritizing, making informed decisions, and to reflect on their own unique quality standards that have been identified in their strategic plan.

Rating of District Practices

Based on district artifacts and processes as well as discussions and observations, team members use these descriptors to define their review:

- **Deficient:** No relevant artifacts or evidence of a process were observed.
- **Adequate:** Some to numerous artifacts were observed, but there was not a clearly defined, systematic process, or there was limited implementation of the process.
- **Strong:** A coherent, systematic process that is being implemented across the district was discussed with the team, and concise artifacts were observed.
- **Exemplary:** A coherent, systematic, documented process that is well-implemented across the district was shared with the team, and concise artifacts were observed. The process and artifacts were of a level of quality that can be shared statewide.

Evidence Definition

- **Artifacts:** Data, print documents, videos, photographs, digital files, self-ratings, survey results, focus group results, research, strategies, plans, reports, models, etc.
- **Processes:** Processes are clearly defined work steps that will produce the desired result if consistently well implemented.

Accreditation vs. Peer Review

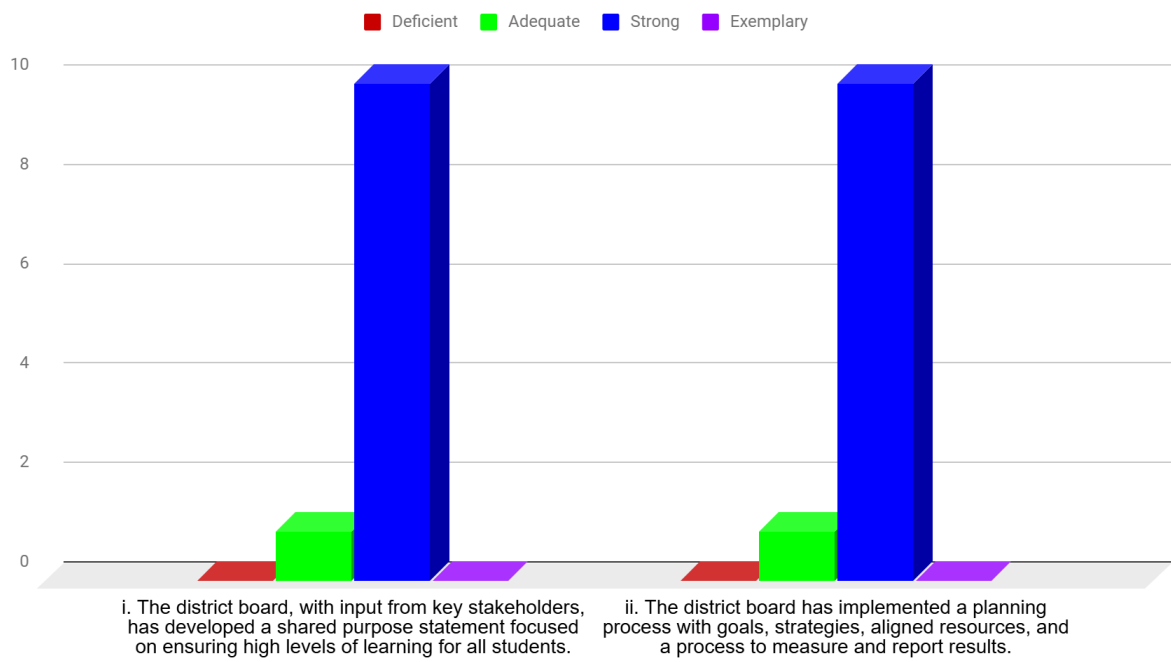
Wyoming State accreditation is conferred annually by the State Board of Education based on the recommendation of the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE). This is based primarily on review of artifacts and assurances submitted to the WDE by the district, and WDE internal review processes.

A five-year external review coordinated by the WDE or an approved provider is required for accreditation. The peer review is based on research-based practices selected and developed by the WDE with input from the Wyoming accreditation task force. Regardless of the external review option selected, a five-year review of the district assessment system is required.

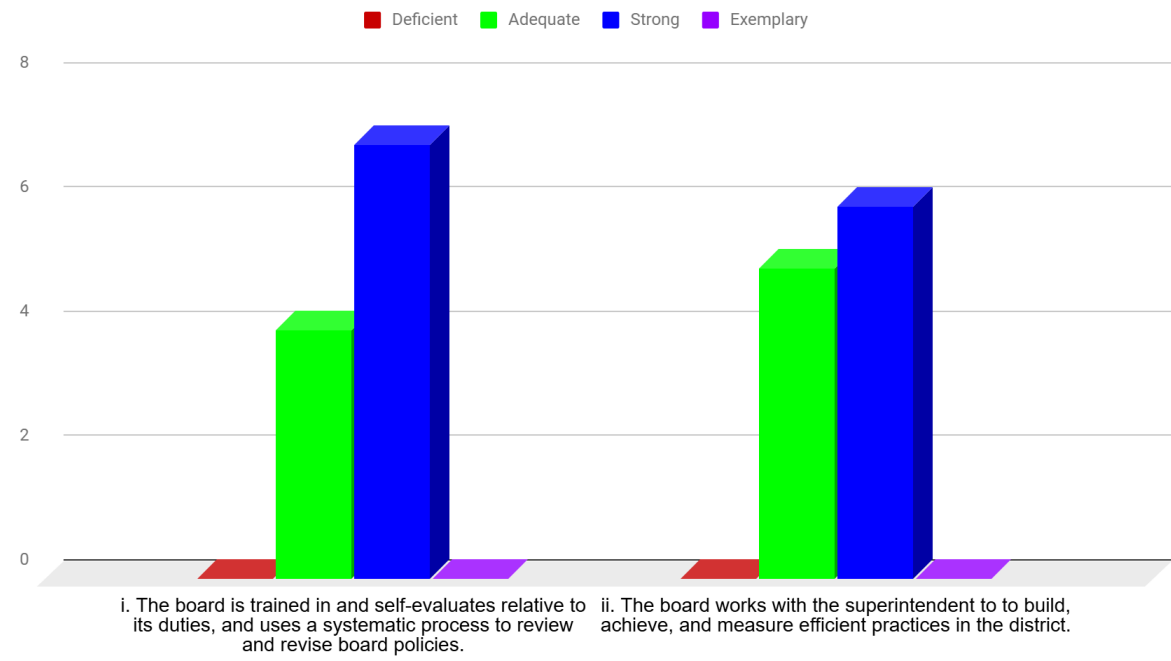
A. GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

01. GOVERNING BOARD

a. District Purpose



b. Governance and Oversight



The district's Board of Education demonstrates a strong commitment to governance practices centered on student learning and community collaboration. Through a systematic process of stakeholder engagement—including surveys, listening sessions, and public meetings—the Board, alongside district leadership, developed a clear mission, vision, and strategic plan focused on preparing students for success in life. This inclusive approach has strengthened trust and transparency across the community and reinforced a shared sense of purpose throughout the district.

The Board's strategic plan guides district operations, aligning goals, resources, and accountability from governance to the classroom. Board goals follow a five-year cycle, with progress reviewed via superintendent evaluations and board self-assessments. Superintendent evaluations are public, increasing transparency and communicating progress on district priorities.

Policies are reviewed monthly in collaboration with the Wyoming School Boards Association (WSBA), ensuring alignment with legal requirements and best practices. The Board also completed WSBA training to strengthen its understanding of governance and oversight responsibilities. A systematic policy review process has established a clear connection between policy, operational procedures, and daily implementation—providing staff with consistency and clarity in their roles.

District leadership emphasizes coherence between board direction and school-level implementation. School Improvement Plans are aligned to district goals, with annual progress updates presented to the Board. This alignment ensures that governance decisions remain directly tied to student outcomes and instructional improvement. Leaders across the district use a common language around the mission and vision, reinforcing unity of purpose and maintaining focus on instructional priorities.

Recent data indicate positive growth trends in academic performance and organizational effectiveness. While specific metrics are evolving, leadership expresses confidence in the district's improvement trajectory. Strategic resource reallocation has allowed the district to strengthen instructional supports, expand staffing to reduce class sizes, and enhance early learning programs that contribute to kindergarten readiness and long-term achievement.

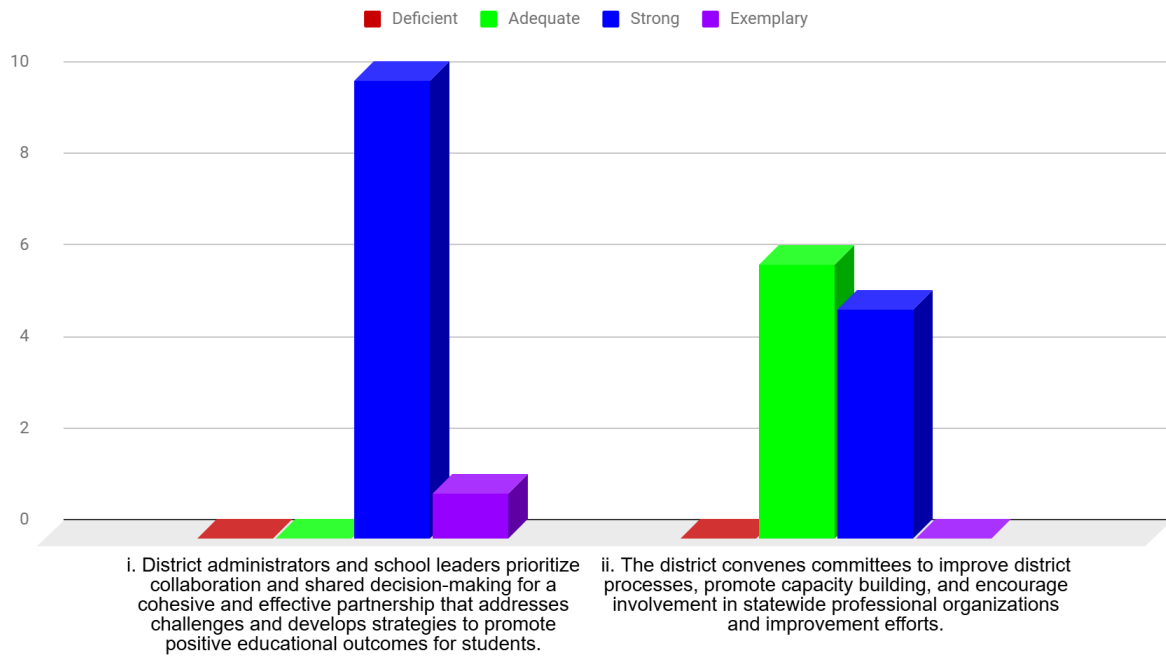
Board members and district leaders acknowledge that many of the district's initiatives are still in early stages of implementation. Sustainability and the development of reliable measures of success remain areas of ongoing focus. Nevertheless, the Board's deliberate approach—grounded in collaboration, accountability, and continuous improvement—reflects a strong foundation for long-term success and governance stability.

Indicators of Effective Practice:

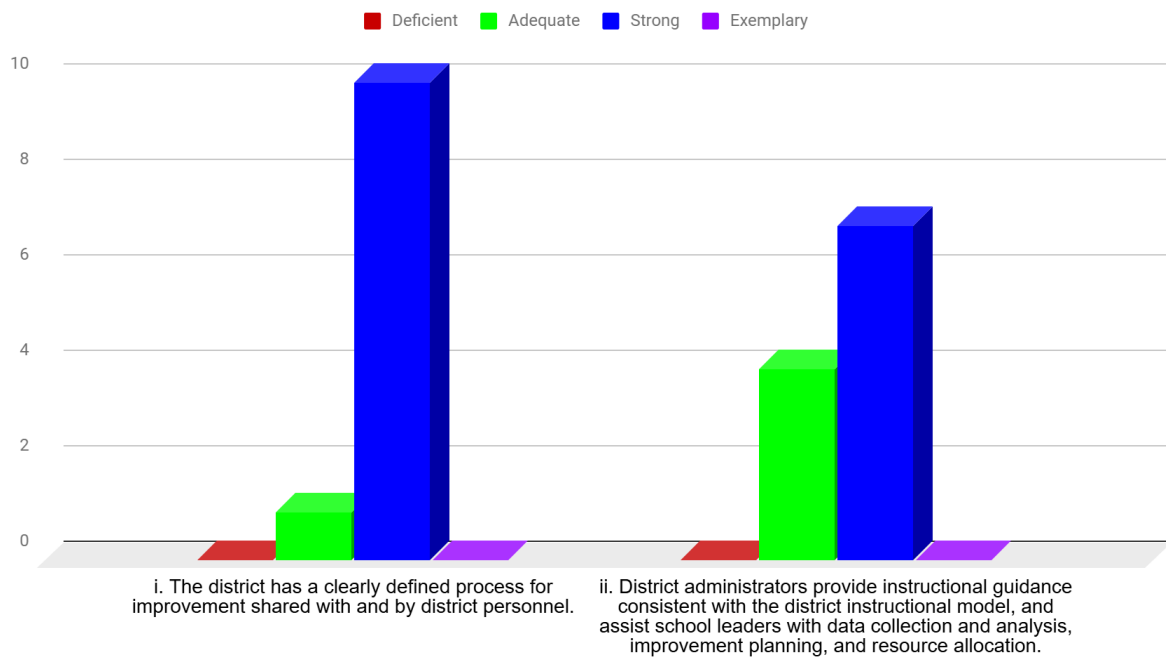
- Board goals and superintendent evaluations are directly linked to student learning outcomes.
- Stakeholder engagement is embedded through surveys, listening sessions, and public forums.
- Policies are systematically reviewed and aligned with WSBA best practices.
- Governance decisions align with district strategic priorities and school-level improvement plans.
- Resource allocation supports early learning, class-size reduction, and instructional support.
- Board transparency fosters community trust and shared accountability.

02. CENTRAL OFFICE LEADERSHIP

a. Collaborative Leadership



b. Quality Improvement



The district's central office leadership fosters collaboration, continuous improvement, and educator empowerment. Intentional implementation of Cognitive Coaching has refined leadership practices, promoting deeper reflection, better communication, and authentic problem-solving. District and school leaders now use this model as a shared language for growth, strengthening relationships and focusing improvement efforts.

The district's collaborative culture mandates in-person communication for discussions over ten minutes, building trust and transparency. Central office leaders maintain visibility and support by regularly visiting schools for building walks, classroom observations, and administrative PLCs, modeling instructional leadership and demonstrating a commitment to improving learning outcomes alongside principals and teachers.

Collaboration is deeply embedded through multiple structures such as book studies, vertical and cross-departmental PLCs, and district committees designed to align school improvement plans and ensure continuity across grade levels and schools. Leaders have moved beyond managerial oversight to true instructional partnership, dedicating time to coaching principals and empowering them as instructional leaders within their buildings.

The district's focus on empowering staff as thinkers and problem solvers, rather than directive implementers, has reshaped professional culture. Initiatives like the second-year program "Beyond Textbooks" reinforce this by supporting teacher efficacy and professional autonomy aligned with standards-based instruction. This "empower thinkers and problem solvers" philosophy is now a leadership cornerstone, emphasizing collective ownership and shared success.

The district prioritizes professional development, including Cognitive Coaching for all directors and administrators and leadership studies to enhance collaboration, trust, and reflective practice. Structured administrative meetings ensure alignment, progress sharing, and support for high student achievement. This intentional focus, along with increased school presence and communication, is beginning to reduce behavioral issues, improve instructional alignment, and foster a more cohesive culture of learning and leadership.

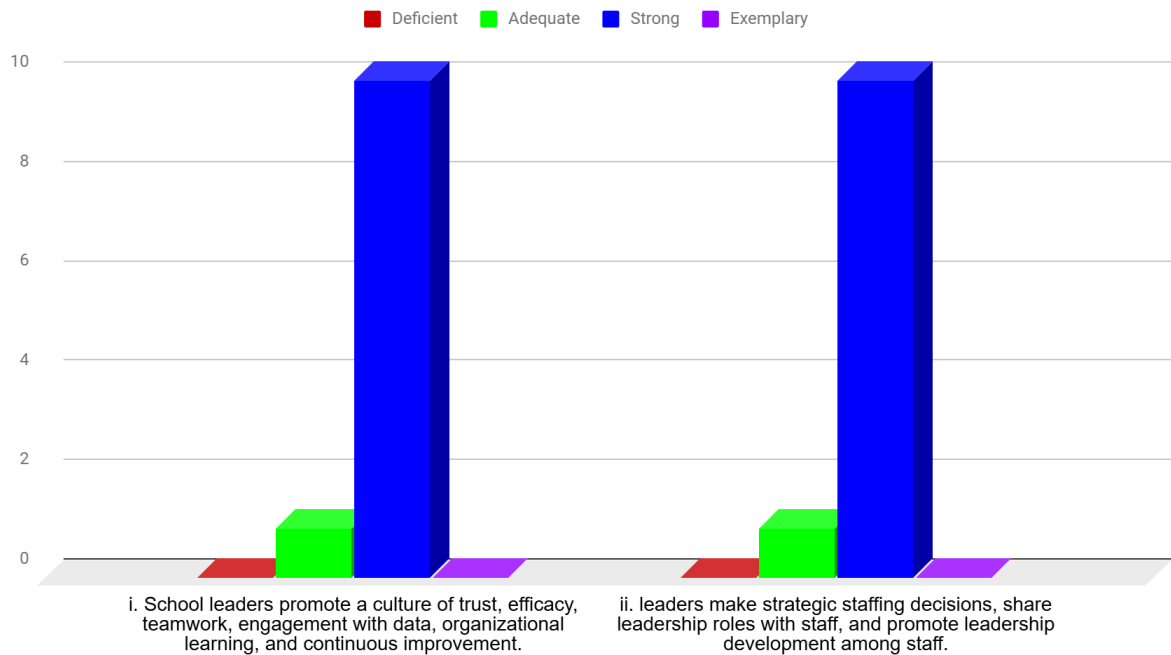
Refining systems is shifting the district from management to leadership. The vision of cultivating intuitive thinkers, problem solvers, and empowered educators is being realized through collaboration, continuous improvement, and a shared belief in the potential of all students and staff.

Indicators of Effective Practice:

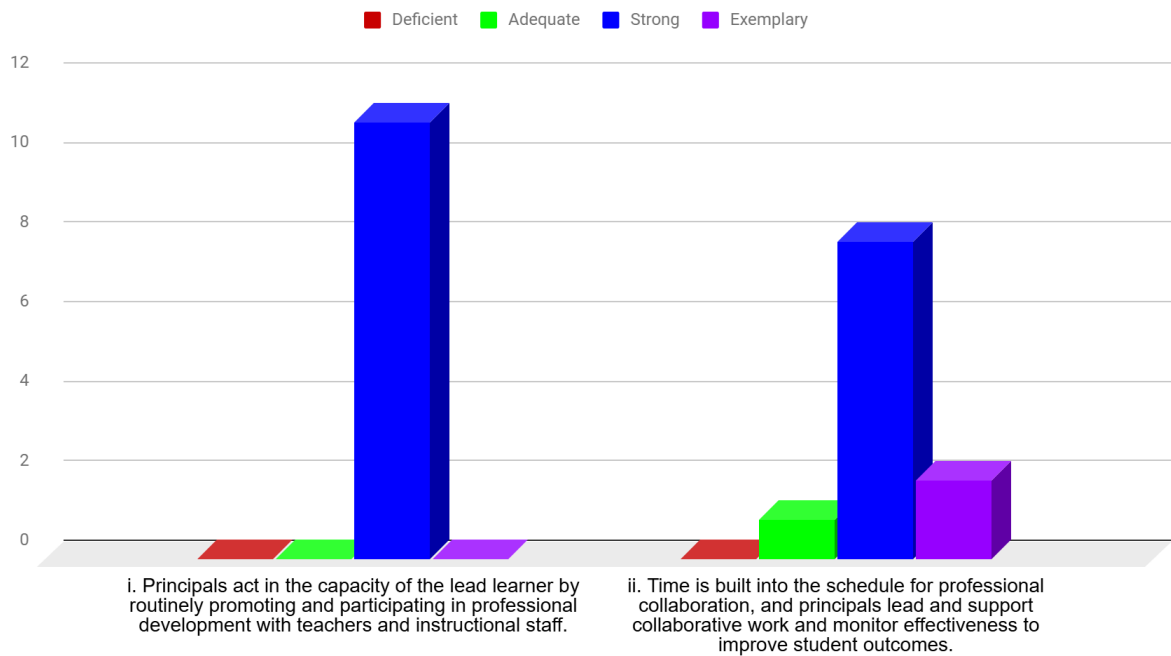
- Cognitive Coaching implemented district-wide to support reflective leadership.
- Central office leaders maintain visible, consistent school presence through walks and PLCs.
- Cross-departmental collaboration ensures coherence between district and school goals.
- Professional development is intentional, continuous, and aligned to district priorities.
- Culture of empowerment and trust fosters autonomy and innovation among staff.
- Leadership focus has shifted from management to capacity-building and improvement.

03. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

a. School Culture



b. Learning Leadership



District and school leaders maintain a consistent and visible presence in classrooms, building strong relationships with staff and students. This hands-on approach fosters engagement, accountability, and relational trust. The district's leadership model prioritizes being "present in the work," ensuring that instructional practices are supported, celebrated, and continuously improved through frequent walkthroughs, classroom visits, and PLC participation.

Over the past two years, leadership practices have transitioned from managerial oversight to collaborative and transparent systems of shared responsibility. Teachers are empowered to take ownership of school improvement efforts through leadership committees, rotating PLC leadership, and collaborative decision-making processes. Assignments and leadership roles are determined through staff surveys and conversations that identify strengths and interests, ensuring that teams are well-matched and professionally supported.

The district's four-day instructional schedule reserves Fridays for professional collaboration, intervention, and planning—demonstrating a clear commitment to aligning professional learning with student needs. Every other Friday is devoted to professional development aligned with data and instructional priorities, while peer observations and cross-school walkthroughs promote best practice sharing and collective efficacy.

Data-informed decision-making is a consistent expectation. Tools such as Edmentum, WY-TOPP, and PLC data cycles are used to guide interventions and assess effectiveness. Input from stakeholders—including results from the Upbeat survey—inform continuous improvement decisions.

Servant leadership and Cognitive Coaching principles are deeply woven into administrative practice, promoting reflection, empathy, and professional trust. Administrators model lifelong learning by attending PD alongside teachers, reinforcing a unified culture of growth. Cross-school collaboration and teacher-led initiatives such as WIN groups and leadership committees further demonstrate the district's investment in shared accountability and empowerment.

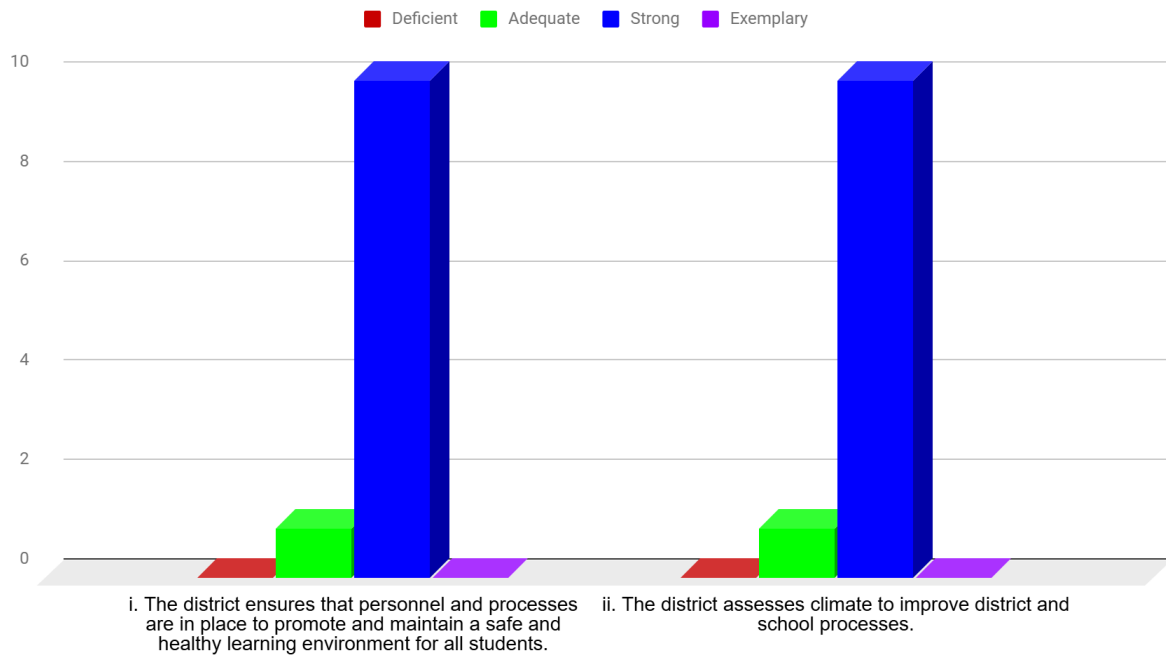
With established systems for collaboration, strong relational foundations, and a clear commitment to data-informed decisions, the district is well-positioned to continue advancing as a model of Professional Learning Community (PLC) implementation.

Indicators of Effective Practice:

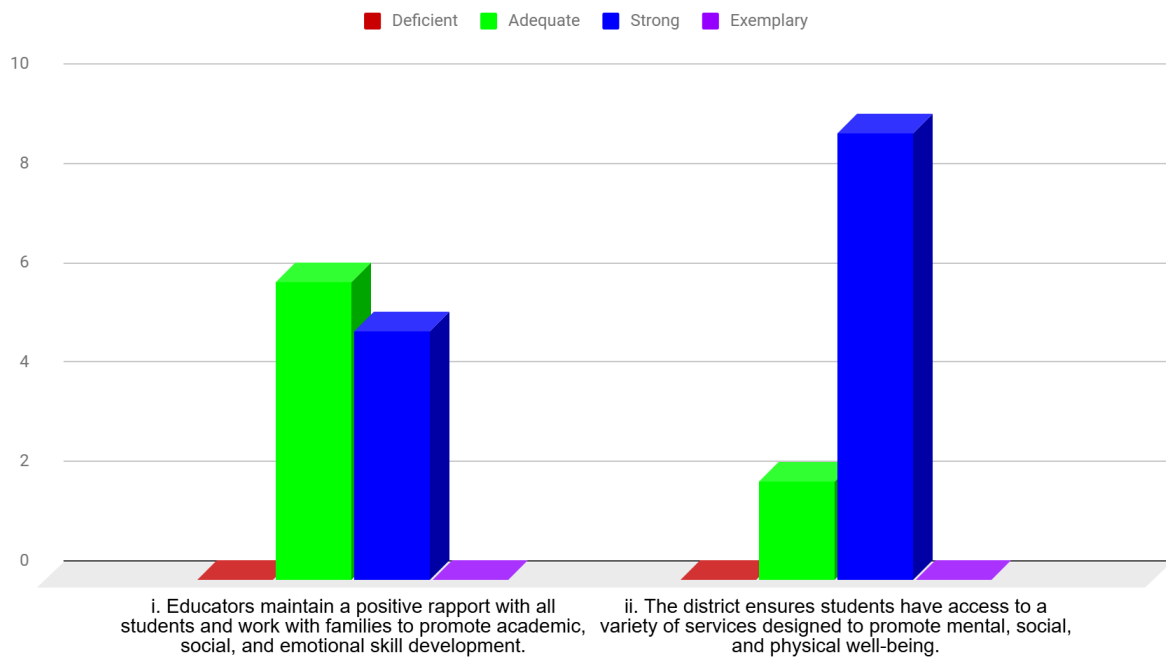
- Leaders maintain visibility and build trust through daily engagement with staff and students.
- Shared leadership is embedded through rotating PLC leadership and teacher committees.
- Friday schedules prioritize professional learning, planning, and intervention.
- Decision-making is data-informed and inclusive of multiple stakeholder perspectives.
- Servant leadership and Cognitive Coaching strengthen collaboration and professional reflection.
- Cross-school collaboration promotes consistency, coherence, and collective efficacy.

04. CLIMATE AND SAFETY

a. Learning Environment



b. Positive Relationships



The district demonstrates a deep and deliberate commitment to maintaining a safe, healthy, and supportive learning environment for every student. Safety and well-being are viewed as integral to the district's mission and woven into every aspect of school culture. Safety systems, social-emotional learning (SEL) programs, and wellness supports are implemented consistently across schools and aligned to the district's vision of caring for the whole child—academically, socially, and emotionally.

The district prioritizes safety, demonstrated by its annual, administratively supported reunification drills in every building. Additional proactive measures include the Raptor visitor system, "I Love U Guys" Standard Response Protocols, MANDT de-escalation training, School Crisis Teams, School Resource Officers, and Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG), forming a robust, interconnected safety infrastructure.

The district equally prioritizes social-emotional learning (SEL) and mental wellness. SEL, starting at Overland Early Learning Center and continuing through high school via Sources of Strength, is taught by counselors with teacher reinforcement. Certified counselors and social workers, in partnership with Optum Emotional Well-Being Solutions, also provide direct instruction in emotional regulation and social skills.

Climate and culture data are regularly collected through the Upbeat survey, providing valuable insights into student, staff, and parent perceptions. The district uses this feedback to identify strengths, address needs, and inform improvement planning. Plans are underway to expand data analysis to the classroom level for more precise interventions.

Operationally, the district's four-day week has enhanced both staff wellness and professional development. The structure supports teacher collaboration, reflection, and consistent student engagement. Extended-day funds have also been used strategically to increase instructional opportunities for diverse learners.

The district's culture of positivity and innovation is evident in its "Why Not?" mindset, which encourages staff to approach challenges with creativity and solution-oriented thinking. Programs such as the student school board amplify student voice, giving learners authentic input in shaping school culture. Staff wellness programs and continued CPR training extend care to educators themselves, ensuring that safety and well-being are community-wide priorities.

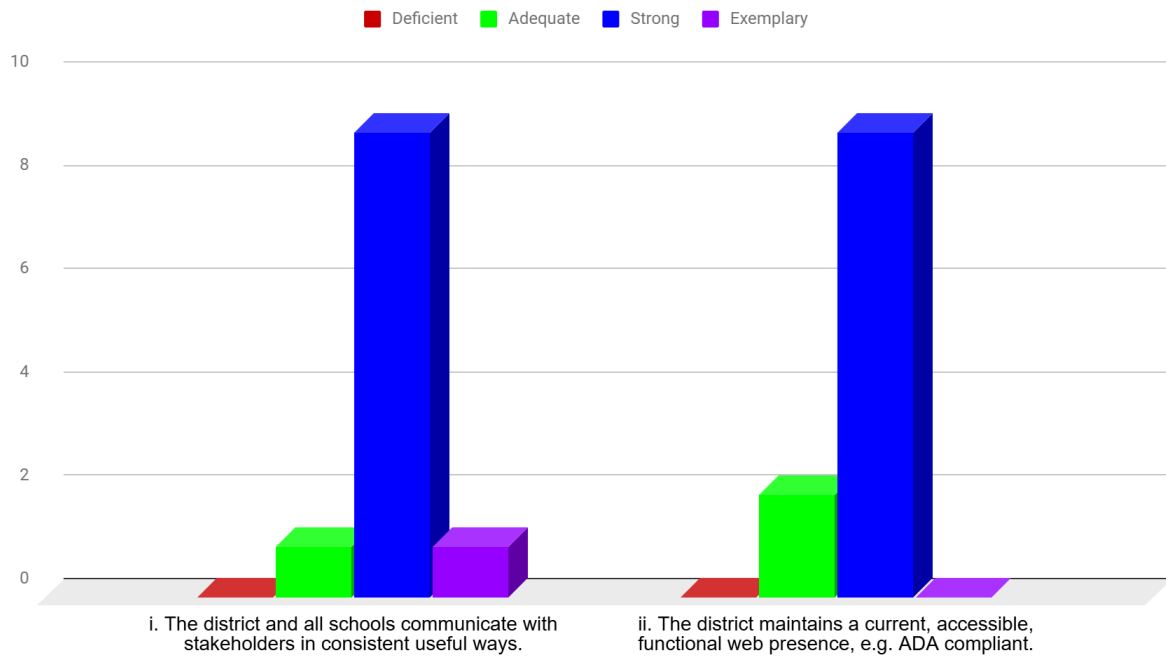
Through proactive safety planning, social-emotional supports, and inclusive leadership, the district exemplifies a mature, evolving system that prioritizes safety, relationships, and continuous improvement.

Indicators of Effective Practice:

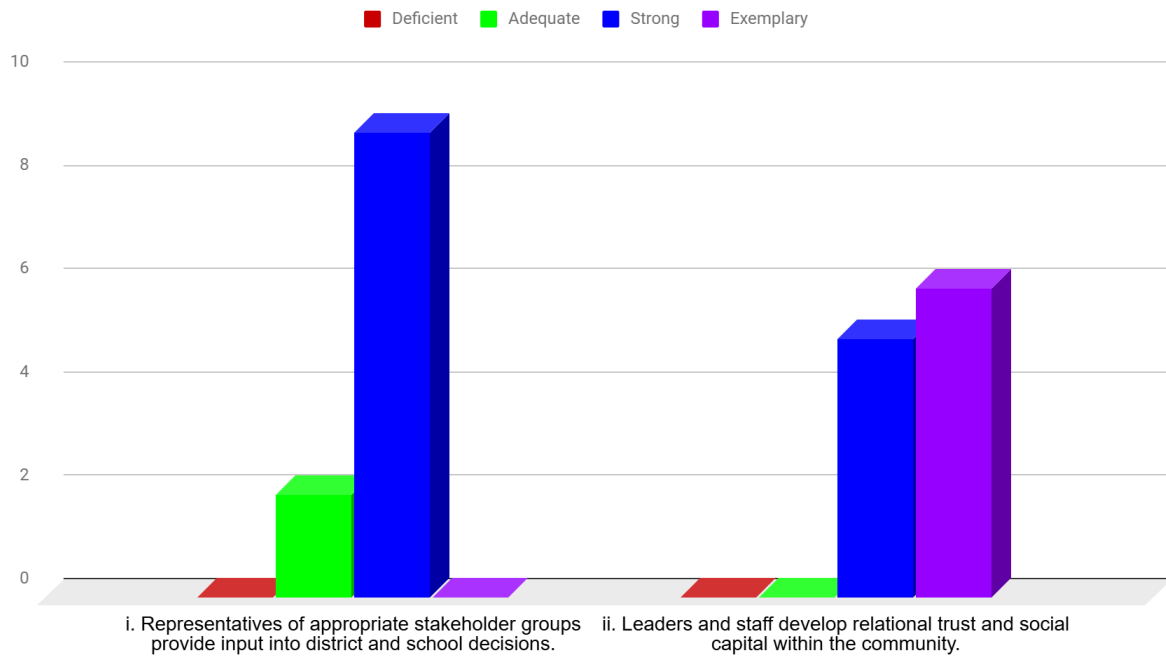
- Comprehensive safety systems (Raptor, CSTAG, SRP) implemented across all schools.
- Annual reunification drills reinforce preparedness and safety culture.
- SEL programming and mental health partnerships address whole-child development.
- Climate surveys inform decision-making and improvement planning.
- The four-day week supports professional wellness and instructional alignment.
- “Why Not?” culture promotes innovation, trust, and positive relationships.

05. STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS

a. Stakeholder Communications



b. Stakeholder Input



The district maintains transparent, timely, and inclusive communication with all stakeholders, ensuring families, staff, and community members remain informed and engaged. ParentSquare serves as the district's primary communication platform, offering real-time updates and ensuring internal audiences receive information before public dissemination. This system fosters confidence and responsiveness across the school community.

Complementing digital communication, the district maintains an ADA-compliant website through Finalsity. The site is updated regularly and features a public Q&A process that allows stakeholders to submit inquiries and view posted responses—an innovative example of transparency and accessibility. Social media, particularly Facebook, is used strategically to highlight student and staff achievements, promote district events, and celebrate success while maintaining a positive online environment through moderated engagement.

The district continues to emphasize relational communication through face-to-face events such as "Community Coffee Chats" and "Open Mic Nights," providing opportunities for informal dialogue between community members, board representatives, and district staff. These initiatives reinforce trust and build authentic relationships with families and community partners.

Recognizing communication as a cornerstone of district culture, the Board established a dedicated communications position to oversee outreach and ensure message consistency across platforms. The district also maintains partnerships with local media to share positive stories and highlight student accomplishments, further connecting schools to the community.

The Sweetwater County School Foundation plays a critical role in resource alignment and community partnership. Its signature program, Kari's Access Awards, has generated over \$630,000 since 2006 to remove financial barriers for at-risk students seeking participation in enrichment and extracurricular opportunities. The Foundation also leads the Hall of Fame and Alumni Association, strengthening long-term community connections and pride.

Through partnerships with local organizations and faith-based groups, the district addresses needs such as food insecurity through initiatives like "Grab-and-Go" pantries and the repurposing of Washington Elementary as a community center for at-risk support. These efforts illustrate the district's holistic approach to student well-being and family stability.

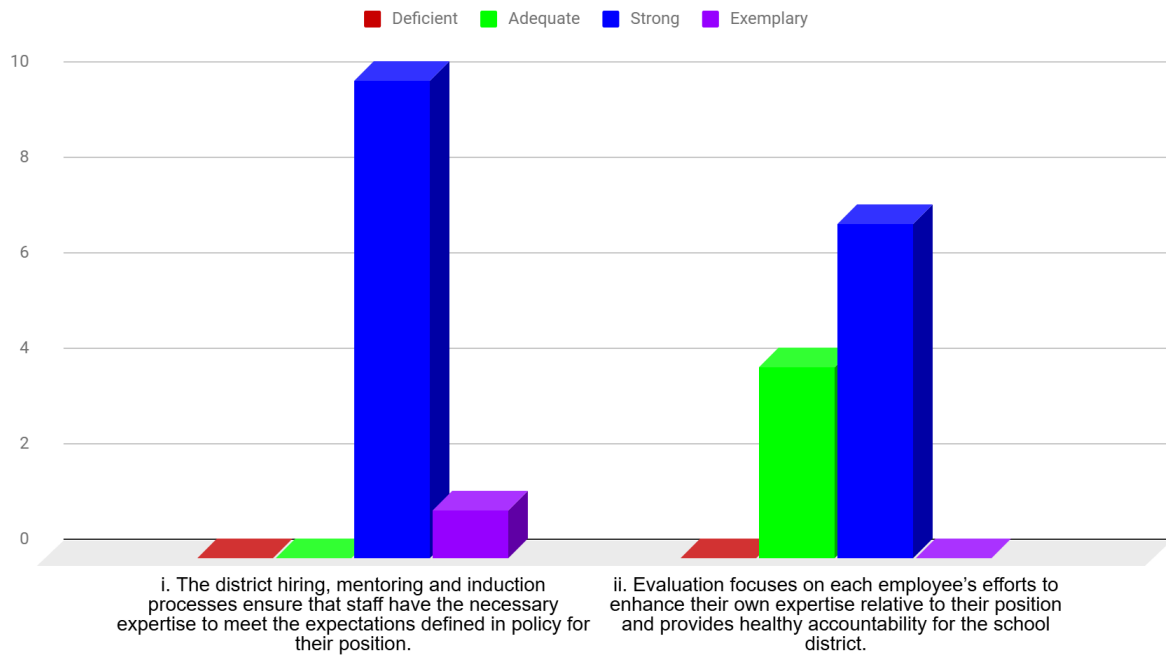
Collectively, the district's approach to stakeholder relations demonstrates a comprehensive communication system anchored in transparency, responsiveness, and partnership.

Indicators of Effective Practice:

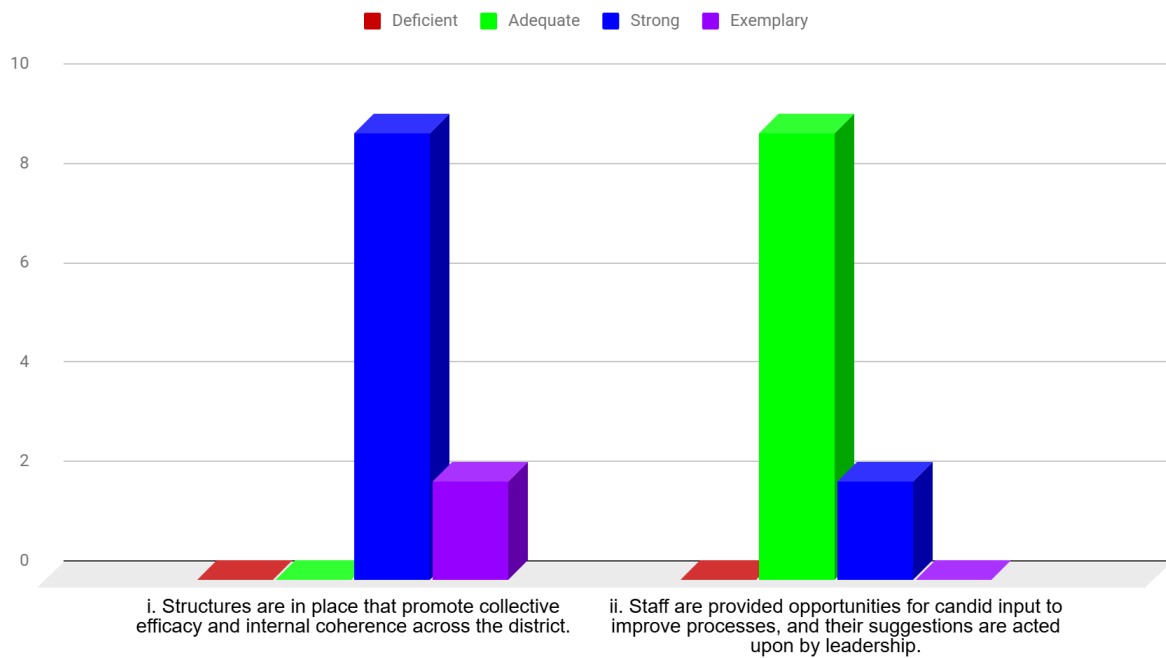
- ParentSquare platform enables timely, two-way communication with families.
- ADA-compliant website promotes transparency and accessibility.
- Community events create inclusive dialogue between families and district leadership.
- Dedicated communications director ensures message alignment and clarity.
- School Foundation partnerships provide financial support and scholarships for students.
- Media collaboration highlights district achievements and builds community pride.

06. HUMAN RESOURCES

a. Human Capital



b. Employee Recognition



The district demonstrates strong and intentional human resources practices focused on recruiting, supporting, and retaining a highly qualified workforce. A comprehensive teacher induction program ensures that all newly hired educators—regardless of prior experience—are provided with consistent training on district expectations, instructional alignment, and professional culture. The program encourages participation for up to three years, offering mentorship, coaching, and shared readings such as *The First Days of School* and *Teach Like a Champion*, which establish a unified instructional language and reinforce the district's "Why Not" culture of innovation.

Hiring practices are thorough, transparent, and collaborative. Building administrators oversee recruitment through the Frontline system, supported by interview teams of at least three members. Certified candidates teach a sample lesson, references are verified, and multiple administrators collaborate to determine the best placements. Strategic staffing decisions have reduced class sizes and strengthened instructional capacity, with recent additions including English Learner and Special Education positions.

Evaluation processes are consistent and growth-oriented. All staff—certified, classified, and administrative—are evaluated annually through the Wyoming State Education Evaluator System (SEES) and the FRISK model. These frameworks emphasize communication, reflection, and professional growth while ensuring accountability. Cognitive Coaching principles are used to guide evaluations, promoting a partnership approach to improvement.

The district also prioritizes recruitment and retention through employee support services. Onsite childcare and preschool programs, funded through TANF and Early Childhood grants, address family needs and improve retention by reducing barriers to employment.

Recognition and celebration are integral to HR culture. The "Why Not" Awards highlight staff innovation and positivity, culminating in an annual recognition luncheon featuring symbolic celebrations of appreciation. Additional acknowledgments include Teacher of the Year awards, "Superstar" nominations, and public recognition during board meetings. A student board representative program further reinforces the district's inclusive and celebratory environment.

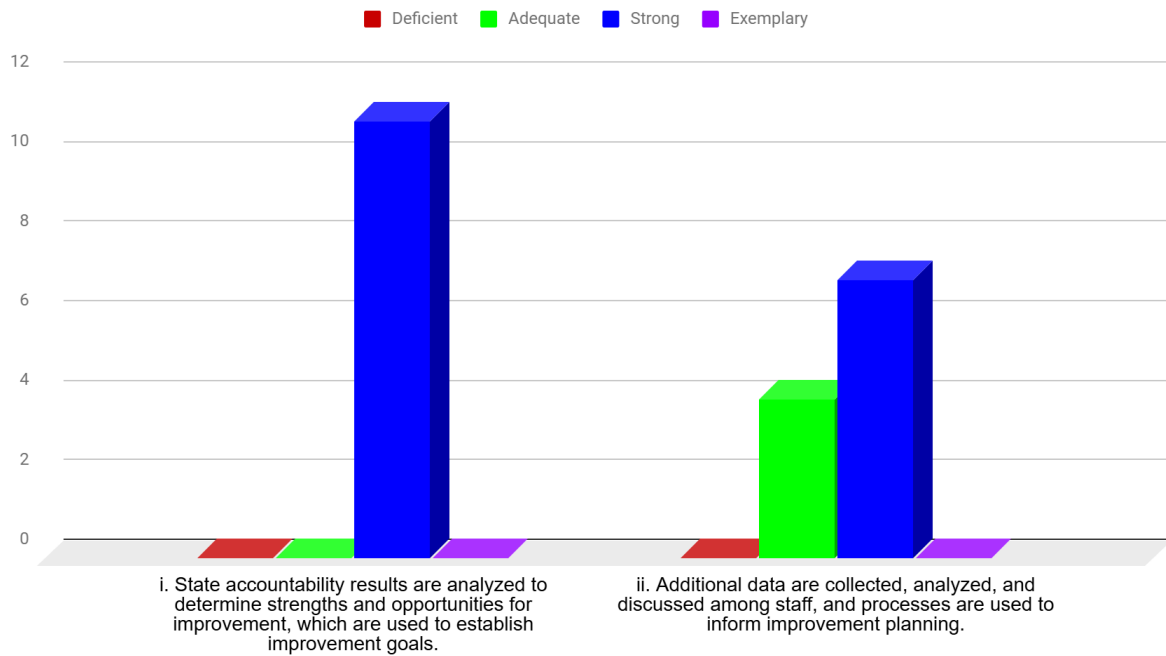
District leadership expresses confidence in the HR systems that streamline hiring, enhance support, and foster collaboration. Feedback from employees is valued and incorporated into continuous improvement processes, ensuring that staff feel both heard and appreciated.

Indicators of Effective Practice:

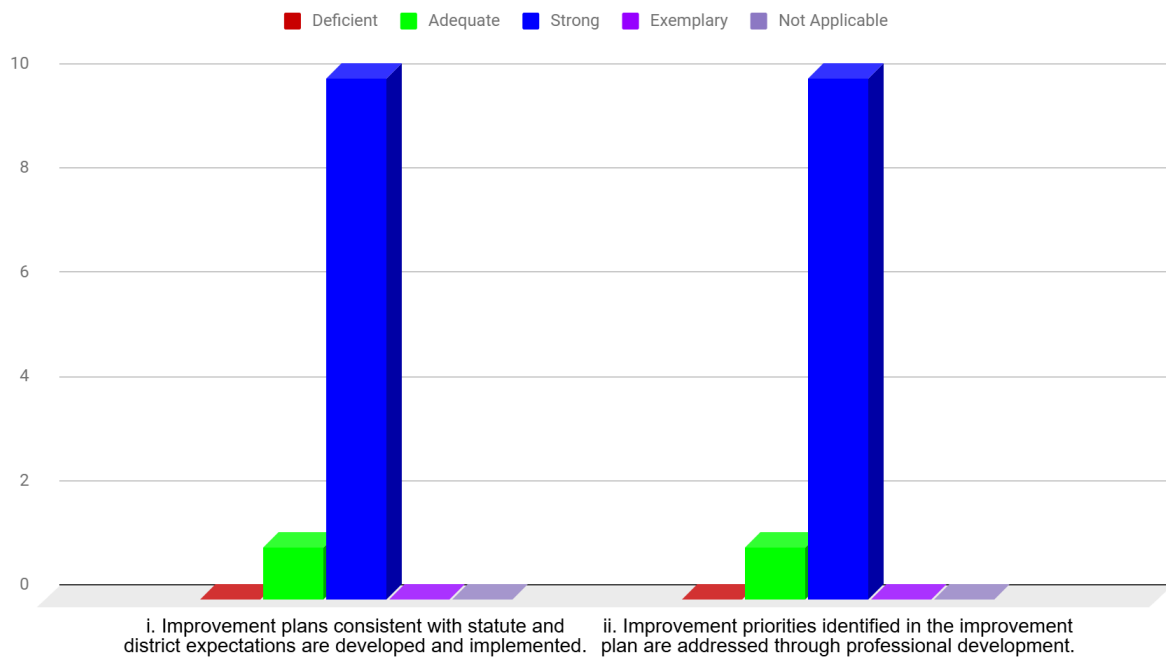
- A comprehensive induction program establishes consistent expectations for new teachers.
- A structured hiring process ensures collaboration and transparency.
- Evaluation systems (SEES and FRISK) promote reflection and accountability.
- Cognitive Coaching fosters trust and continuous growth.
- Childcare and preschool services enhance recruitment and retention.
- Employee recognition programs strengthen culture and morale.

07. ACCOUNTABILITY AND IMPROVEMENT

a. Needs Analysis



b. Improvement Plans



The district embraces a comprehensive and collaborative model of accountability grounded in data-driven decision-making and empowered instruction. Teachers are trusted as instructional leaders within their classrooms and encouraged to exercise professional judgment to meet student needs. This autonomy has nurtured innovation and collective ownership of outcomes.

A transition from textbook-dependent instruction to a standards-based framework aligned with Wyoming State Standards has significantly elevated instructional rigor. Standards-based grading practices have been implemented district-wide in K–6 and are being integrated at secondary levels to ensure clarity and alignment in measuring student proficiency.

Accountability data guide long-term goal setting and improvement planning. School Improvement Plans (SIPs) are aligned with the district’s strategic plan and developed collaboratively with input from all stakeholder groups. The Superintendent leads the accountability process, emphasizing the conversion of data into actionable improvement.

Vertical alignment meetings and K–6 pairing cohorts foster continuity and coherence across grade levels. Title II-supported professional development connects directly to SIP goals, while building-level budgets are tied to instructional priorities. Monthly meetings between principals and the Chief Financial Officer ensure that fiscal decisions align with learning goals, bridging financial and instructional systems effectively.

Collaborative planning meetings—held monthly and inclusive of instructional and support staff—create a culture of reflection and shared learning. Cognitive Coaching and growth-focused evaluation models support open dialogue and goal adjustment throughout the year.

The district’s ambitious target—to exceed state performance averages by twenty points within five years—reflects a shared confidence in its educators and systems. Beyond Textbooks, professional development, and alignment efforts continue to strengthen fidelity, collaboration, and student outcomes.

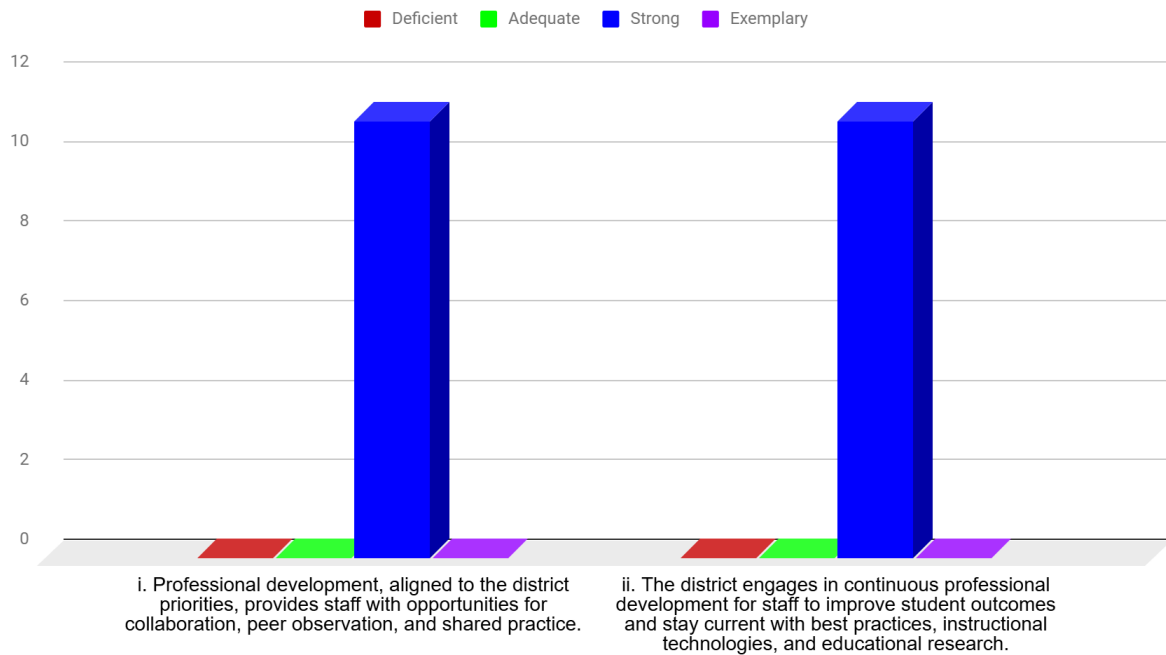
Indicators of Effective Practice:

- Data-driven decision-making informs all planning and instructional priorities.
- Standards-based grading fosters clarity and consistency in assessment.
- School Improvement Plans align directly with district strategic goals.
- Fiscal planning supports instructional improvement and accountability.
- Vertical alignment strengthens coherence across grade levels.
- Empowered teachers exercise professional judgment with accountability for results.

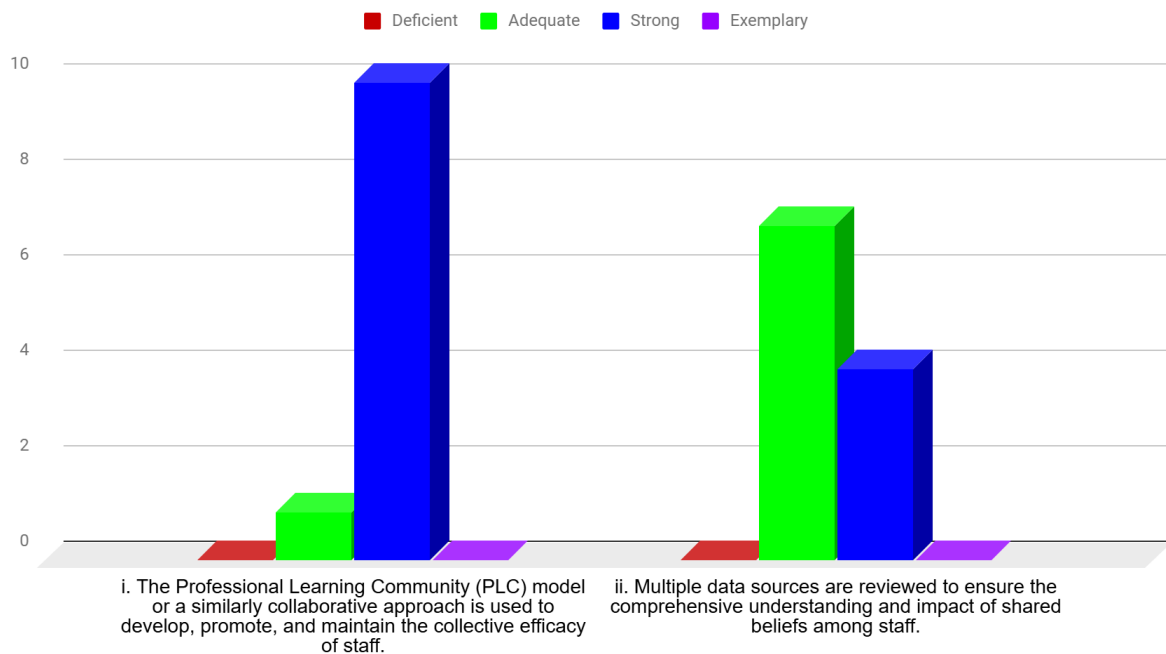
B. INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMMING

08. HIGHER IMPACT STRATEGIES

a. Collaborative Expertise



b. Collective Efficacy



Collaboration is deeply embedded in the district's professional culture and serves as a cornerstone for instructional improvement. Administrative leaders actively participate in all Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings, ensuring that collaboration is modeled and supported at every level. This consistent leadership presence reinforces accountability, coherence, and alignment between district priorities and classroom practice. Building schedules have been intentionally structured to embed PLC time within the contract day, allowing teachers to collaborate and reflect regularly without extending the workweek.

Student Achievement Teachers (SATs) play a pivotal role in advancing collaborative expertise. Each SAT is assigned to specific schools, delivering targeted professional development in literacy and mathematics while facilitating data analysis and instructional planning. Their work bridges district initiatives and building-level practice, promoting consistency and shared understanding across schools.

Teacher leadership is intentionally cultivated through quarterly rotations of PLC facilitators, allowing multiple staff members to develop leadership capacity and ensure sustainability. This distributed leadership model encourages ownership and continuous improvement at all levels.

Professional development (PD) is strategically aligned with district priorities and school improvement plans. Core PD areas include literacy and mathematics, supported by national consultants such as Kagan, Ron Clark, and Solution Tree, alongside local expertise. The district's Summer Academy offers diverse sessions led by teachers and consultants, empowering staff to select learning opportunities that match their professional goals. Each PD session is followed by the reflective question, "What now?"—ensuring that learning translates into classroom practice and improvement cycles.

Supporting tools such as the PLC Co-Planner and RTI Cheat Sheet assist teams in maintaining focus on student needs, while assessments like Edmentum and iSTEOP guide MTSS implementation. This comprehensive system ensures instruction is informed by data and aligned to standards.

Collective efficacy has become a defining strength of the district's professional culture. Educators share a unified belief that all staff—teachers, leaders, and support personnel—can positively influence student learning outcomes. Individual student goal-setting through data binders promotes ownership, while leadership coaching for administrators strengthens capacity across schools.

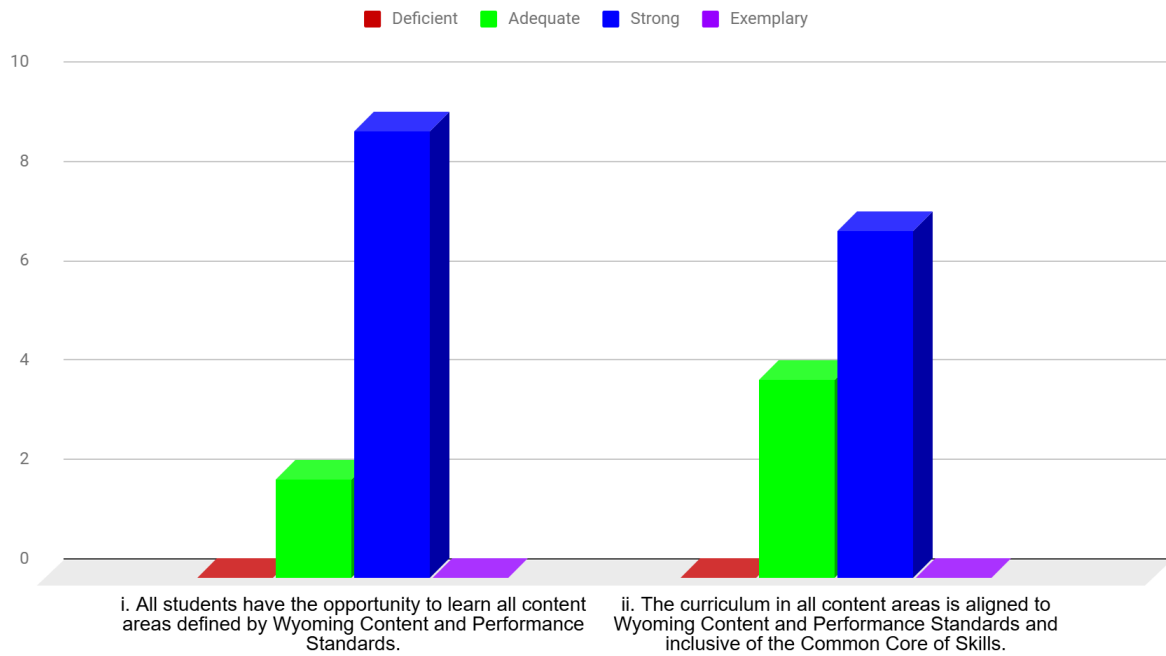
Through intentional collaboration, structured support, and reflective professional learning, the district has built a culture of continuous improvement rooted in trust, alignment, and shared success.

Indicators of Effective Practice:

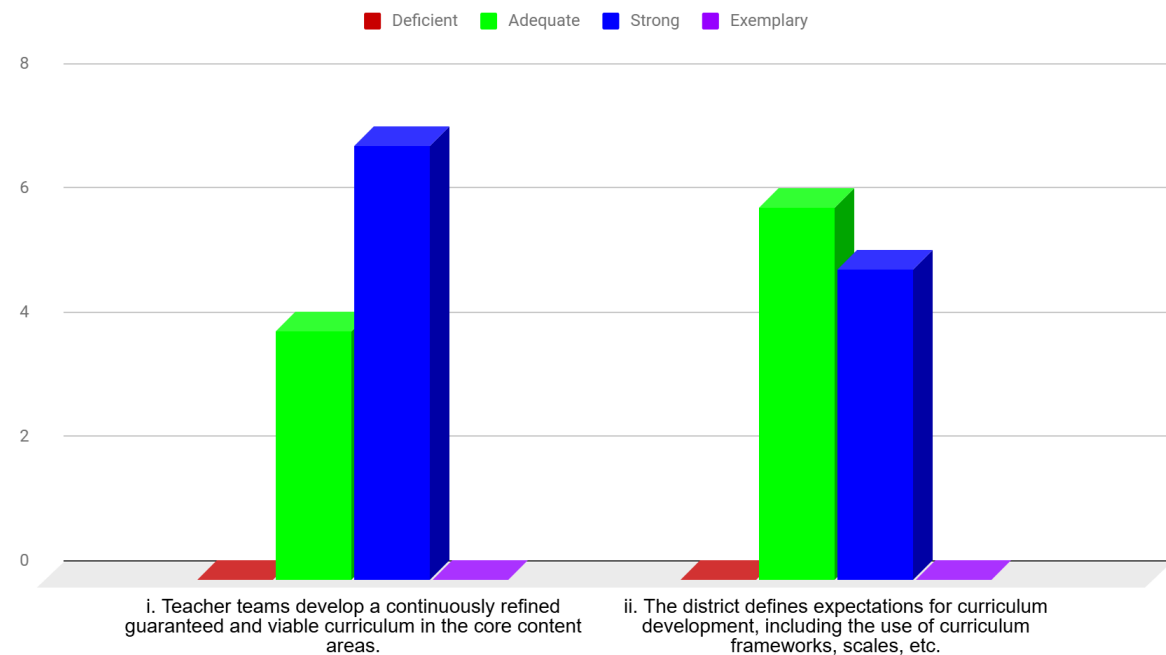
- Leadership presence in PLCs ensures collaboration is modeled and non-negotiable.
- Student Achievement Teachers bridge professional learning and classroom practice.
- Professional development is aligned to literacy, mathematics, and district goals.
- Rotating PLC leadership promotes sustainability and teacher empowerment.
- Reflection protocols ("What now?") ensure PD translates into practice.
- Collective efficacy fosters shared belief in improving outcomes for all students.

09. CONTENT AREAS, STANDARDS, AND CURRICULUM

a. Content Areas



b. Curriculum



The district has made notable progress in developing a comprehensive, standards-driven curriculum that guarantees access to the Wyoming Content and Performance Standards (WCPS) for all students. This commitment reflects a broader vision of equity and consistency across classrooms.

The district's philosophical shift from textbook-dependent instruction to a standards-based framework is supported by the Beyond Textbooks (BT) initiative. BT provides a scope and sequence aligned with WCPS and WYES standards, enabling teachers to prioritize complex standards earlier. This allows for repeated reinforcement of essential concepts, leading to increased mastery.

Inclusion is a hallmark of this system. Students served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) now access core academic content rather than alternative curricula, resulting in improved proficiency and higher graduation rates.

Collaboration drives curriculum coherence. The Community Curriculum Council ensures unified direction and consistency across grade levels. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) use data to align instruction, while Standards-Aligned Tools (SATs) and district-wide data trackers provide structures for monitoring progress. These collaborative approaches have eliminated silos, replacing them with co-planning and co-teaching models that capitalize on teacher expertise.

Tier I instruction emphasizes foundational, research-based strategies with clear learning targets visibly posted in every classroom. Students are encouraged to articulate what they are learning and why it matters—strengthening engagement and accountability.

Grading practices are intentionally aligned to developmental needs: grades K–6 employ standards-based reporting, while grades 7–12 utilize traditional grading supplemented by standards-based practices. This blended model provides clarity and fairness while maintaining high expectations for all learners.

Leadership capacity continues to expand through Cognitive Coaching, which enhances reflection and instructional leadership. Evaluation systems include self-assessment components that promote teacher autonomy and growth. The Unified Student Data Tracker, created by a building principal, exemplifies innovation and coherence, providing a district-wide platform for monitoring academic progress and supporting MTSS implementation.

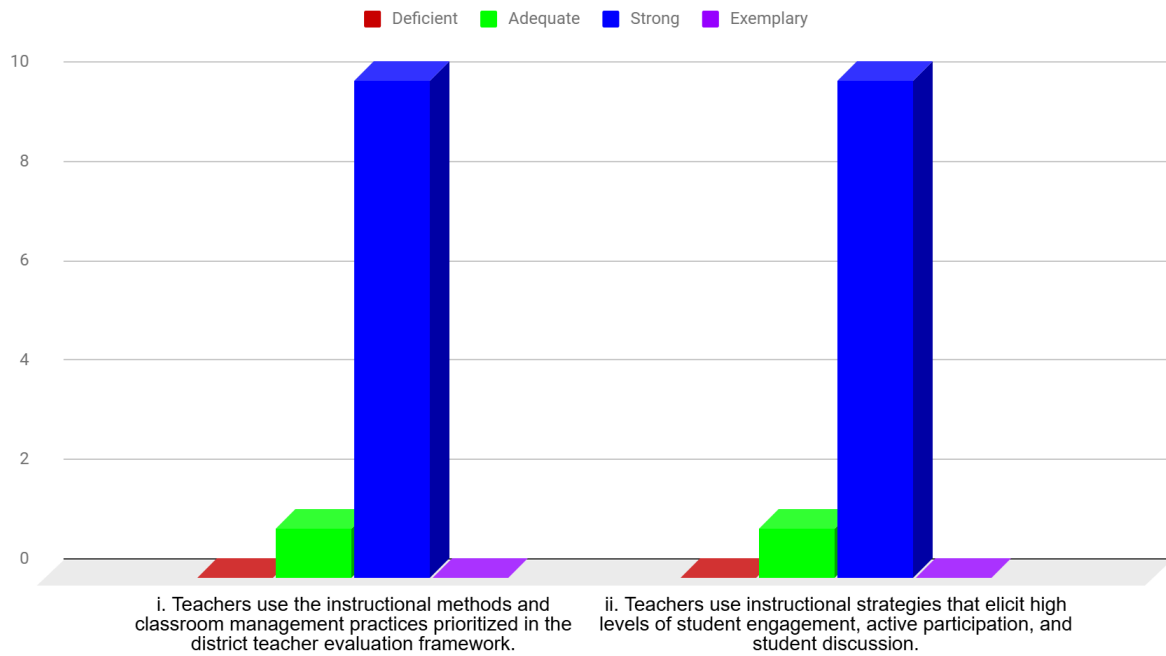
Through collaborative systems, standards-based alignment, and reflective leadership, the district has developed a coherent curriculum structure that supports both equity and excellence.

Indicators of Effective Practice:

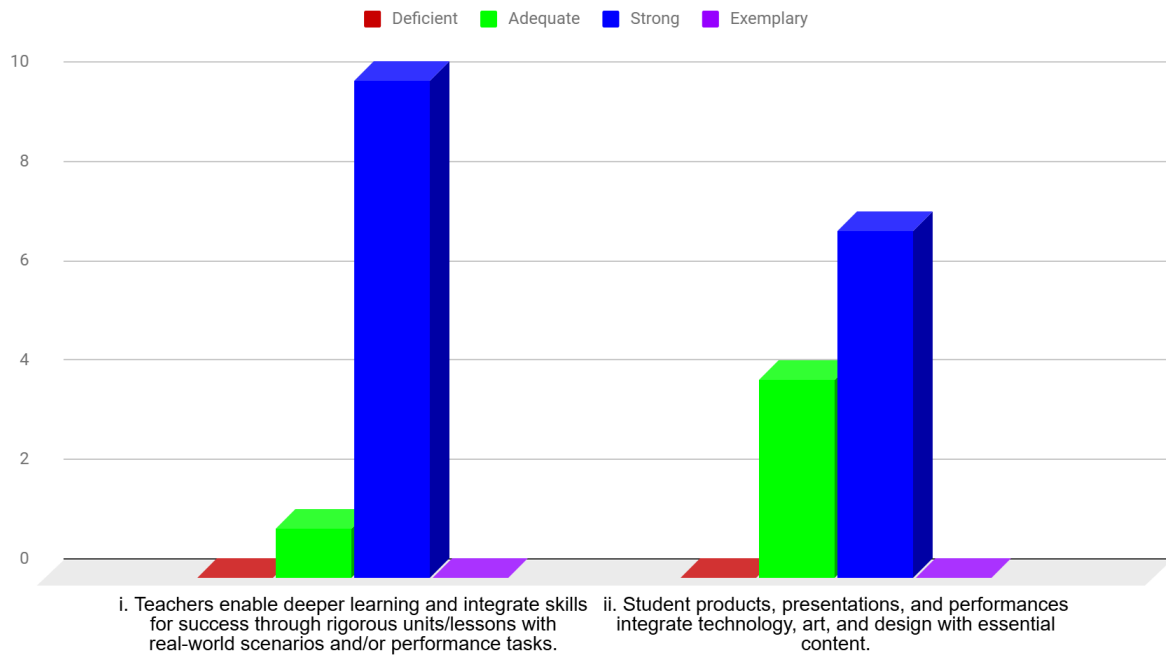
- Beyond Textbooks provides a consistent, standards-based instructional framework.
- All students, including those with disabilities, access core academic content.
- PLCs and the Community Curriculum Council ensure coherence across grade levels.
- Learning targets are consistently posted and communicated to students.
- Standards-based grading enhances accuracy and fairness in reporting progress.
- Cognitive Coaching strengthens leadership reflection and instructional quality.

10. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

a. Instructional Practices



b. Academic Tasks



The district is refining its instructional practices to ensure consistent alignment with academic standards and promote high levels of student engagement. Classroom observations across the district revealed rigorous, intentional instruction with students demonstrating clear understanding of their learning goals.

Students were consistently able to articulate their “I can” statements and reference posted standards, demonstrating ownership of learning. Teachers provided explicit instruction through modeling, guided practice, and structured independent application. Classrooms reflected effective management, clear routines, and positive relationships—conditions that promote focus and academic success.

Inclusionary practices are a defining strength, particularly at the elementary level, where paraprofessionals and co-teachers provide targeted support to ensure all students participate meaningfully in instruction. Tier I teaching, reteaching, and enrichment occur seamlessly, ensuring equitable access to learning.

Technology integration complements traditional teaching methods. Digital tools are used strategically to enhance engagement, differentiate instruction, and extend learning. Teachers strike a balance between hands-on, inquiry-based learning and structured, standards-aligned instruction.

Across the system, teachers employ a range of active learning strategies—whole-group discussion, partner work, cooperative learning, and individual practice—to maintain engagement and support diverse learning styles. English Language Learner (ELL) instruction stands out for its purposeful, structured, and culturally responsive delivery.

Student Achievement Teachers (SATs) provide ongoing professional development and classroom coaching focused on student-centered instruction. The district’s co-planner tool, which includes research-based strategy exemplars, guides lesson planning and reinforces consistency in practice.

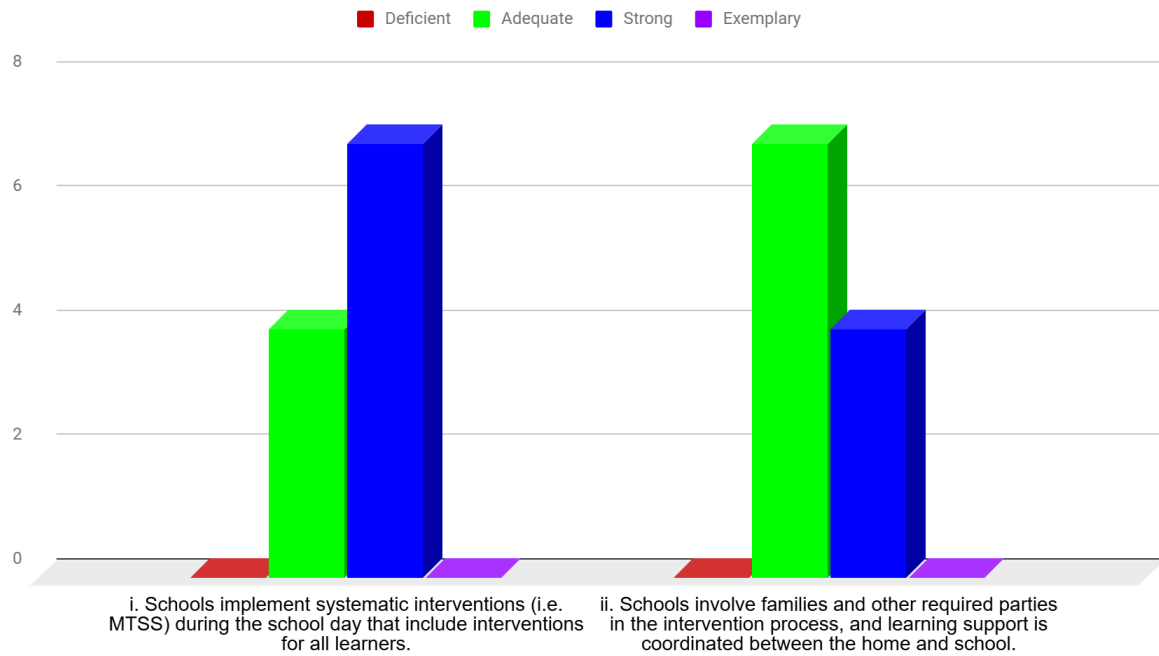
Instructional quality and student engagement are hallmarks of this district’s classrooms. Teachers demonstrate strong command of their content, deliberate planning, and a deep commitment to helping students understand the purpose behind their learning.

Indicators of Effective Practice:

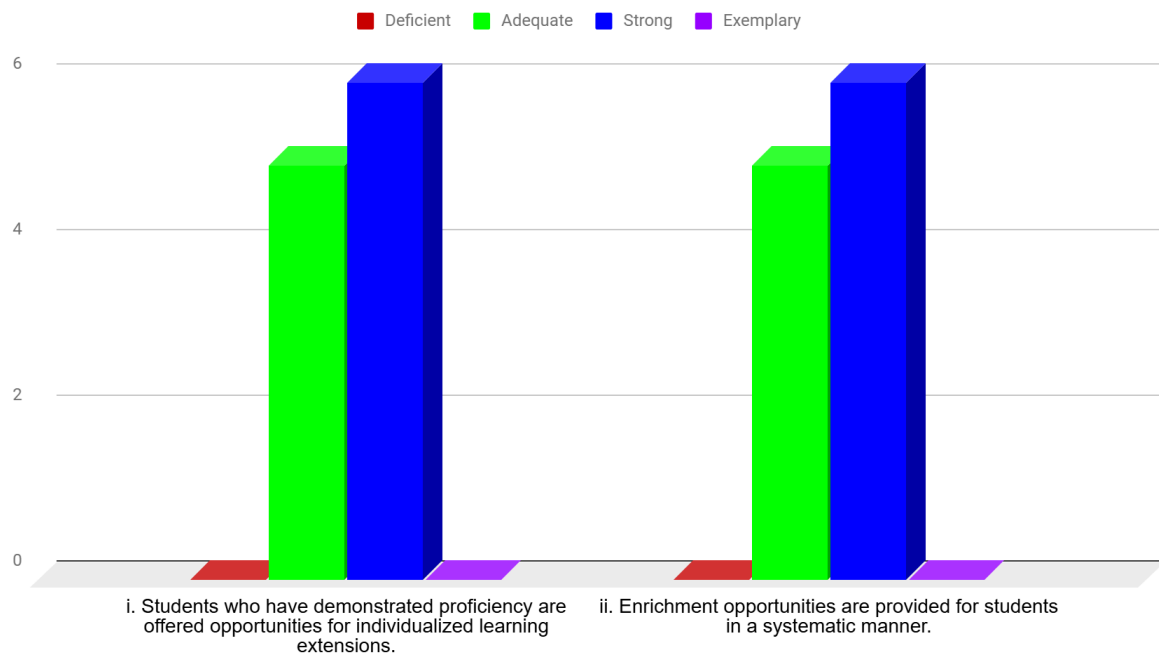
- Explicit instruction and "I can" statements promote clarity and ownership of learning.
- Inclusive co-teaching and paraprofessional support ensure equitable participation.
- Technology integration enhances differentiation and engagement.
- Structured routines and relationships foster productive learning environments.
- ELL instruction is purposeful and culturally responsive.
- Student Achievement Teachers provide ongoing support and professional learning.

11. LEARNING SUPPORT

a. Intervention



b. Extension and Enrichment



The district has developed a comprehensive, student-centered system of learning support that integrates intervention, extension, and enrichment across all grade levels. The Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) ensures that every student receives timely, targeted assistance during the regular school day. Data teams and Achievement Monitoring and Progress (AMP) Teams use universal screeners, formative assessments, and progress monitoring tools to identify and respond to student needs early.

The district's focus on early intervention begins with the Overland Early Learning Center, where high-quality preschool programming and data-driven instruction promote kindergarten readiness. Accadience data indicates significant gains in K–3 literacy, reflecting the effectiveness of early learning supports. The four-day week schedule strategically reserves Fridays for small-group reteaching, enrichment, and professional collaboration—an innovative structure that maximizes student and staff growth.

Special Education services span preschool through age 21 and emphasize inclusion, collaboration, and skill development. The expansion of the Life Skills program for 18–21-year-old students provides critical job training and transition support, extending the continuum of care for students with disabilities.

English Language Learner (ELL) support is embedded throughout instruction, with certified teachers and paraprofessionals providing both academic and language acquisition assistance.

For advanced learners, Gifted and Talented (G/T) services begin with universal screening in grade two and extend through elective and enrichment opportunities at the secondary level. Fridays are used for G/T extensions, interdisciplinary projects, and advanced study sessions.

The district's Virtual School program offers flexible learning pathways for students in grades 7–12 who require alternative settings, ensuring that discipline or life circumstances do not interrupt progress toward graduation.

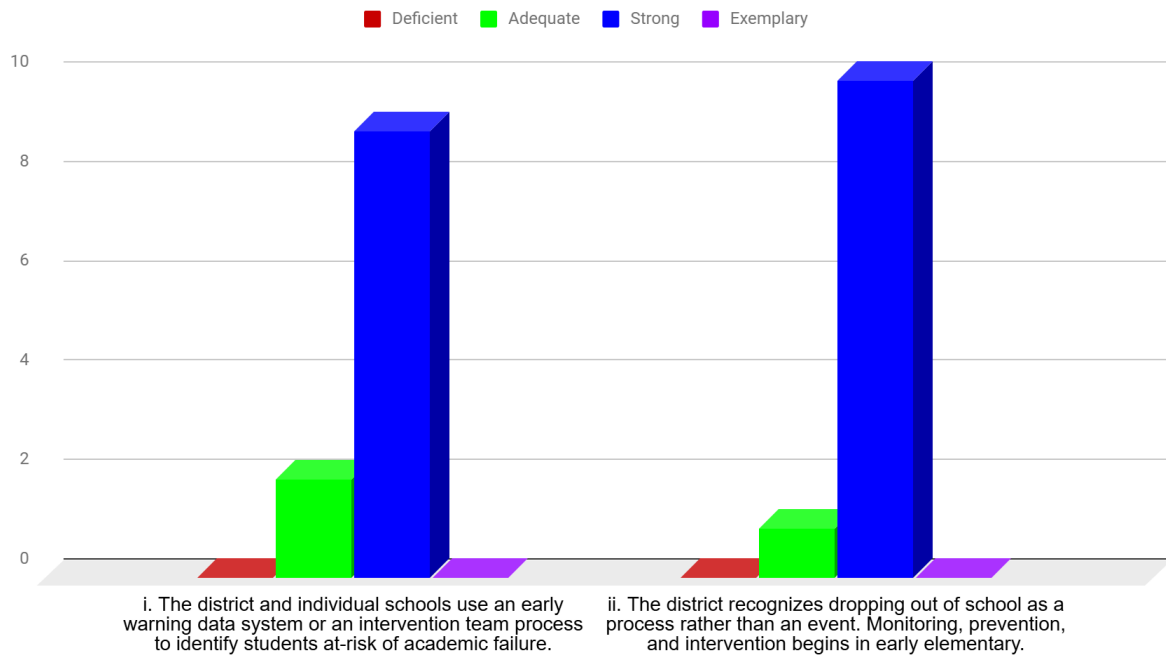
These systems are supported by strong collaboration between families and schools, regular communication, and comprehensive wraparound services. The four-day week, combined with structured Friday interventions, reflects a district that balances innovation, equity, and effectiveness in learning support.

Indicators of Effective Practice:

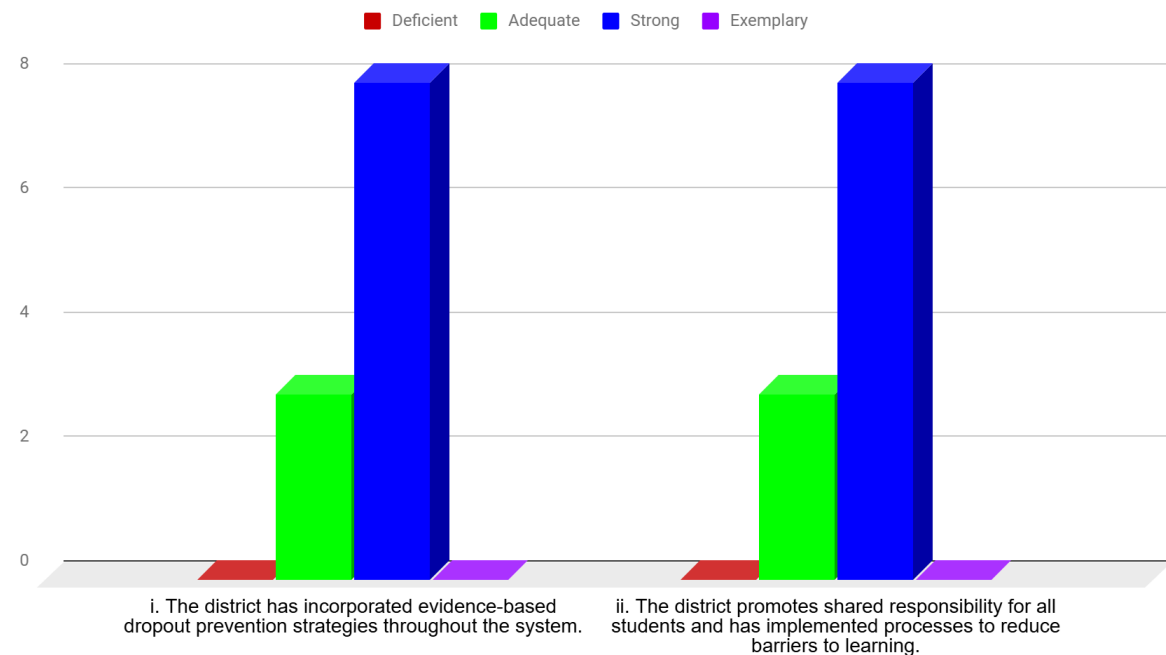
- MTSS ensures systematic academic and behavioral intervention.
- Early learning investments strengthen foundational literacy and readiness.
- Special Education services provide inclusive supports through age 21.
- G/T and enrichment programs extend learning for advanced students.
- Virtual School pathways support flexible and alternative learning needs.
- Fridays used strategically for intervention, enrichment, and collaboration.

12. AT-RISK AND DROPOUT PREVENTION

a. Early Warning Systems



b. Dropout Prevention Strategies



The district demonstrates a deep, system-wide commitment to identifying and supporting at-risk students through proactive, coordinated, and sustainable strategies. Recognizing that dropping out is a process rather than an event, the district's prevention model begins early—spanning preschool through high school—and integrates academic, behavioral, and social-emotional supports.

A robust early warning system operates across schools, guided by PLC and Achievement Monitoring and Progress (AMP) Teams. Universal screeners, academic data, and behavioral indicators allow staff to identify students who may be struggling and initiate early intervention before risk escalates. TANF funding has been leveraged strategically to enhance early childhood education and wraparound family supports, addressing barriers such as housing, nutrition, and healthcare.

At the secondary level, the Freshman Academy provides targeted academic and social-emotional supports during a critical transition year. This initiative strengthens student relationships, engagement, and retention, laying the groundwork for on-time graduation. High school and junior high teams collaborate to ensure smooth transitions and maintain momentum for students at all levels.

The district offers flexible graduation pathways, including an 18-credit option focused on core content and financial literacy. A virtual school accommodates students with scheduling conflicts from employment, parenting, or disciplinary issues. Credit recovery and Hathaway-approved GED options serve as additional safety nets to keep students engaged in learning.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways through the district's CTE Academy engage students in career-connected learning with opportunities to earn industry certifications in areas such as healthcare, welding, and public service. Programs like RIDE provide voice and choice in vocational learning, increasing student engagement and purpose.

Community partnerships extend support beyond academics. Collaborations with local businesses, workforce agencies, and service providers connect students to internships, mentorships, and essential resources. District leaders and central office staff ensure these systems remain aligned through walkthroughs, data reviews, and professional book studies focused on student success.

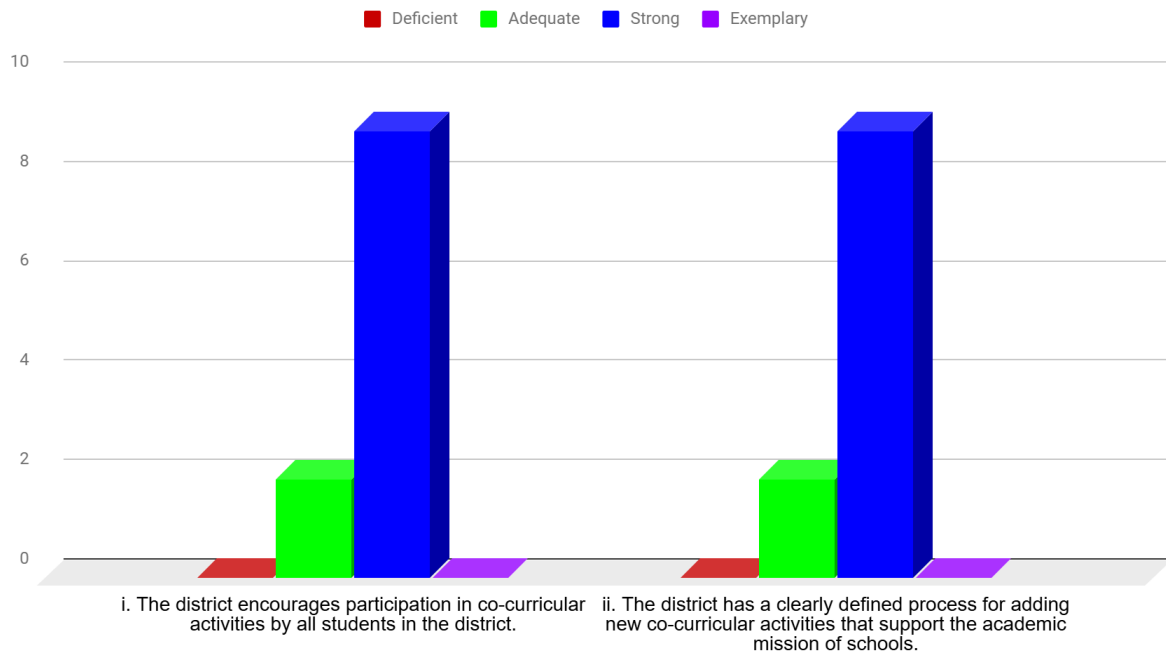
The district continues to strengthen staffing and sustainability by reallocating resources, expanding counseling and intervention services, and building long-term capacity for innovation. While many initiatives are in early stages, staff report growing confidence and momentum in improving graduation rates and reducing dropout risks.

Indicators of Effective Practice:

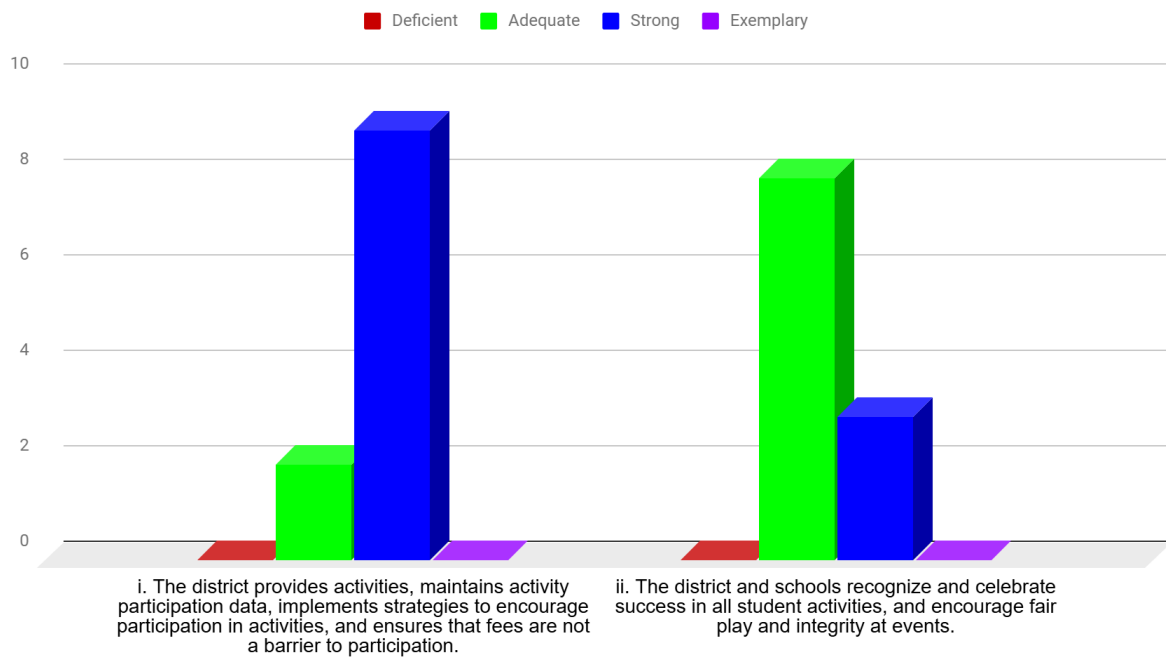
- Early warning systems identify academic, behavioral, and attendance risks.
- TANF-funded early childhood and family supports address external barriers.
- Freshman Academy smooths transitions and increases student engagement.
- Multiple diploma and virtual pathways provide flexible options for success.
- CTE Academy connects students to industry certifications and real-world learning.
- Strong community partnerships reinforce wraparound and career readiness supports.

13. STUDENT ACTIVITIES

a. Co-Curricular Activities



b. Extra-Curricular Activities and Clubs



The district provides a robust and inclusive array of student activities that promote engagement, belonging, and personal growth. Athletics, performing arts, academic clubs, and service organizations are offered across all grade levels, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to participate meaningfully in school life. The guiding philosophy—"a place for everyone"—underscores the district's belief that extracurricular participation is essential to developing well-rounded learners.

Inclusivity is a defining feature of the program. Students of all abilities are encouraged and supported to participate, with accommodations and creative solutions ensuring access. Special Education students actively engage in athletics and clubs, including participation in football, track, and Special Olympics. Financial barriers are minimized through fundraising, parent-led gear exchanges, and scholarships from community partners such as the Kari Foundation. A "no-cut" policy at the junior high level ensures that all students who wish to play sports are able to do so, reinforcing belonging and confidence.

Community partnerships further enrich the program. Collaborations with local businesses, colleges, and civic organizations expand learning opportunities beyond the school day. High school athletes and club members mentor junior high students, fostering continuity and anticipation for continued involvement.

The district maintains a clear process for developing new clubs and activities based on student interest and staff sponsorship. Co-curricular additions such as percussion ensembles and the crochet club reflect the district's responsiveness to evolving student passions. Coordination between junior high and high school teams ensures alignment and sustainability.

Celebration and recognition are embedded within the district's culture. Achievements are highlighted through newsletters, social media, and school board meetings. "Hype videos," "Fan in the Stands" campaigns, and spirit events showcase both athletic and non-athletic achievements. The district continues to refine equitable visibility for all programs to ensure that fine arts, academics, and service organizations are celebrated alongside athletics.

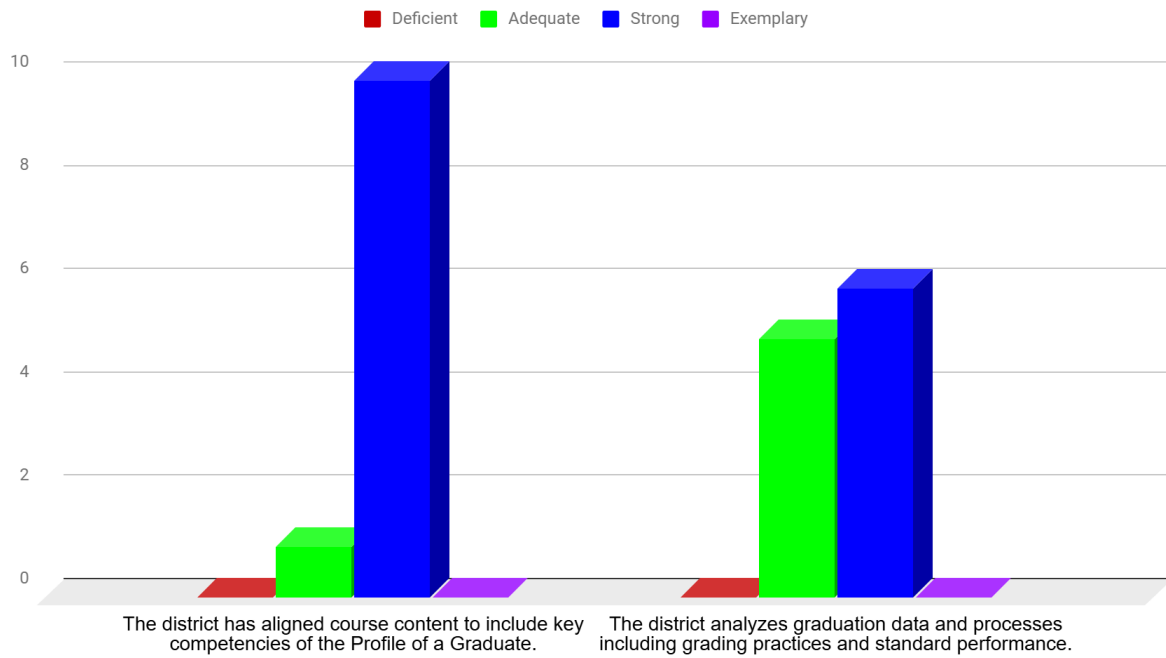
Data-driven reflection guides continuous improvement. The district is developing a formal system to track participation data and set future engagement goals, ensuring that student activity programs continue to evolve and meet diverse interests.

Indicators of Effective Practice:

- Inclusive access and accommodations ensure all students can participate.
- Community partnerships expand extracurricular opportunities.
- “No-cut” policy promotes equity and belonging at junior high levels.
- Student and staff collaboration drive creation of new clubs and activities.
- Systematic celebration of achievements reinforces pride and engagement.
- Data-driven reflection guides participation goals and program growth.

14. GRADUATION

a. Graduate



b. Graduation Plans

